

MASTERING S.M.A.R.T. TALENT MANAGEMENT

# THE RIGHT

SOURCING · MARKETING · ASSESSING · RECRUITING

# HIRE

Patrick Ropella

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** 21

Chapter 6 | Using Tests to Determine  
the Best Candidates

## Using Tests to Determine the Best Candidates

In addition to looking at resumes, cover letters, and Skills Surveys and using the Candidate Scorecard, an employer also has many other tools available to determine which candidate really is the best choice. Third-party tests of various kinds can enable you to target specific talents and attitudes to differentiate them and more easily see the candidate you want for your company.

### Finding Your Best Candidates through Personality Profiling

Inner passions in a person's life tend to push them toward certain activities that will eventually lead them to select hobbies, and make educational and career choices. When people are able to align their work with their interests, they will succeed. This greater level of success (over others working in the same job position) will manifest itself such that they will become better skilled in less time, and they will be more motivated.

As your company considers a number of candidates for an open position, it is worth your time to understand the candidate's interests in order to determine the best individual for a specific position. Two psychologists, Timothy Butler and James Waldroop, conducted interviews of many professionals over a ten-year period and determined that there are eight "embedded life interests" through which most people will find expression. Their findings were published in a Harvard Business Review book called *Job Sculpting: The Art of Retaining Your Best People*.

Their book mentions that these "embedded life interests" are stronger than just hobbies such as skiing or opera, oceanography, or Chinese history. They write that, "Instead, deeply embedded life interests are long-held, emotionally driven passions, intricately entwined with personality and thus born of an indeterminate mix of nature and nurture. Deeply embedded life interests do not determine what people are good at – they drive what kinds

of activities make them happy. At work, that happiness often translates into commitment. It keeps people engaged, and it keeps them from quitting."



*Embedded Life Interests Can Tell You A Lot about an Individual*

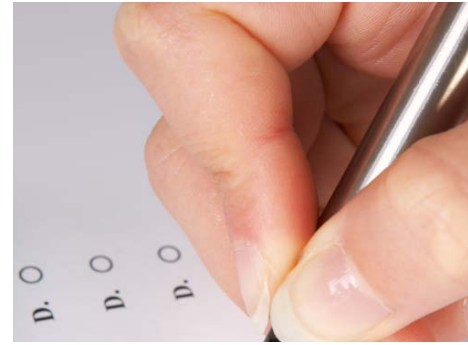
After completing their research, Butler and Waldroop worked to create an assessment tool that would better help companies align a candidate's interests with the company's responsibilities and opportunities. Their assessment tool is called the Business Career Interest Inventory (BCII). Along with this tool, Butler and Waldroop have identified eight life interests that form the backbone of their career self-assessment program called CareerLeader. The program is highly beneficial, because it helps both employers and employees.

The Harvard Business School Working Knowledge Website promotes BCII. It says: "The BCII model distinguishes itself from other career interest models in that it is activity based, rather than based on general interest patterns. It's founded on the notion that interests, not skills, should be the foundation

of people's careers. The BCII provides a way to measure those interest patterns as they apply to business work roles and work environments in the following core function areas:

- **Application of Technology** measures interests that are often associated with engineering, production, operations, and the general use of technology to accomplish business objectives.
- **Quantitative Analysis** measures interests that are realized through problem solving that relies on mathematical analysis.
- **Theory Development and Conceptual Thinking** measures interests involving broadly conceptual approaches to business problems.
- **Creative Production** measures interests that are realized through highly creative activities such as the development of new products or marketing concepts, the generation of new business ideas, etc.
- **Counseling and Mentoring** measures interests that involve developing relationships as a crucial part of business work, such as coaching, training, and mentoring.
- **Managing People and Relationships** measures interests that involve developing relationships as a crucial part of business work, such as coaching, training, and mentoring.
- **Enterprise Control** measures interests that are realized through having ultimate decision making authority for complete operations.
- **Influence Through Language and Ideas** measures interest in exercising influence through the skillful use of written and spoken language.

One more thought from the authors of Job Sculpting provides some insight into how a person's inner passions work to help mold the individual and their interests. They write: "Think of a deeply embedded life interest as a geothermal pool of superheated water. It will rise to the surface in one place as a hot spring and in another as a geyser. But beneath the surface – at the core of the individual – the pool is constantly bubbling. Deeply embedded life interests always seem to find expression, even if a person has to change jobs – or careers – for that to happen. Job sculpting is the art of matching people to jobs that allow their deeply embedded life interests to be expressed."



