

Adapting to Change

Perhaps the most daunting challenges that currently face both employers and employees are those posed by the ever-increasing influx of new and rapidly changing technologies.

For the majority of today's employees, the days of learning a set of rote tasks that remain mostly unchanged for the duration of one's career has long since become a thing of the past, yielding both positive and negative consequences. On the one hand, it means freedom from boredom and stagnation, resulting in increased job satisfaction. On the other hand, it can be a cause for added stress, increased personal time devoted to learning and upgrading job skills, and uncertainty regarding one's own competence and future within an organization.

For employers, the process of assessing which employees are best suited to a position has become a more complex task than ever before, since employers must now predict potential technological changes for a given position along with the employees' ultimate ability to adjust and thrive with the ongoing innovations in their environment. It's a safe assumption that most jobs will undergo some form of technological change that will require ongoing learning and adapting on the part of employees and employers.

It is therefore more important than ever that Human Resources personnel employ accurate means of evaluating both existing and potential staff's ability to adapt to change, particularly as it relates to new technologies in the work place.

With regards to IT positions, this need is most pressing as the introduction of new software, hardware, programming languages, etc., seems to be an almost daily occurrence. While choosing an IT staff member is often predicated on the amount of pre-knowledge one brings to the job, this should not be regarded as the sole factor, or even the most important factor when selecting from various candidates. Some pre-knowledge is of course necessary. However in the long term view, openness towards continued learning and the ability to deal with stressors resulting from same are often the overriding factor in determining long range suitability. A candidate may have an impressive resume and a high degree of technological expertise. Nevertheless, if their learning curve has halted, their expertise will become obsolete over time. Conversely, a candidate may display limited technological knowledge yet their passion for acquiring new skills makes them an ideal choice. It is important to remember that new technologies are usually a means to an end, simply an effective tool. A new software package implemented in a company may be regarded as a delivery system by which the employees transmit pertinent information in real-time. This is a huge advantage for management in terms of being able to make rapid business decisions for the organization, provided that the employees are able to adjust effectively to the modifications.



For example, let's say Mary works at a manufacturer of car parts, Carson Car Parts. Mary's company has recently begun implementing an ERP solution (Enterprise Resource Management), which will allow Mary's company to be able to track the entire processes within the organization, from procurement, through work orders, to sales and receivables and all steps in between. Carson Car Parts hopes that this technology will allow them to be more profitable by accommodating just-in-time delivery. Mary is a talented welder, and has many years of experience. She has never liked computers and is worried that she won't be able to adjust to the new system. Her fears prove to be unfounded, as it turns out that Mary has the ability to learn and adapt. She quickly becomes a "power user" of the system, and the "go to" person for other employees. Mary was lucky; her organization recognized that although she was nervous, when coached and supported through the change, she was able to bring more to the organization than if they had simply ignored her lack of computer technology experience and passed her over for a less experienced welder who had more computer skills in place.

When viewed in this light, it is not necessarily the pre-mastery of the delivery system that takes precedence. While the candidate should also possess the competence or ability to learn the other skills associated with their position; it is the desire and willingness to master new systems on an ongoing basis which typically becomes of primary importance. It can often mean the difference between success and failure of the technology to deliver the anticipated return on investment.

Recognizing that adaptability to change is of prime importance to Human Resource personnel, Plumeus incorporates this personality assessment factor into many of our tests available to ARCH Profile members. With the proper assessment tools, organizations can now approach the future enthusiastically, without trepidation.

To quote Brian Tracy, renowned Author, Business Coach & Motivational Speaker, "Resolve to be a master of change rather than a victim of change."

Contact us @ 1-888-855-6975 to learn which tests can help you predict this important trait.