



The Ultimate Guide To Talent Assessments

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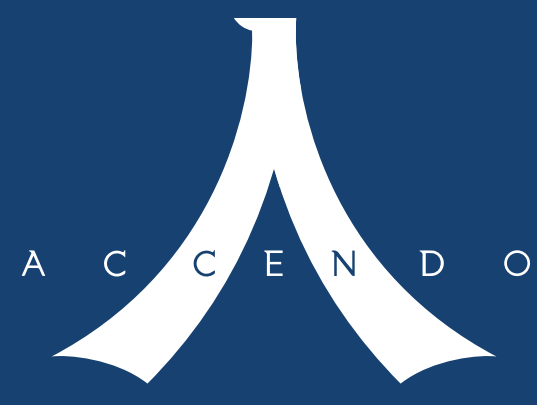


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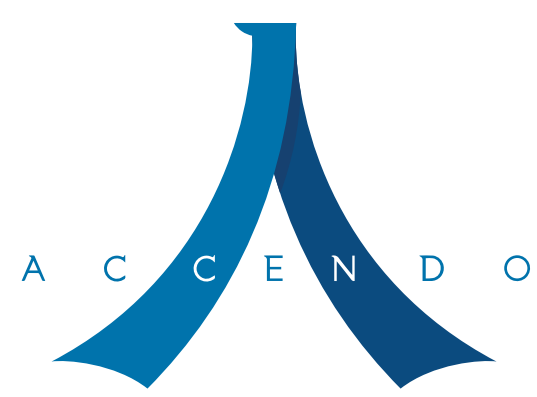
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A photograph of a laptop with a glowing screen, set against a dark background. The screen displays a colorful, abstract graphic with blue and red tones. The laptop is framed by a bright green border.

Introduction

01



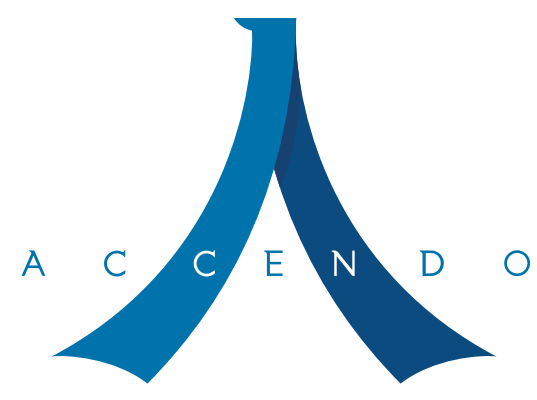
What Are Talent Assessments?

Human Resources (HR) has always played a vital role in making key talent decisions and driving talent processes in organisations. Traditionally, the entire talent lifecycle of an employee's career is essentially a roadmap prepared by HR. Although not always the end decision-makers, one of HR's key roles is implementing strategies and processes to enable decision-makers to make the right decisions.

This has led to the birth of many well-known HR tools often deployed to increase the predictive validity of decision-making when selecting talent, either for pre-hire or post-hire purposes. One of the most trusted tools is assessments. A talent assessment framework is a structured approach that enables employers to identify candidates with the skills and talents that match the job description and adapt themselves to the needs of the business.

Talent assessments help employers prioritise which candidates to interview and how. The assessment tests can be administered online on a cloud-based platform secured with advanced technology. They are usually designed and conducted by field experts or trained HR professionals and can be deployed for any job role at any job level.



