

# HOW TO ASSESS FOR PASSION, PURPOSE AND A GROWTH MINDSET



# IT'S TIME TO CHANGE THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT ASSESSMENTS

The world is changing faster than ever before – as employers grapple with the digital transformation, skills shortages and competitive economic conditions. In response to these drivers, job responsibilities change rapidly and organizations need to hire creative employees to innovate and implement new ideas.

According to McKinsey, the pace of change in the workplace is so rapid that, by 2030, as much as 14% of the global workforce could need to change occupational categories.

To remain competitive, employers cannot simply hire a candidate who can meet the requirements of a job as they are written on day one. The candidate needs to have the skills and drive to grow, learn and adapt as the organization moves into the future.

Despite this need to attract candidates with growth mindsets, the interview and assessment processes used by most employers are stuck in the past. For the purposes of this ebook, we refer to assessments as any stage in the interview process where a selection decision is made. So, an assessment can be a traditional skills test or a requirement that must be met on an application or type of interview, like behavioral or video interview. For most employers, these assessment processes have too many steps and are narrowly focused on hard skills – allowing too many candidates to become disqualified early, before they are able to demonstrate who they really are.

Employers need to broaden their use of candidate assessments to allow for measuring factors that impact a candidate's ability and willingness to learn and grow, as well as their passion for the role and alignment with the broader purpose of the organization. Organizations need to assess a candidate as a whole person as early in the process as possible to really understand what they may be able to offer.

In this ebook, we explore the current state of assessments, the ways we at PeopleScout have worked to expand assessments to evaluate a candidate as a whole person, how these new assessments work in practice and the benefits and results of the whole person assessment method.

## OUR EXPERTISE:

PeopleScout's assessments are developed by occupational psychologists. This means the assessments are research driven. The model we outline in this ebook is based on decades of academic research into what makes an organization effective and how to improve the job satisfaction of employees. This work is based on the proven forces that drive people at work.



**By 2020 the pace of change in the workplace is so rapid that, by 2020, as much as 14% of the global workforce could need to change occupational categories**

– McKinsey



## THE CURRENT STATE OF ASSESSMENTS AND A BETTER WAY FORWARD

The interview and assessment process is challenging for both candidates and employers. Traditional skills assessments focus on evaluating the capability, behavior and results of candidates.

Research shows that these traditional measures can predict the future success of certain candidates in specific roles; however, now that change is constant, we believe that traditional assessments work best under two conditions:

1. When the candidate has had the opportunity to develop specific knowledge, skills and abilities through their past work experience.
2. When the organization is very clear about the requirements of the role.

While traditional assessments can predict the success of an individual candidate under those circumstances, they may not accurately predict failure. We also know that they can actually lead to less diversity because certain groups perform worse on narrow skills assessments. According to the Harvard Business Review, U.S. companies that have instituted

written skills tests for managers see decreases of 4% to 10% in the share of managerial jobs held by white women, African-American men and women, Hispanic men and women, and Asian-American women during the proceeding five years.

Current economic conditions and the growing competition for talent call for a better process. Traditional assessments can be effective; we shouldn't ignore them. However, they are only a portion of what research shows can predict success in a role. By combining traditional capability, behavior and results assessments with new measurements that focus on passion, purpose and mindset, we can better predict the success of candidates.



### **Challenges of the Current Process for Candidates:**

- The process is often long with multiple stages of video, phone and in-person interviews as well as potential skills assessments.
- Candidates don't feel they can show the full spectrum of who they are, and they may miss out on an opportunity because of one weakness even though they have several strengths.
- The process doesn't give candidates enough of an opportunity to understand the culture and values of the organization or show hiring managers why they would want to work there.
- The process provides minimal opportunity to demonstrate their passion.
- Candidates don't get a lot of feedback as they move through the process, especially at the earlier stages.

