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Assess For the Best

Assessments can provide insight into innate talents and skills

What's the point of an assessment? This is a question clients often ask when we discuss the importance of using assessments in the coaching process.

Let's begin to answer that question by exploring a little further. Have you encountered clients in a midlife career crisis or early life career crisis? Have you heard clients say they are struggling with work issues, and although they like to work and enjoy their coworkers, they are just not motivated to jump out of bed each morning to go to work? Do they express being discontent in their job

into our clients in order to be more effective?

Our work has shown that diagnostic assessment tools give us a starting point. They enable us to quickly establish a baseline and identify areas that are appropriate for the coaching process. These tools give us insight into HOW our clients behave, WHY they behave in a particular manner, and WHAT capacities they have. Assessments help identify the potential strengths clients have but may not be aware of or using. Clients quite often experi-



“Assessments help identify the potential strengths clients have but may not be aware of or using.”

situation but are unclear on what to do about it? In a recent poll conducted by Target Training International, 70 per cent of 8,000 job seekers said they were considering a job change for reasons unrelated to stress, poor management, or inadequate salary. More than 90 per cent said they wanted to find the “right” job and were compelled to take whatever time necessary to find that right position.¹

So as coaches, where do we begin? How do we gain the necessary insight

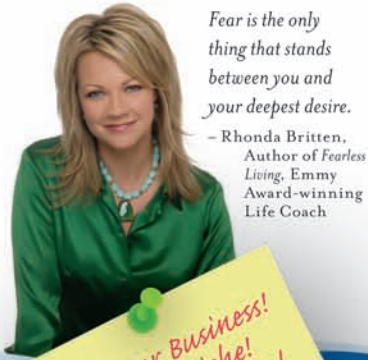
ence an “a-ha” moment as they come to understand the information provided in the assessments.

To help clients discover HOW they behave, we use behavioral assessments. These assessments are especially helpful in allowing us to identify the characteristics, strengths, and behavioral style a client brings to an organization. They also identify communication styles, which are a critical element of the coaching process. In order for coaching to be effective, clients need to be able to

hear and respond to what a coach is saying, and likewise, a coach needs to be able to understand and appreciate the communication style of their clients. Behavioral assessments can supply the blueprint for this common language.

To enable clients to understand WHY they behave in a particular manner, we use a value or motivation assessment. By providing clients with insight into what energizes and moves them into action, we can guide them via coaching, in determining the occupation they're best suited for, and enable them to discover their “right fit” in the workplace.

To facilitate the understanding of WHAT capacities or innate talent skills clients possess, we use an assessment which is based on a validated mathematical system called axiology. This assessment measures a client's structure of value, or the road map and filtration system they use to think, evaluate and make decisions. This value structure results in indi-



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impact

A Case Study

Recently, a physician director from a large urban hospital contacted us to discuss her current role. She had graduated from an elite east coast medical school and risen to the position of manager in the hospital.

As she began to discuss her concerns with us, she disclosed she had been unhappy as a physician for a long time. She had enjoyed studying, but did not like the interaction with others. In her career, she had been rewarded for her strong performance by being promoted to a management position that demanded considerable interaction with others.

The behavioral portion of her assessment revealed her strengths were her analytical and problem solving abili-

ties; but in dealing with people, she was skeptical and cautious. The value or motivation assessment revealed she had a strong “Utilitarian” value; meaning, generally she was very practical and bottom line oriented; but she was not motivated by the “Social” or altruistic value, which is common in many physicians, and focuses on helping others.

In working with us, she came to understand herself more clearly. Using the information gained from the assessments in our coaching process, she was able to determine that she would be happier using her medical degree in a business environment. She also discovered she had a preference for working with tasks

and projects, rather than teaching, guiding or managing people. She concluded that perhaps a research role, or even an executive administrative role, might also better utilize her natural talents and acquired skills.

If the question is “to assess or not to assess,” then our answer would definitely be “assess!”

Skilled coaching techniques, coupled with diagnostic assessments, can equip us with tools to be more effective as coaches, and allow clients to better understand and realize their full potential, to develop greater personal growth, have better organizational fit, and develop a customized strategy for personal success.

vidual perceptions, and ultimately how a person makes decisions. The assessment result is a ranking of innate personal talent skills, describing their potential for workplace performance. Clients can focus on the skills they need to develop, and also gain insight into those that define their strongest capabilities.

In a benchmark career research study conducted by TTI, 21 jobs from CEO to receptionist were studied. A total of 353 benchmarks were analyzed with an average of seven Subject Matter Experts. After data from 2,471 Subject Matter Experts was evaluated, three innate personal talent skills stood out: “Self Manage-

ment” was required by 96 per cent of the jobs and was the number one skill required over 50 per cent of the time. “Results Orientation” was next, with 94 per cent of the jobs requiring it in the top seven skills. “Personal Accountability” was the third most important skill and was required in 76 per cent of the jobs studied.¹¹ When a client knows their innate talent and skills, they can more easily determine where they potentially fit in the workplace. •

Notes

¹ TTI Superior Performer, 2006 p.31

¹¹ benchmark research, 2006, TTI Performance Systems, Jim Robins

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Assessments

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4 Questions For Assessing The Assessments



Creating Meaning with Assessments