*Testing Can Reveal Life Interests, Which Can Enable Better Placement*

The BCII helps a corporation to understand an individual's interests and passions so that they can align them with the company's needs – providing the possibility of peak performance and the greatest interest! The test has another benefit, too, in that it will help the employer be able to know how to manage the employee better. The same tool also helps the manager to identify areas of focus and to be able to develop the employee's strengths while working.

This test is one of many possible personality testing choices. These kinds of tests range widely in price and will provide different amounts of information. While some tests may be for a specific position, it may be up to you to figure out which personality type is best for your position. Other tests may require a psychologist to personally administer and interpret for you.

## Where to Get Personality & Skills Assessment Tests

Here's a list of some popular personality and skills assessment tests and the providers and/or supporting service organizations that can help you select which tools are right for your particular open position.

- **Birkman** ([www.birkman.com](http://www.birkman.com)): According to the company's site, "As the premier non-clinical instrument for measuring human behavior and occupational strengths, the Birkman Method® provides a wide range of applications including: Pre-Employment, Workplace Diversity, CareerTransition & Management, Leadership Dev. & Executive Coaching."

- **DISC** ([www.discprofile.com](http://www.discprofile.com)): According to the company's site, "Research has shown that behavioral characteristics can be grouped together in four major divisions called personality styles. People with similar personality profile styles tend to exhibit specific behavioral characteristics common to that profile. The acronym DISC stands for: D (Drive), I (Influence), S (Steadiness), C (Compliance)."
- **Myers & Briggs** ([www.myersbriggs.org](http://www.myersbriggs.org)): According to the company's site, "(MBTI) assessment is a psychometric questionnaire designed to measure psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions."
- **Wonderlic** ([www.wonderlic.com](http://www.wonderlic.com)) According to the company's site, "Wonderlic provides practical solutions that help businesses recruit, select, develop, and retain top-performing employees to achieve their goals. Their pre-screening questionnaire along with cognitive ability and personality assessments will better your entire hiring process."

## Testing Applicants for Skills, Attitude, and Aptitude to Obtain Best Fit

Apart from the regular documents that an applicant may send to you, you also have the opportunity to do some testing and learn much more about them. Testing enables you to compare the skills, aptitudes and attitudes of candidates to determine which one really is the best fit. Before using any test, however, you want to make sure that it is legal, accurate, and reliable.

Testing is really only valuable to you if you first know exactly what needs to be tested. It does not make sense to test just for the sake of having a test, or to have one that does not measure the traits you think are most essential for the position – whether it is entry-level or executive. With so many testing tools available, once you know what you should test for, you can then choose the right tool to determine the right candidate for the job.

Tests are generally designed to determine the ability of a potential employee in just a couple of areas. This is why my repeated efforts emphasize that you must know what characteristics, skills, and abilities an individual must have in

order to perform at a specific job very well. In some cases, you may even want to combine a couple of tests in order to get all of the information you need about a candidate.



*Tests Are Available to Help You Assess the Candidates More Thoroughly*

The tests should be given to assess the best candidate for a particular position. If you are looking for a team leader, for instance, then you want to administer a team-leading or a leadership test. Other tests can help you determine honesty, attitudes toward being supervised, or tests that show skill level for things such as customer service, retail, mechanical ability, dexterity, safety habits, computer skills, and much more. Here are some tests that are typically used in industry today.

### ▪ Basic Skills Tests

A basic skills test is often used to test most employees without concern of their position. It would involve the testing of things that are usually learned in school and in everyday life, such as reading, math, measurement, ability to solve problems, decision-making, vocabulary, and the ability to verify accuracy.

### ▪ Aptitude Tests

An aptitude test can be used to measure an individual's ability by measuring general knowledge and natural ability. It can show their ability to learn, and will assess their current skill level. They are not necessarily used to determine someone's specific knowledge.

An example of this is the testing of a registration clerk, which will focus on their ability to be accurate when inputting

information. An electrical aptitude test will usually measure a person's practical knowledge in science, abstract thinking, mathematics, physics, and logic, and this can be used to determine their ability to learn electrical concepts.

#### ■ **Specific Skills Tests**

This type of test is generally specific to a certain task or job. There are many such tests and they are designed to test a job candidate's knowledge and skills that pertain to a specific task. These can be used to test software skills for such products as Word, Excel, QuickBooks, or they can test the skills that are involved with a field such as nursing, customer service, pharmacies, selling skills, and much more.



*More Testing Enables Better Hiring Choices*

One company that offers testing for specific skills can be found at [www.eskill.com](http://www.eskill.com). They are a subscription-based testing service that you will most likely find to be suitable to your candidates – and to your budget, too.

