

# ASSESSMENT WITHOUT COMPROMISE

IDEAS FOR TALENT ASSESSMENTS  
THAT MAKE A REAL BUSINESS IMPACT

# INTRODUCTION

## In this booklet

- 3 Some metrics ARE more impactful than others
- 5 What gets measured gets managed
- 7 How outcomes-led thinking creates better business results

**The nature of work is changing and so are the demands we make of our people. It's not easy to define the nature of a role in a volatile and uncertain working environment and it's an even bigger question to ask whether the right person for the role will still be the right person in five years' time?**

Our session with the **RL100** is focused on creating a fair hiring process for all. By sharing the work with Herbert Smith Freehills we hope to demonstrate how to overcome some of the diversity issues challenges associated with traditional approaches to assessment.

Diversity in hiring is one of many important assessment outcomes we might include as a goal. In this paper we showcase some client stories and pose some questions that we hope will help shape your thinking about what you really want to get out of your assessment process. With the right tools and philosophy there's no need to compromise on results from your assessments.



# SOME METRICS ARE MORE IMPACTFUL THAN OTHERS

**Based on our work with clients, we've found that some assessment metrics do have a more positive impact on business outcomes than others. They are:**

## 1 DIVERSITY OF HIRING

Creating a process that is, fair, inclusive and free from bias has a high impact on business outcomes. We can ensure a fair process by evaluating the assessment model and checking for adverse impact. By analysing factors such as performance in role and readiness for promotion, and viewing it alongside demographic data, we can maximise positive business outcomes while minimising adverse impact.

Traditional assessment tends to perpetuate bias because the tools that are used are based on academic achievement (which is linked to opportunity and therefore socio-economic group), experience (which is tied to both socio-economic factors and career stage), and IQ (which focuses heavily on short term memory, verbal and numerical reasoning). The Sova approach has a completely different philosophy.

## 2 POTENTIAL FOR PERFORMANCE

There are other indicators of potential other than getting through to the next stage of the process or doing a job well! For example, line managers tend to rate team members highly if they keep their head down in the first year. However, people who have good conceptual thinking or question the way things are done may be more difficult for their line managers but tend to get promoted more readily.

What our practitioners find is that the trends that correlate with high performance as reported by line managers might not be the same as those needed to move up through the organisation. It's important to understand the true indicators of performance in a specific organisation and a specific role. Sova's approach to assessment is specific to both.

## 3 STAYING POWER

This is often considered as a too-hard-to-measure metric because of the time lag. What we need to know is: What is the profile of people who are a good role and organisational fit and stay with the business?

This metric requires patience and in-depth data analysis but pays huge dividends as it enables organisations to understand flight-risk and to spot high-potentials. The Sova approach to assessment means we re-visit the model and outcomes periodically to ensure it's helping to identify, and predict, right-fit hires.

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*Employees have got to be able to hit the ground running, have high potential for performance and be likely to stay with the organisation. These are the individuals that make bottom line impact”*

**Alan Bourne, CEO & Founder,  
Sova Assessment**



## ABOUT YOUR APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT

WHAT KEY METRICS DO YOU CURRENTLY USE TO MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT?

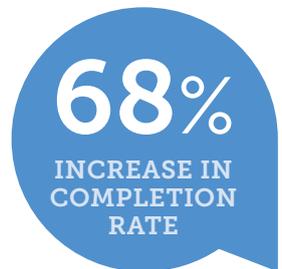
Time to hire	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity of hiring	<input type="radio"/>
Cost to hire	<input type="radio"/>
Offer ratios	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of hire	<input type="radio"/>
Level of potential	<input type="radio"/>
Retention rate	<input type="radio"/>
Progression / development	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate experience	<input type="radio"/>

### OUTCOMES-LED ASSESSMENT IN PRACTICE: SANTANDER

Santander was suffering from high attrition in contact centre and customer advisor roles. In an agile job market, candidates want to decide quickly and so a speedy hiring process is essential as good candidates who find themselves in a lengthy process frequently drop-out.

**What does success look like at Santander?** Our research led us to replace the two-stage process with a single whole-person assessment that was followed by an instant candidate report. The switch has created positive business outcomes for the business:

- Completion time reduced from 11 days to 1.5 days
- Completion rates increased to 68%
- Gender balance remained at 50/50
- Offer ratio up from 5:10 to 8:10 offers at assessment centre
- 89% accuracy in predicting high performers



# WHAT GETS MEASURED GETS MANAGED

**With traditional assessment processes the metrics that are easy to measure are typically those that measure the performance of recruitment.**

Is recruitment working well in terms of time to hire? Cost to hire? Even if it is, you could be simply measuring the success of your process rather than positive business outcomes.

For example, you could still get a short time to hire by making poor decisions and so it's important to look at the bigger organisational canvas. If your process is working well at the organisational level, you'll improve traditional recruitment metrics anyway as result. So, when we work with clients, we get them thinking about business outcomes and we work this back to assessment design.