### **Challenges of the Current Process for Employers:**

- Strong candidates can become disengaged and remove themselves from the process if there are too many stages.
- Strong candidates are often screened out when they have unmeasured strengths that would lead them to succeed in the role.
- There is no objective way to measure if a candidate will be engaged and happy in the role.
- Certain assessments can be more difficult for certain groups of people, resulting in less cognitive diversity among the candidates who make it through the process.



# DEFINING THE TERMS OF WHAT WE'RE ASSESSING

When thinking about the factors that we evaluate to determine if a candidate is a good fit, it's best to think of them like individual gears that work together to drive how a candidate works. What each candidate brings to a role is a combination of their capabilities, behavior, results, passion, purpose and mindset. When those gears work together in the right environment, the candidate will be a successful employee.



**Capability:** Capability is a candidate's core intellectual ability and capacity. Cognitive ability tests that measure a person's verbal or numerical capabilities can have a moderate to strong correlation with performance. Traditional assessments and interviews measure capability.



**Behavior:** A candidate's past behavior and personality-based behavioral preferences work relatively well to predict performance. These can be measured through structured interviews where a candidate explains what they did in the past or during an assessment where an employer can observe a candidate take an action. Behavior is measured during traditional interviews and assessments.



**Results:** Results are what a candidate has already achieved in terms of the knowledge, skills and experience that are required to deliver in a role. Results can be evaluated through skills-based work examples. This is something traditionally reviewed during the interview and assessment process.



**Passion:** Passion is a candidate's enthusiasm, enjoyment and commitment to mastering the requirements of a role. When an employee is passionate about a role, they are engaged. According to Gallup, 85% of workers are not engaged in their current roles. Dale Carnegie Training reports that organizations with engaged workers outperform their peers by 202%.



However, most employers don't currently have a method to effectively understand what a candidate is passionate about.

**Purpose:** Purpose is a candidate's alignment with and willingness to contribute to the vision and values of an organization. One study reported by McKinsey found that, out of 100 variables, employees reported that seeing purpose and value in their work was their most motivating factor – even more so than compensation.

Purpose-driven work is especially important for younger workers. According to Cone, 75% of millennials and 55% of all age groups in the U.S. would take a pay cut to work at a socially and environmentally responsible company. Despite this, the traditional interview and assessment process doesn't include a deep dive into whether the candidate aligns well with the purpose of an organization.



