

The Managerial Jigsaw – Finding the Right Piece to Fit Your Company’s Puzzle

One of the most difficult positions to fill in a company is, arguably, a managerial one. It has to be filled by someone who can wear a lot of different hats – coach, cheerleader, leader, innovator, visionary, etc. Managers can’t be a one-size-fits-all. Good managers can adjust their style to bring out the potential of each employee, and need to be competent in a variety of areas. They also need to be willing to learn, especially if their approach and style doesn’t mesh well with employees.

It’s no surprise that a great deal of psychometric tests that assess managerial potential have a long laundry list of traits and skills. Managers have to juggle numerous tasks, from setting goals for employees to work toward and motivating them to work hard to achieve them, to problem-solving, giving feedback, organizing tasks, and making major decisions. And this must all be done with poise, professionalism, and tact. If a manager were to show any hesitancy or doubt in their own abilities, it would not go unnoticed by those they manage. This encompasses the type of pressure that many managers face – something that few handle with ease.



Finding a manager who possesses the right set of competencies is important, but it’s also essential to keep in mind the type of organizational atmosphere and circumstances you’re hiring for. Personality is essential when hiring a manager, regardless of how skilled the person is. For example, imagine a company that is struggling to succeed. It’s experiencing financial difficulties, role confusion, and employees are either scrambling to jump ship or call mutiny. Tough times like this call for firm leaders. Bringing things back on track would likely require a manager who takes a direct approach, is comfortable making tough decisions and



taking risks, and who can instill confidence in employees again. Like former mayor Rudy Giuliani, or former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Now imagine the opening of a new chain department store. A team of totally new faces has been put together, some with job experience and some without. They're excited to make the store a success but are nervous too. In order to pull this team together to work as one and make the opening a smashing success requires a more people-oriented and motivating manager with good coaching skills, someone like Mary Kay Ash, founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics, and Sam Walton, Wal-Mart founder.

Running an online search of what makes a good manager will yield plenty of professional and anecdotal opinions, but there are a few common ones that will keep coming up. For instance, employees tend to prefer a manager who is good with people, communicates clearly and offers feedback; someone who is willing and able to take responsibility to get work done, but who also doesn't micromanage. Hard-nosed leaders who are demanding and push employees too hard almost always tend to alienate their staff, which can impact motivation and productivity. Take Google's latest solution-focused managerial endeavor. After conducting surveys and looking over tons of performance evaluations, they discovered that even the most

technically-skilled manager will be shunned by employees if he or she doesn't strive to work well with others.

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Assessing a manager's skill set and knowledge can be fairly easy based on job experience, references, and contextual interview questions, but evaluating personality is a bit more of a shot in the dark. With many companies opting for a more neutral policy when it comes to job references, it's a little difficult to find out if a person who interviews well will turn into a tyrannical, power-abusing manager when set loose on the company.

Fortunately, this is where personality assessments can shed some light. With the right questions to assess traits like flexibility, soft skills, integrity, and the willingness to collaborate with others, personality tests can pick up small nuances that often go undetected in interviews.



PsychTests' **ARCH Profile** offers the comprehensive **MANSSA (Management Skills and Styles Assessment)**, as well as other in-depth personality profiles such as **AMPM**, based on the renowned Big 5 traits, and the **MEIQ - R7** which assesses emotional intelligence, one of the hottest buzzwords in managerial circles. ☘

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