



The Employer's Advantage

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Client Highlight **3M Trainer Finds Solutions with Profiles Tools**

A bid for help from managers who wanted to coach their sales people more effectively led Gene Nichols, a 3M trainer in St. Paul, Minn., to reassess the Profiles tools his company used. He found assessments that could give managers specific information and that could be changed to fit his company's needs.

An experienced sales veteran, Nichols is education and development manager for the medical division of 3M, a diversified technology company with worldwide presence. When he assumed his role four years ago, the previous manager was already using Profiles tools. "We'd been using Profiles for seven or eight years. We wanted to give field managers the tools to coach salespeople," he said. "We needed to see how successful reps were doing it and how we could coach along those same skill sets." Nichols uses the ProfileXT and the Sales Indicator to ensure they hire the right people and to benchmark sales reps.

"Both are very important," Nichols said. "Our sales people must be able to speak well and do calculations and contracts. We look at these skills and whether they are enterprising and want to serve others. We look at financial/admin skills, technical and mechanical skills and creativity."

Managers also look at the PXT's behavior scales. All sales people go through the process, and the company uses benchmarks for each. "If we are looking at someone to become a manager, we see how closely they match other managers and what coaching they need," Nichols said. "We ensure new managers resemble ones who are doing superbly."

The company benchmarks its sales reps across the country. "When we first started, upper management and regional leaders asked our sales managers to identify those who excelled in their jobs," he said.

Profiles strategic partner Nancy Ness helped Nichols understand the power of Profiles tools. He now has three key groups of people and rebalances the benchmarks against those groups. "Nancy has been very helpful in getting the program set as it is today," he said.

Ness admires his enthusiasm. "He spends time and energy on understanding the information and sees the value in it." Owner of Profiles, Inc., in Eden Prairie, Minn., she has been affiliated with Profiles International since 1991. "We've really evolved technologically," she said. "With everything online, it's easy to deliver the product. It's exciting!"

Using assessment tools in a purposeful manner

Technical Corner, a new column this month, will examine Department of Labor guidelines on occupational assessment tools, starting with the first one. It states that assessment tools must be used in a purposeful manner.

This means that managers using the tools need to understand how they work. Profiles International's assessment tests meet or exceed Department of Labor guidelines, and we work with our clients to help them understand our tools and use them correctly.

For example, the Profile XT helps determine which candidate will best perform a particular job. How can it tell that? The employer, using appropriate measures, identifies top performers, or

then build a job match pattern that will identify top performers over those challenged by the position. To keep the assessment fresh and relevant, this benchmark is updated as more information becomes available.

The Profile XT assesses an employee's behavioral traits, interests and thinking style to reflect the person within. Answers to these measures in part determine work fit. Think of the analogy of the square peg in the round hole. To make the square peg fit in a round slot, we have to shave the corners. If the peg is more curved than square, perhaps we have to shave off less to make it fit in the round shape. However, if the peg is already round, it fits perfectly in the hole with no shaving or honing needed.



Our assessments seek this kind of fit. It is common sense that employees who fit well into their jobs exhibit a higher level of job satisfaction. They come to work more often, change jobs less frequently and perform superbly overall. They are able to be successful doing what comes naturally to them.

Managers using assessment tools correctly already know the shape of the holes they need to fill. They only need a peg to fit it well. Profiles helps clients understand how to do that.

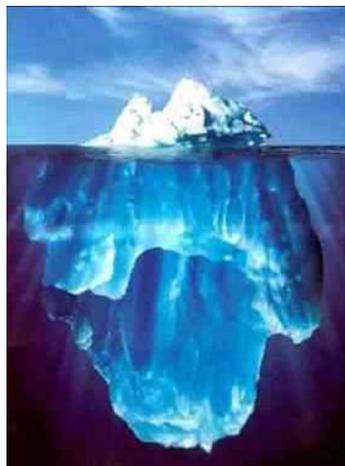
Department of Labor Guidelines Checklist

✓ **Assessment tools must be used in a purposeful manner**

those employees working at the highest level. The employer shares the ranking with us. We

10% - Good, but limited information:

**Skills
Experience
Education**



90% - Essence of the Total Person:

**Thinking Style
Behavioral Traits
Occupational Interests**

Generates Job Match

To Reduce Turnover, Realize What Causes It

Robert, the top boss at a large manufacturing company, mostly managed his people well. He told his managers what he expected and gave them freedom to do their jobs as they saw fit. His door was open most of the time, and he often discussed issues with his assistants.

His company, however, was not immune to the turnover that plagues so many businesses. Additionally, his company was small, so turnover affected everyone in some way. Staff members assumed others' duties in addition to their own or moved temporarily to another area, often one they did not know so well. People worked overtime to finish jobs left undone by the missing employee. Stress was often high, and employees were often not informed of searches for new workers.

Robert blamed the turnover on the pay structure. People just wanted more money, he reasoned. He took pains to review and revise pay policies, but even when he paid employees more, turnover did not decrease significantly. More puzzling, turnover often was lower in the areas where he expected it to be high and higher in areas where pay and professionalism were the highest and required stability.