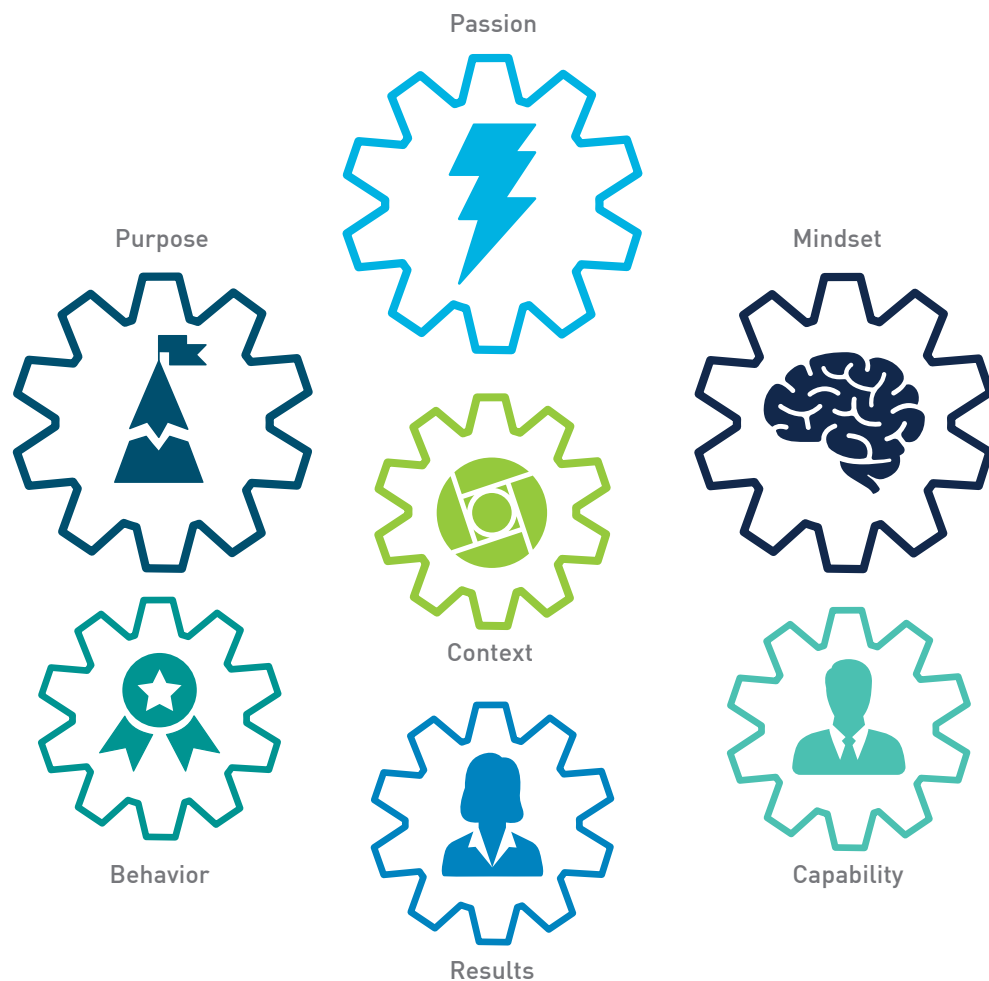
**Mindset:** Mindset is a candidate's belief about themselves and their basic qualities. These beliefs are rarely measured by employers. There are two types of mindset: fixed and growth.

**Fixed mindset:** is the belief that one's talents are innate gifts and not malleable.

**Growth mindset:** is the belief that one's talents can be developed through education and effort.

People with a growth mindset achieve more throughout their lives because they're focused on learning. In children, growth mindset is correlated with increased test scores, achievement and enjoyment in school.

According to Deloitte, companies that practice a growth mindset create "designed growth" and stretch assignments and openly discuss mistakes to promote learning. Those companies are three times more profitable and have four times better retention than those that do not.



We believe that passion, purpose and mindset can have as much impact on performance as core intellect, what you've achieved and how you've behaved. Most employers are not assessing for all of these factors, so they are missing out on a comprehensive look at candidates. As part of PeopleScout's talent advisory practice, we have developed a model that evaluates all six performance indicators.

## THE WHOLE PERSON MODEL

We developed the whole person model to evaluate capability, behavior, results, passion, purpose and mindset and how they interact. In this graphic, the gears operate together to contribute to the success of the candidate.

At the center is context. The way we measure all six factors depends on the role and the broader context of the organization. In the whole person model, assessments are built with a deep understanding of the organization and the factors that contribute to success in a particular role. For example, the way we measure results and passion will be different for an engineer at a large tech company than a retail sales representative.

In this graphic, you will also notice that each gear is a different size. The relative size of the gear demonstrates the weight of each factor in predicting success. We believe that mindset, passion and purpose should be key factors in assessing candidates for a particular role; however, the relative weighting of each factor will be determined by the context of the role and the organization.

The whole person model measures each candidate in a way that gives all candidates the opportunity to show their best selves. For example, if a candidate has not shown significant results thus far in their career, but they demonstrate a large amount of passion for the industry and the role, that passion could make up for the other weakness.

By looking at candidates through the lens of the whole person model from the start, we provide a more intellectually diverse slate of candidates. This is because the model identifies candidates who excel in





different ways. The model more effectively identifies candidates who have the passion and purpose that align with an organization and the mindset to experience continued success in the future.