## **OUTCOMES-LED ASSESSMENT IN PRACTICE: ZURICH INSURANCE GROUP**

The Swiss-based insurance giant's TA team wanted to make three key changes to their assessment process. They wanted to address a gender-balance issue that was being evidenced in their existing process, make cost savings and move to a mobile-friendly single assessment.

**What does success look like at Zurich?** Our research drove us towards values, behaviours and ability questions. The new process is a 'whole-person' mobile-first assessment that has generated the right outcomes:

- Balanced gender selection 50/50
- Better calibre of hires at assessment centre so the team can make more offers per centre and therefore run fewer assessment centres which has led to cost savings
- Reduced spend on assessment centres by 40%

**50/50**

**GENDER  
BALANCE**

**40%**

**REDUCED SPEND  
ON ASSESSMENT  
CENTRES**



## ABOUT YOUR APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT

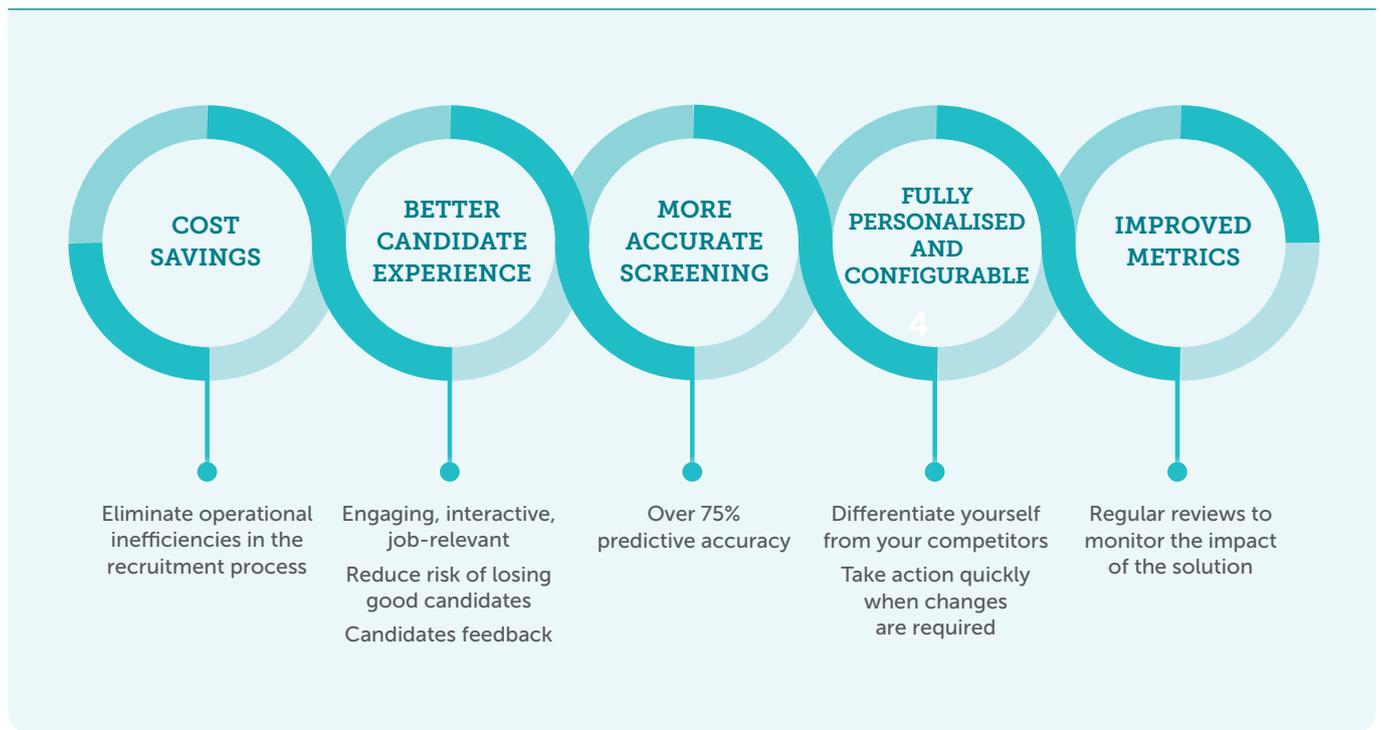
### WHAT OUTCOMES DO YOU WANT TO SEE FROM YOUR ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

- More diverse hiring
- A more agile workforce
- A future focused workforce
- Faster time to hire
- Better quality of hire
- More cultural alignment of hires
- A more objective approach to development
- A better candidate experience
- Better analytics

#### Which of these outcomes matter most to you?

- 1
- 2
- 3

# HOW OUTCOMES-LED THINKING CREATES BETTER BUSINESS RESULTS



## An outcomes-led approach to assessment offers direct and indirect benefits to the business.

At face value it's efficient and accurate, and it offers a more personalised and relevant candidate experience. This in turn will positively impact basic recruitment metrics.