Turnover costs were soaring—estimates vary from a low of \$10,000 to a high of \$50,000 per employee—If Robert could have dug deeper, he might

have found many reasons why people were leaving his company:

- Employees with no way to advance
- Workers who did not know or agree with company values
- Staff members who left because others did (Turnover often has that domino effect.)

All employers should know that there is a more efficient way to keep valuable employees. They must know and understand their workforce and have good information about what their employees want. This would not be the same for each individual, but good employment practices generally allow workers to ask questions, understand company policy and make suggestions about how to get jobs done.

Employers also need to know why good workers leave. They need to delve deeper than the common exit interview in which departing employees generally don't want to burn their bridges. What if they

had problems with a key manager who appears one way to her staff and another to her bosses? What if the top boss is doing something that repels key workers and doesn't even know it?

Assessment tools can help reduce turnover and positively affect other key areas as well. Hunches work in some areas, but when dealing with something as costly in time and human capital as turnover, the facts offer better solutions.

The Impact of Job Match		With Job Match	Without Job Match
High Turnover Industry			
% left / fired after 6 months		24%	46%
% left / fired after 14 months		28%	57%
Low Turnover Industry			
% left / fired after 6 months		5%	25%
% left / fired after 14 months		8%	34%

Source: "Job Matching for Better Sales Performance," Harvard Business Review, Vol. 58, No. 5.

Sales Tip of the Month: Make VoiceMail Your Pal

How often do you get to speak to the decision-maker in person? Some studies say up to 70 percent of business phone calls go to VoiceMail. Clearly, it's time to make this time- and money-saving device your friend. Here's how: Craft your 30-second elevator speech in writing. Use a friendly tone of voice and your client's name. Practice your message, then read

the speech as if you are saying it in person. Imagine grasping the client's hand and looking him or her in the eye.

Be sure to include your contact information, speaking clearly and distinctly. Visualize your client writing the number from your message.

Then say, "Please call me, and I will also follow up." Then do it.

That Was just the Last Straw...

You've decided that this trip to your neighborhood pharmacy was your last. It's a shame because you like the pharmacists, and it's convenient. But the checkout clerk seems to make each visit an unpleasant adventure with her careless and often impatient attitude.

This time she didn't listen when you asked a question, so you had to repeat yourself. Then when she answered, her voice dripped condescension. It's not that the clerk is a bad person, just a person in the wrong job. She just doesn't have the necessary customer service skills.

How many people do you have in the wrong place in your business? It's disturbing to think that the person at the front desk,

whom your customers see first, might be driving them away.

With all the competition you face to *get* customers, you don't want them to have to jump over obstacles once they enter your front door. But short of putting on a disguise to check out what kind of service your customers are getting, what can you do?

Profiles International's Customer Service Profile offers just the tool companies need. We believe that great customer service begins with people who are naturally inclined to serve others.

We can help you find those people by using this tool to:

- Guide you to create a plan that fits your customer service needs.
- Work with you to establish a comprehensive customer service



perspective for your organization.

- Help establish a program that solves internal and external communication issues.

- Assist you in building an excellent customer service reputation.

We have Customer Service assessments to serve the health-care, hospitality, retail and financial services industries. So there's really no reason to let your customers be driven away by an employee in the wrong job! Examine our assessments online at: www.RodinConsulting.com.

Case Study: Profiles Sales Indicator at a Midwest Staffing Agency

Background - Facing low employee productivity, a Midwest staffing organization conducted a study using the Profile Sales Indicator to see how productivity, in the form of sales totals, related to job match.

Participants - Thirteen of the organization's recruiters participated in the study. Using sales dollars, the company classified employees as either top performers (six) or bottom performers (seven). The six top performers generated an average of \$107,011 in sales dollars. The seven bottom performers generated an average of \$40,977 in sales dollars.

Job Match Pattern - With the Profiles Sales Indicator, we developed a job match pattern for a recruiter position using a concurrent study format. In January 2006, a sample of current recruiters was the basis to formulate the job match pattern. The company now uses this as the benchmark to predict recruiter performance based on Sales Indicator pattern match.

Performance Grouping - Based on the information gathered from the employer, we built a pattern that described the qualities of the existing top performers. The 13 recruiters were then matched to this pattern. After a review of the samples, the top-

performing employees were best identified by an overall job match of at least 79 percent. This suggested that a top performer should be identified by a match of 79 percent or greater, and this benchmark was set as representing a good match to the job pattern.

Of the 13 recruiters, six had a job match of 79 percent or more. Five of those six, or 83 percent, were top performers. In addition, five of the six were above the 79 percent job match pattern break point. One of the seven bottom performers, or 14 percent, achieved the same mark.

Details - Average sales dollars generated by those matching the pattern at 79 percent – \$97,730. Average sales generated by those who did not match the job match pattern at 79 percent – \$48,932.14.

Summary - By using the PSI to build and benchmark, this company has identified 83 percent of the employees who achieved the percent match benchmark as top performers. The average difference in sales earnings between top and bottom performers is nearly \$50,000. By using the PSI, this company is better able to select employees who are likely to succeed, earning more now and in the future.