



It's all in the mind

Corporate companies are using psychometric tests to fine-tune their hiring process and evaluate a candidate's character



because you are getting the right candidate for the job profile," says Piyush Agrawal, Senior Manager, Operations in a corporate firm. He adds that the test is important in hiring a candidate for a higher role. "Fresher and middle management candidates can be recruited with a regular hiring process."

Process of elimination

Assessing the behavioural traits and personality of a candidate can be much more difficult than the other factual facets such as education, skills, logical reasoning and verbal communication. And while psychometric testing makes the recruitment process sharper and smoother, it also helps analyse results that are statistically in favour of the organisation. This way, a company can also eliminate the candidates who don't meet the basic criteria. "When you are hiring in bulk, you can filter out the candidates. Instead of interviewing all the applicants, the company needs to go on further hiring rounds only with those meeting the basic criteria," explains Dr Nivedita Srivastava, the founder of 9links, a psychometric assessment company in Gujarat.

Similarly, clinical psychologist Shyamolie Desai notes that the tests help companies to

check a specific personality trait that they are looking in a candidate for a particular role. "There are several tests, and every test would help get the most suitable person for the role. If there are many people applying for the same job, then it is easy to choose the right one from them through the test," she adds.

Difference of opinions

However, not everyone is sold on the value of psychometric testing in the hiring process. While it is true that it is a scientific way of analysing skills, some also believe that there is a bonafide risk that psychometric testing puts entrants into cubby-holes.

"By revealing the type of character a candidate has, you are making your process rigid. It is sub-standard exercise and there is no point in having this in the hiring process," says Amit Kumar, operations manager at a Gurugram based corporate company.

He further adds that candidates' work experience matters the most. "If a candidate comes with

enough work experience, then taking a test doesn't make sense. And as far as team management and solving issues are concerned, there is always help available in the process," opines the manager.

Desai agrees to some extent, adding that companies should not completely rely on psychometric testing either. "Companies should not fully rely on these tests and neglect the person because that will make their rules very strict and stringent. Companies need to take other observations about the person in consideration," she suggests.

Srivastava avers that while there is no one process that should be relied on for hiring a candidate, psychometric testing helps discover good candidates as well as candidates who have lied about their skills. "It is not difficult to fake CVs, and every candidate appears prepared for the interview. So while psychometric testing is not the final thing to decide whether the candidate should be hired or not, it at least helps in understanding the candidate's actual trait and capabilities," she says.

Being natural is the key

Some people might procure jobs by pretending that they

are good for the position, but they ultimately prove to be the wrong choice. But according to experts, candidates cannot get away with fake responses on psychometric tests. "I have been through this test quite a few times and couldn't clear. You would never know where you missed out because it checks your natural personality," says Agrawal and adds that the tests have similar questions with different situations. "You just respond impulsively to all the questions which are connected to each other and tweaked with different situations and there you are gone," says the senior manager.

Srivastava too adds that there is no key to clearing the test except being authentic. "You can clear the verbal language and logical reasoning tests with practice, but when it comes to personality and social behavioural skills, there is nothing that works. You need to be yourself," suggests the expert. "It is a scientific thing and there is no technique to clear the test," she clarifies before signing off.

PRIYANKA CHANDANI

In today's time of economic instability, winning and surviving for the companies in the market is possible through the competent man power among other things. Therefore, while many are still going by the tried and tested method of college placements and face-to-face interviews, others are diving deeper into their potential employees by using psychometric tests to evaluate their experiences. This method provides employers with a comprehensive understanding of a candidate's personality and ability, which can help decide if they fit into the company.

Although psychometric testing has been used abroad for several years, India is yet to apply it outside big multinational companies. So far, 29 percent of Indian companies such as Credit Suisse, Macquarie Group, IndiGo, Accenture, and Asian Paints among others use psychometric testing in their candidate assessment process, and many employers believe that it helps in hiring quality talent.

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—PIYUSH AGRAWAL, SENIOR MANAGER, OPERATIONS

Bollywood actor Tara Sutaria walks on the ramp for designer Punit Balana at the Lakme Fashion Week Summer/Resort 2020

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