

Maybe It's Not the Job, But the Customers

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A Brief History of Context in Validation

- Local validation studies required
 - Context extremely important to validity coefficients
- Meta-Analysis demonstrated that “contextual” differences were really measurement error

And Then There's Technology

- Computer technology has changed how jobs are done and how we assess for them
 - Straight typing moved to software knowledge
- Technology has not only affected the tools employees use, but also the tools that customers use
 - Access to knowledge bases on line
 - Much more DIY culture

Technology and Customer Service

- Customers can go to chat rooms, forums and databases to find answers
- Companies have enabled more access to help
 - Phone, chat, e-mail, and remote access
 - Cost efficient for them
 - Offers more perceived control to user

Does Technology Impact Valid Hiring Practices?

- Clients want to know if they have the right people in the right positions
 - Are some people better at chat than phone interactions?
 - If so, can these differences be predicted by assessment?

Background of Project

- Multiple years of validating tests for phone representatives
- Company moving towards chat/e-mail for agents
- Criteria based on customer surveys and monitoring of calls
- Some agents are exclusive in a modality while others handle all forms of customer input

Job Analysis Led to the Following Predictors

- Reasoning
 - Numeric
 - Abstract
 - Verbal
- Basic Math
- Reading Comprehension
- Agreeableness
- Self-Confidence
- Conscientiousness
- Openness
- Work Drive
- Customer Service Orientation
- Empathy
- Biodata

Results--Aptitude

Test/Measure	Performance on Phone Contacts (n of agents=646)	Performance on Chat Contacts (n of agents =168)
Numeric Reasoning	0.16***	0.15*
Abstract Reasoning	0.15***	0.24***
Verbal Reasoning	0.12***	0.21**
Basic Math	0.05	0.19**
Reading Comprehension	0.22***	0.22**

Stronger or equal coefficients for Chat contacts

Results--Personality

Test/Measure	Performance on Phone Contacts (n = 646)	Performance on Chat Contacts (n of agents =168)
Agree	0.07*	-0.13*
Self-Confidence	0.08*	-0.07
Conscientiousness	0.07*	-0.12
Openness	0.05	0.08
Work Drive	0.11**	-0.06
Customer Service	0.07*	-0.03
Empathy	0.06	-0.02
Biodata	0.21***	0.28***

Personality not as strong of a predictor as aptitude, but stronger for Phone contacts than Chat contacts.

Implications For Client

- Separate scoring when agents are being hired for a specific modality
- Must pass for both to handle both types of customer input

Implications for Assessment

- Results indicate that there are differences in what customers are looking for when contacting the company
 - A person who comes in looking for help on chat is much more interested in getting the problem solved than the interaction with the agent
 - Perhaps demographic, or people who choose to use the phone tend to want more interaction

Implications for Job Analysis

- If the job requires customer contact, the method(s) of contact is critical to the how well the job is performed
- Even for non-customer contact jobs, this aspect of context could affect performance
 - Remote workers
 - Telecommuters

Q & A