

DIVERSITY, HABITS & EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this case study is to illustrate that people from different backgrounds, cultures, religions, ethnicities, age and gender as well as different emotional intelligence abilities can still share the same habits that make them successful in a specific working environment performing a specific job.

CHALLENGE

Assessment solutions are routinely used for recruiting and internal employee management. It is critical that these solutions treat everyone equally when being used to support hiring, deployment and organizational decisions. If they inherently produce biased results, the impact to the individual and the organization can be extremely harmful.

A prominent Mining Company had decided to roll out six new positions in their Information Technology Department, specializing in the configuration and maintenance of information technology programs used by the company. They needed to ensure that the solution used to support the appointments of these positions was fair and unbiased.

WHY SHADOWMATCH?

Shadowmatch research specifically shows that habits and behaviors are independent of factors such as age, race, etc. Therefore, it can be used effectively as a selection tool in a multi-cultural environment.

IMPLEMENTATION

As part of the selection criteria Shadowmatch was used as a screening tool in the process, specifically to establish whether candidates had the same habits of those people that were successful currently within that job environment.

It was required that the top performers in the Information Technology Department, in the specific role, should complete the Shadowmatch worksheet in order to establish the benchmark for the candidates. Two employees were identified as top performers; a white male, late 50s and a black female, mid 20s. After completion of the worksheet Shadowmatch showed a 92% match of habits between these two very diverse individuals (age, cultural background, ethnicity, language and gender) in the working environment.

Five critical habits were also identified. These were their strongest habits and of great necessity in the effectiveness of their work. Both the individuals indicated the following strong habits ...

- Responsiveness (the habit of acting immediately)

- Discipline (the habit of working in an environment where adherence to structure, rules and regulations and time frames are imperative)
- Resilience (applying oneself relentlessly to solve problems and overcome challenges)
- Self-confidence (the habit of acting with a high level of trust in your abilities, qualities and judgment, knowing who you are and what you can and can't do)
- Simplification (the habit of breaking complex scenarios down to linear challenges that can easily be solved)

What was interesting was the fact that even though these two individuals shared the same habits, their emotional intelligence composite scales were markedly different from one another. Both individuals completed the Bar-On EQi (an accepted measure of emotional intelligence) previously for developmental purposes. The most significant difference was evident in the interpersonal realm (what is known as people skills). It indicates that when a person functions effectively in this area, this individual tends to be responsible and dependable. They understand, interact with and relate well to others in different situations. These individuals inspire trust and function adequately as part of a team (Stein & Book, 2006).

The white male indicated effective functioning in the realm of interpersonal skills, whereas the black female indicated this area as an area of enrichment. Referring back to the habits of Shadowmatch, habits regarding people skills are also measured. These areas are 'people positive', 'altruism' and 'team inclination'. It is important to include the habit of 'conflict handling' because a combination of emotional intelligence scales (including some of the subscales in the interpersonal realm) makes up effective conflict handling abilities.

Both individuals assessed by Shadowmatch demonstrated the habit of working with people in a positive way, building positive relationships, influencing others in a positive way, willingness to assist others without expecting something back as well as working with others as part of a team. The habit of conflict handling, taking on a problem or situation and dealing with it also registered as a strong behavior about come.

The results from the Bar-On EQi demonstrated that the black female lacked effective coping skills regarding the composite scale of empathy. Her social responsibility scale also indicated limited or restricted ability towards being a cooperative, contributing and constructive member of a team or social group (Stein & Book, 2006). Regarding her ability towards interpersonal relationships, she seems to be just barely effective, indicating that there was still growth potential in this particular area. Handling conflict in an effective and constructive manner ties closely in with these three composite scales.

The manager of the two individuals confirmed that both their behavior at work and how they handled tasks matched the Shadowmatch results. Both individuals were extremely effective at their work, always reaching targets and outperforming expectations. However, the white male was seen as a more approachable individual, whereas the black female was seen as more of a "hard" individual, sometimes battling to cooperate effectively with the team.

It was evident that even though both these diverse individuals shared the same habits (dealing or assisting people, being part of a team and handling conflict effectively) emotionally they were different.

VALUE

The ability to make unbiased decisions related to human capital is imperative in today's society. The value in such a system as Shadowmatch protects against negative impact to employees and candidates, and from legal exposure.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that people from diverse backgrounds regarding demographics, personality and skills can still share the same habits that can make them effective in a specific working environment. However, these habits are restricted to only output, the effectiveness of the specific output seems to be tied into the degree of emotional intelligence.

Shadowmatch is an excellent solution for measuring the habits and behaviors needed in a specific work environment.

References

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