As data is collected at every interaction it can be fed into training and development and talent strategy, offering longer term benefits:

- **Future focus:** Using the Sova approach data is current, you're not basing high performance on what the role looked like years ago. Data on progression helps us understand what behaviours and competencies matter now, and how is this likely to change in the future?
- **Agility:** Building agility into the fabric of organisations means businesses can thrive in times of change and transformation. The data from our assessments can be used to assess who hits the ground running? Who develops quickly? Who is most able to be successful even when the environment changes?



**ABOUT YOUR APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT**  
**DO YOU KNOW WHO YOUR KEY STAKEHOLDERS ARE?**

- Within talent acquisition? .....
- Within L&D? .....
- Within HR? .....
- On the senior leadership team? .....
- Amongst hiring and line managers? .....
- In the broader business? .....



**ABOUT YOUR APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT**  
**ARE YOU DEPENDENT ON ENTERPRISE-WIDE IT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PEOPLE-CENTRIC PROCESSES?**

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Recruitment              | <input type="radio"/> |
| Assessment               | <input type="radio"/> |
| Onboarding               | <input type="radio"/> |
| Learning and development | <input type="radio"/> |
| Performance management   | <input type="radio"/> |

## OUTCOMES-LED ASSESSMENT IN PRACTICE: RSA

RSA found that attrition was being driven by candidates who accepted an offer but weren't truly prepared for a contact centre role. The talent acquisition team therefore wanted to give applicants a realistic job preview. RSA also wanted to identify their high performers efficiently and effectively through assessment and, given the pace of hiring in contact centres, they needed a swift process.

**What does success look like at RSA?** Our research led us to create a process that included video content, SJT's and an automated report for each candidate. Videos were hosted by people already doing the job. As a result of the change:

- Candidates offers at assessment centre went from 1:3 to 1:2 for claims handlers
- Candidates offers at assessment centre went from 1:3 to 2:3 for customer service advisors
- Predicted who would become high performers with 80% accuracy
- Attrition levels dropped

**1.2**  
OFFER RATIO  
CLAIMS  
HANDLERS

**2.3**  
OFFER RATIO  
CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
ADVISORS

**80%**  
ACCURACY IN  
PREDICTIONS

  
ATTRITION  
LEVELS  
DROPPED



**ABOUT YOUR APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT**

**REFLECTING ON THE CONCEPT OF OUTCOMES-LED ASSESSMENT, ARE THERE CHANGES YOU COULD MAKE TO YOUR ORGANISATION'S APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT?**

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# SOVA ASSESSMENT AND THE RL100

**The goals of the RL100 are very much aligned to what we want to achieve at Sova Assessment – and this is our motivation for supporting the RL100 this year.**

In order to create positive change in the world of resourcing we need to be open to new tools, technologies and philosophies. This is exactly the reason we exist.

At Sova, we're proud to be disruptors in the assessment market. But, we're psychologists as well as technologists and we don't do anything that we can't prove works. We help businesses make better, safer longer-term people decisions that are fair, accurate, objective and transparent.

By enabling our clients to understand and prepare for success both now and tomorrow we make sure they remain competitive in a rapidly transforming world.

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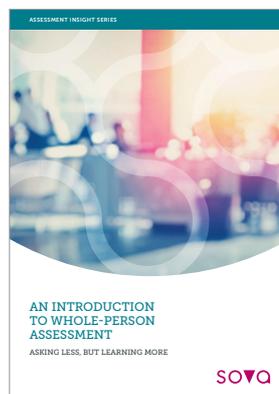
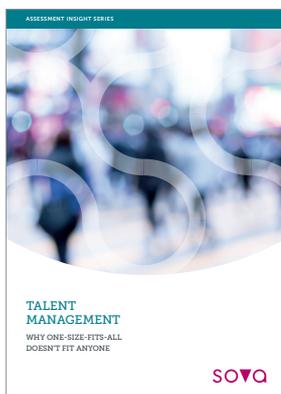
## TO FIND OUT MORE

about how your organisation can adopt outcomes-led thinking into your hiring and development processes, please get in touch.

**info@sovaassessment.com**  
**www.sovaassessment.com**

## READ MORE IN THE SERIES

For more from our Assessment Insight Series please visit [www.sovaassessment.com/insight/articles-and-papers/](http://www.sovaassessment.com/insight/articles-and-papers/)



## **ABOUT SOVA**

We believe that an organisation's ability to thrive depends on its people. That if you have the right talent strategy and make the right people decisions, your business will achieve its ambitions.

Our talent assessments provide a future-focused view of people and potential, for recruitment and development, at every career stage, at every level. We've drawn on the best of science and the best of technology to offer a seamless assessment solution that is personalised, fair, and affordable.

We help to put people in the right roles, in organisations that share the same values and aspirations, and where they're supported by leaders who will enable them to flourish.

## **CONTACT US**

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