## Companies That Provide Tests for Organizations

Here's a list of some other popular skills, aptitude, and attitude tests and the providers and/or supporting service organizations that can help you select which tools are right for your particular open position.

- **CareerPath** ([www.careerpath.com](http://www.careerpath.com)): According to the company's website, "CareerPath is a career resource center created by CareerBuilder that will assist you in making the right career decisions. Assistance is provided with career tests, advice, and resources."

- **First Advantage** ([www.fadvassessments.com](http://www.fadvassessments.com)): According to the company's website, "First Advantage Assessment Solutions provides more than 800 Skill Check behavioral and skill assessments for measuring a wide variety of knowledge, skills, and aptitudes. First Advantage provides Nursing Assessment, to measure knowledge of medical coding, dosage calculations, with assessments for specific fields, including critical care, surgical, intensive care, and more. And Medical Office, to test knowledge of medical terminology, billing and filing codes, and other key skills."

#### ■ **HSI—Healthcare Selection Interview**

([www.testsource.com](http://www.testsource.com)): According to the company's website, "The Healthcare Selection Inventory evaluates Job Performance, Service Excellence, and Retention in advance of the selection decision, and has been validated for five Job Families: Nursing, Patient Care, Entry-Level Service, Technical/Professional, and Administrative/Clerical."

- **Total Testing** ([www.totaltesting.com](http://www.totaltesting.com)): According to the company's website, "With 'Identity' tests you can now get a more complete profile of any job candidate. The Identity suite of behavioral tests includes assessments for measuring cognitive abilities, risk profile, sales and service orientation, workplace skills, and workplace personality. Each test measures candidates along a variety of scales, including a built-in candidness scale."



# THE RIGHT HIRE

“The most important decisions that business people make are not *what* decisions, but *who* decisions.”

- Jim Collins, Author of *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... And Others Don't*



**In most organizations, making the right hire means the difference between success and failure.** This book helps you recruit great people and keep them loyal to the organization by helping you understand, assimilate and execute today's best processes, programs and practices for Sourcing and Marketing to potential candidates, Assessing and Recruiting top talent, Retaining & Training employees and Transforming your organization for the better.

## What you will learn from this book

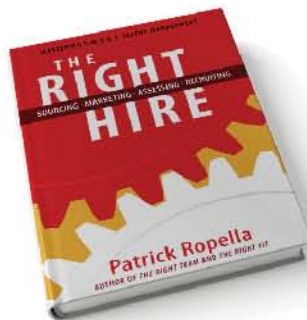
- How to successfully execute the all-important preparation stage of talent sourcing
- What to do to bring into alignment the whole interview-selection team
- Where to scout, network, and narrowcast in order to recruit the best candidates
- What techniques to use to screen and assess talent using proven tools
- How to use behavioral-based questions and interviewing techniques to uncover quality information that leads to great hiring decisions
- What can be done to dramatically improve the negotiations, offer, acceptance, start date and on-boarding processes
- And much, much more...

“People interviewing have choices, and *The Right Hire* presents the right things to do not only attract the top talent, but also to assess for culture fit, personal characteristics, experiences and credentials that will fit with your opportunity. With the growing need for companies to hire the very best talent available, *The Right Hire* is a must read.”

- Steve Watson,  
International Chairman, Stanton Chase

“Too often making the right hire is seen as a matter of luck. It should not be. Follow the steps in this book and it will improve your success rate dramatically.”

- Yves Lermusi, CEO, Checkster



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**Patrick B. Ropella** is Chairman & CEO of the Ropella Group, a 25-year-old international Executive Search, Leadership Transformation, and Corporate Consulting firm in Florida with clients among the world's most prestigious corporations. The Ropella Group focuses on working with mid-level management and executive-level leaders regarding their search, leadership, and/or consulting needs across most roles and functions. Patrick authored the book and web based training program, *The Right Hire – Mastering the Art of SMART Talent Management*. The SMART Talent Management System covers Sourcing, Marketing, Assessing, Recruiting, Retention, Training and Transforming top talent. Patrick's status as a thought expert, and writer on talent management & leadership has been promoted, featured and published in a wide variety of trade magazines and business publications, and leadership and executive search industry blogs and journals. Patrick regularly speaks at webinars, career fairs, conferences, trades shows and more. For more information about Growing Your Great Company through Ropella services, visit [www.ropella.com](http://www.ropella.com), or call Patrick Ropella at (850) 983 - 4777.