#### **Benefits of the whole person model:**

- ✓ Increase ability to source candidates with skills of the future
- ✓ More engaging candidate experience
- ✓ Shorter hiring process
- ✓ Enhance the ability to measure the strengths of a person earlier in the process
- ✓ Expand the ability to measure future readiness
- ✓ Improve cognitive diversity
- ✓ Lengthen employee tenure
- ✓ Boost perceived fairness from candidates












## **HOW DOES THE WHOLE PERSON MODEL WORK IN PRACTICE?**

The whole person model is a highly bespoke assessment process. We have found that the model functions best in two contexts: high-volume hiring and highly specialized leadership hiring.

If an organization needs to hire a large number of candidates for a specific role or type of role, the whole person model can produce stronger, more diverse candidates and can result in longer-tenured employees. The process of building out the tailored assessments is time- and cost-effective for high-volume hiring.

The whole person model can also be valuable when searching for the right candidate for a leadership role. For organizations in times of transition, it can be especially difficult to identify candidates with the ability to lead through change.

# WHOLE PERSON MODEL USE CASE: HIGH-VOLUME HIRING

	CAPABILITY	BEHAVIOR	RESULTS	PASSION	PURPOSE	MINDSET
REALISTIC JOB & CULTURE PREVIEW						
ONE EXPERIENCE						
ASSESSMENT CENTER						

This infographic is one example of the whole person model in practice for high-volume hiring. It includes three stages and each stage measures different aspects of a candidate's background, or gears of the whole person model:

1. A realistic job and culture preview
2. The One Experience online assessment
3. The final stage of online assessments, which we call the Assessment Center

During the realistic job and culture preview, a candidate gets a practical look at what it would be like to work for your organization and in this particular role. This section will include media, like a video job description, shaped by your EVP and employer brand and customized to a job's responsibilities.

Showcasing the job and the employer brand of the organization is critical during the realistic job and culture preview because it assesses the passion and purpose of the candidate. If the candidate identifies with and is enthusiastic about your organization, they will continue through the process. If a candidate does not feel as though their passion and purpose align, they will not continue in the process.

The One Experience assessment is an online holistic tool that assesses each part of the whole person model. Candidates answer questions in a variety of formats that allow them to demonstrate their different strengths. Each of the six factors is weighted differently based upon their ability to predict candidate success and the requirements and expectations in a role.



In the One Experience tool, the scores for each type of assessment will be combined and weighted, and candidates who meet a certain threshold will be moved along to the next step. Because there are a variety of ways to earn a passing score on these assessments, there will be a more cognitively diverse group of candidates that make it through this part of the process.

At this stage, the assessments include automated feedback reports so that candidates have a better understanding of why they do or do not move forward. This improves the candidate experience because candidates who do not get the position are not left in the dark. It gives them an opportunity to see why they may not have been the best fit.

The final step is the last set of online assessments, which we call the Assessment Center, to further narrow the candidate pool. In this example, it measures mindset, passion, capability and behavior. However, it can be adapted to focus on the categories that show the strongest predictive ability for a specific position. This stage also includes automated feedback reports.

Using this model, we see fewer candidates making it past the realistic job and culture preview to complete the One Experience tool, but 50% of those who do complete that step go on to pass and move to the Assessment Center. Those who make it to the Assessment Center have a pass rate of 75%, which is higher than the traditional process. In the old process, clients viewed a pass rate of 50% at this stage as high.

## ASSESSMENTS IN HIGH-VOLUME HIRING: HEALTHCARE CASE STUDY



**The Problem:** A PeopleScout healthcare client wanted to improve quality-of-hire and decrease turnover for their nearly 2,000 annual call center hires.

**The Solution:** PeopleScout partnered with the organization to deploy an online assessment that identified the key behaviors and personality traits that correlated who are aligned to the organization's mission and who have a growth mindset, and who could be successful in leadership roles.

**The Results:** After two-and-a-half years, the client has seen an increase in the quality of candidates and is expanding the use of the assessment to all external positions. They may also deploy the assessments for internal positions as well.



