

Harvard Business Review Article on the Craft Personality Test

by Dr. Larry Craft

In 2001, I developed and marketing the *Craft Personality Questionnaire (CPQ)* which was sold in 2007. My most recent generation of pre-employment tests now includes the *CraftMetrics Personality Inventory (CMPI)* and the *CraftMetrics Learning Aptitude Survey (CLAS)* which have utilized the most recent assessment technologies to significant increase predictive validity and reliability. The article below compares this 2nd generation "*CraftTest*," the *CPQ*, to the *DISC*, one of the most widely used personality tests.

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The Importance of Aptitude Testing in Sales– DISC Versus CPQ

Hiring salespeople has evolved from throwing something up against a wall to see if it sticks to careful consideration of background, past performance, culture fit, social media presence, and etcetera.

Another tool used increasingly in selecting salespeople is psychometric testing, with aptitude testing being the most prevalent form.

Since salespeople provide the lifeblood of an organization (revenue), managers and executives are increasingly aware that to invest a bit more upfront is to avoid making the "\$150,000 mistake," which is the estimated minimum a bad outside sales hunter hire costs an organization.

With 50 percent of sales success attributed to basic aptitude, deeper insight into candidates is wanted, as is a structured recruiting process. While going with the gut shouldn't be completely discounted —the impression a candidate makes in an interview is important — more hiring managers realize they need a bit more science in the selection process, which is what aptitude testing provides. In fact, over 80 percent of Fortune 500 companies now use some form of testing in their hiring process.

There are about 5,000(!) tests on the market, but the number one seller to date across all industries has been one of the many variants of the DISC Aptitude Assessment.

But does being the number one selling aptitude test make it the right choice to hire salespeople?

To answer this, let's explore how the DISC Assessment works, and compare it to an alternative test: the Craft Personality Questionnaire.

DISC Aptitude Assessment

The theory behind this test dates back to 1928 with the pioneering work of Dr. William Marston, who put forth a model of human behavior that broke it down into 4 main personality types:

- Dominance
- Inducement (also, Inspiring)
- Submission (also, Supportive)
- Compliance (also, Cautious)

This was expanded upon and developed into a formal test in the 1970s, and Test results for each individual are plotted against known patterns which certain personality types possess, which reveal things such as the likely communication style, temperament, and job strengths for each individual.

So What's The Problem With DISC?

The DISC Assessment is an excellent test for hiring across a broad category of job functions. It does very well as a general tool, but is problematic when it comes to one very important job category: sales.

It has been proven that performance in the sales industry depends on possessing specific traits. Things cannot just be trained in, there needs to be a natural “knack” present in the personality in order to successfully educate someone as a sales professional in the first place.

Not only that, but each particular sales role, from outside sales hunter to inside customer service representative, has further dominant sub-traits. Testing for these sub-traits and getting very specific is what leads to more accurate results in testing, and therefore better results in hiring.

Unfortunately, DISC just doesn't get specific enough when it comes to sales jobs.

A few other issues:

- Vendors sell different “flavors” of the DISC Assessment, including highly customized ones which have not been thoroughly vetted as to accuracy and non-discriminatory language.
- The test results are lengthy and full of jargon, making it difficult for a typical sales manager or sales executive to interpret and make an informed hiring decision.
- DISC has no large-scale real world studies done which demonstrate a correlation between test results and actual, measurable job performance in the sales profession.

Craft Personality Questionnaire (CPQ)

The CPQ, unlike the DISC Assessment, is specifically designed to test aptitude for the sales profession. Not only that, but it checks suitability for up to 30 different roles in the sales — from manager to outside sales hunter to inside sales rep.

Similar to the DISC Assessment, the CPQ plots the test results against several personality traits. The eight used by the CPQ are:

- Goal Orientation
- Need for Control
- Social Confidence
- Social Drive
- Detail Orientation
- Good Impression
- Need to Nurture
- Skepticism

The CPQ goes beyond just personality type and addresses specific areas of strengths and blind spots critical for hiring and training decisions. This allow “stretching” and adapting by the job applicant to improve performance in certain areas, making it a vital tool for coaches working with both new hires and existing personnel.

Having been administered over one million times over the past 30 years, there exists a wide body of data correlating fitness as indicated by the test with actual job performance.

Other advantages of the CPQ:

- Consistent, predictable results. There is only one CPQ. It is standardized. You can compare candidates confidently because everyone takes the same test.
- Reports are thorough, but easily understood by the layperson. This makes it much likelier to be used by sales managers and executives to make better hiring decisions.
- High correlation to performance thanks to real world studies done to test its validity.
- Legally defensible as a selection tool under the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978) (29 CFR Part 1607 for EEOC, as amended by 46 FR 63268), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1978. These federal laws prohibit discrimination in any term or condition of employment (including employment tests) on the basis of race, color,



national origin, religion, age and gender.

Remember, the CPQ was my 2nd generation assessment. I now have a third generation model, the *CraftMetrics* Personality Inventory (CMPI). The CMPI goes beyond even what the CPQ can do and is supported by many other new features, based on the latest research and technical developments in the field.