

Choosing and Using Pre-employment Testing

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There are many types of employee-testing products and services available. Most employers start with integrity and aptitude tests at entry-level positions, and for higher-level positions, add skills tests, sales skills tests, and personality tests to determine job fit. Once the hiring decision is made, employers can then use behavioral assessments as a management tool. Prices for these products range from as little as \$10.00 for an aptitude test to over \$100.00 for a personality profile for each candidate.

There is usually a setup cost of \$100 to \$200 for the computer software. These tests are administered and scored on site by the employer. There are also testing services that will administer, score, interpret, and fax the reports to the employer within a 24 to 48 hour period. These services generally start at \$125 per candidate. The most elaborate form of testing includes a battery of tests, interviews with a psychologist, and simulations of real-life situations in the work place. The cost of these services is determined by the psychologist and start at \$500. Reports are generally available within 30 days.

Small-business owners need to consider their budget and their cost of turnover when selecting an assessment product. Other factors to consider are whether the assessment meets all current Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and American Disability Act regulations; whether it has been recently validated in the business community; if the report is timely, readable, and easy to understand; and if it is easy to administer and works well within their current hiring system. Most importantly, the assessment should have a "lie scale," an indicator of whether the candidate has been honest and consistent with his answers. Some products enable the employer to develop custom profiles of job positions based on successful employees in that position. These custom profiles enable the employer to quickly determine job fit or match to the job description.

Employee testing enables business owners to be selective in finding and hiring the right person for each position. It enables them to put new hires and current employees in proper positions and pinpoint potential problem areas before they arise. It enables them to conduct specific training based on each employee's strengths and weaknesses and provide team-building tools for maximum performance.