## WHOLE PERSON MODEL USE CASE: LEADERSHIP HIRING

In the case of leadership hiring, rather than using the One Experience tool, the whole person model uses a deep-dive interview in which the questions are designed to assess the candidate's passion, purpose and mindset, as well as their capability, behavior and results – the six factors included in the model. By assessing top candidates for these factors, organizations can better identify leaders who fit well with their organization and goals.

To understand how this works, let's look at how we applied the whole person model to help the Scottish Police Authority appoint the next Chief Constable for Police Scotland.

# USING THE WHOLE PERSON MODEL – SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY

**The Job:** Chief Constable

## Challenges:

- High public and political scrutiny
- History of leadership challenges
- History of extensive change
- Need for the Chief Constable to live and breathe the values, culture and purpose of Police Scotland
- Nearly impossible to find a candidate with experience in an equivalent role

**Needs:** The Chief Constable needs to be able to restore credibility and public trust, as well as continue to work toward the 2026 strategy.

PeopleScout has built a customized assessment process designed to identify candidates' alignment with the passion, purpose and mindset necessary to fit with the Scottish Police Authority culture and values because no candidate had the work experience to demonstrate the results needed.

## Step One: Online Psychometrics and a Deep-Dive Interview

### Techniques Used:

Storytelling Questions

Blueprint Questions

Push/Pull Dichotomies

Does the candidate have the passion, purpose and mindset to align with the needs of the position?

### What are Psychometrics?

The measurement of knowledge, abilities, attitudes and personality traits.

### Results:

An in-depth report was compiled and shared with the Scottish Police Authority identifying which candidates have the factors necessary for success.

## Step Two: All-Day Immersive Assessment Center

### Immersive Exercises Used:

A media briefing with professional journalists

A stakeholder engagement exercise with 12 senior-level leaders from a range of public sector organizations

Can the candidates succeed with the public pressure and leadership scrutiny of the role?

### A Benefit for Candidates:

A 90-minute verbal feedback call and detailed developmental reports are provided at the end of this stage.

### Results:

Another report for the Scottish Police Authority to take into its own final interview stage exploring strengths, development areas and specific questions to probe further.

### End Result:

The Scottish Police Authority had the information to make an objective, fair and well-informed appointment decision.

### How did this impact the onboarding process?

The new Chief Constable continued the developmental work they invested in during the assessments process and received a series of coaching sessions throughout the transition.

All candidates reported a positive experience that provided ample opportunity to demonstrate their capability and suitability for the role.





## APPLYING THE WHOLE PERSON MODEL TO YOUR HIRING

In the current economic climate, employers who hire and retain candidates with a growth mindset and who align with the passion and purpose of the organization will be at an advantage. By assessing for these factors and looking at the whole person, employers can better identify those candidates and set themselves up for success.

When employers face the challenge of hiring a large volume of employees, the model can be customized to efficiently identify the best candidates with a passion for the work and the organization. When an organization is looking to make a leadership hire but is struggling to find candidates with relevant experience, the model can be customized to identify those who can learn, lead and grow with the organization.



## ABOUT PEOPLESCOUT

PeopleScout, a TrueBlue company, is the world's largest RPO provider managing talent solutions that span the global economy, with end-to-end MSP and talent advisory capabilities supporting total workforce needs. PeopleScout boasts 98% client retention managing the most complex programs in the industry. The company's thousands of forward-looking talent professionals provide clients with the edge in the people business by consistently delivering now while anticipating what's next. Affinix™, PeopleScout's proprietary talent acquisition platform, empowers faster engagement with the best talent through an AI-driven, consumer-like candidate experience with one-point ATS and VMS integration and single sign-on. Leveraging the power of data gleaned from engaging millions of candidates and contingent associates every year, PeopleScout enhances talent intelligence for clients across more than 70 countries with headquarters in Chicago, Sydney and London and global delivery centers in Toronto, Montreal, Charlotte, Bristol, Krakow, Gurgaon and Bangalore.

For more information please visit [www.peoplescout.com](http://www.peoplescout.com).