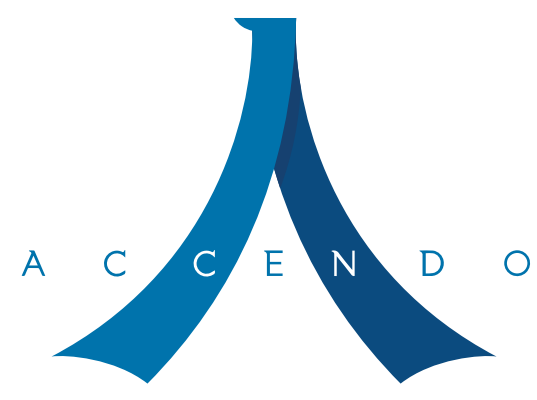


Organisations conducting these online talent assessment tests can fully automate the entire recruitment process, leading up to interviews, using a talent assessment platform. Employers can also use a holistic suite of talent assessment tools, ranging from coding and technical assessments to personality, behavioural, and cognitive assessments.

In summary, talent assessments provide a scientifically rigorous approach for assessing a candidate's behaviour and fit to a role.

This elaborate guide will take you along the path of assessment centres and their key elements, applications, best practices, and processes. You will also learn how it retains its proven validity in predicting candidate performance and potential whilst leveraging technological advances.





Benefits

Organisations striving to deliver the best products, services, or sales require an extraordinary workforce. For this to happen, identifying the right candidates for specific roles is instrumental in the following three areas:

Business Performance

Planning a talent strategy is crucial for the sustainability of the business. Talent assessments can help employers identify, evaluate, and engage candidates in the direction of the company's business goals.

Candidate Experience

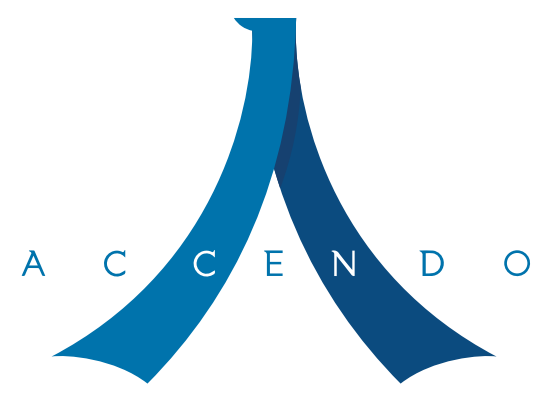
A great candidate experience includes reducing friction and repetition in the application process, automating time-consuming processes, and having mechanisms in place to make you unique and stand out against the competition.

Process Efficiency

An efficient and effective talent assessment process relies on using the right tools to highlight the key competencies or deficiencies of a candidate. Study the insights and metrics to focus on what matters to align your talent strategy and seamlessly present your results.

Cost Savings

The cost of bad hires can add up rather quickly, and this is what assessments aim to eliminate. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the cost of a bad hire can go up to 30% of an employee's wages for the first year. If an organisation took on an employee with annual pay of \$80,000, the expense to the employer would be as high as \$24,000. At the same time, it is not just the money that employers lose. Assessments can help reduce the chances of a bad hire.



Corporate Practice & Adoption

Conducting talent assessments for a specific job role is an age-old practice but the science of talent assessments is relatively new. Like most other management practices, it all first began in military applications where the first intelligence (IQ) test was developed by Robert Yerkes for army recruits during World War I.

Members of the army chain of command were unimpressed by the test results but the creators called it a huge success. It became popular and resulted in an assessment boom. The progress for talent assessments was made in terms of reliability and validity, yet the field was a mystery.

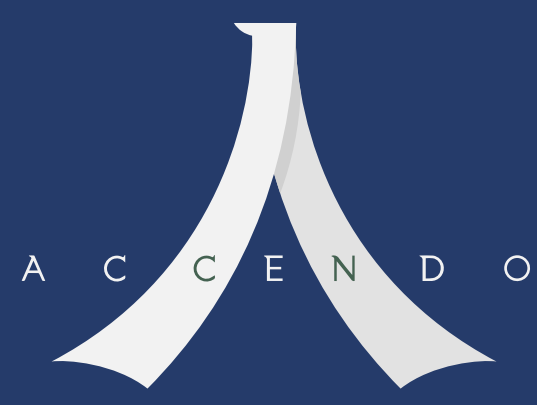




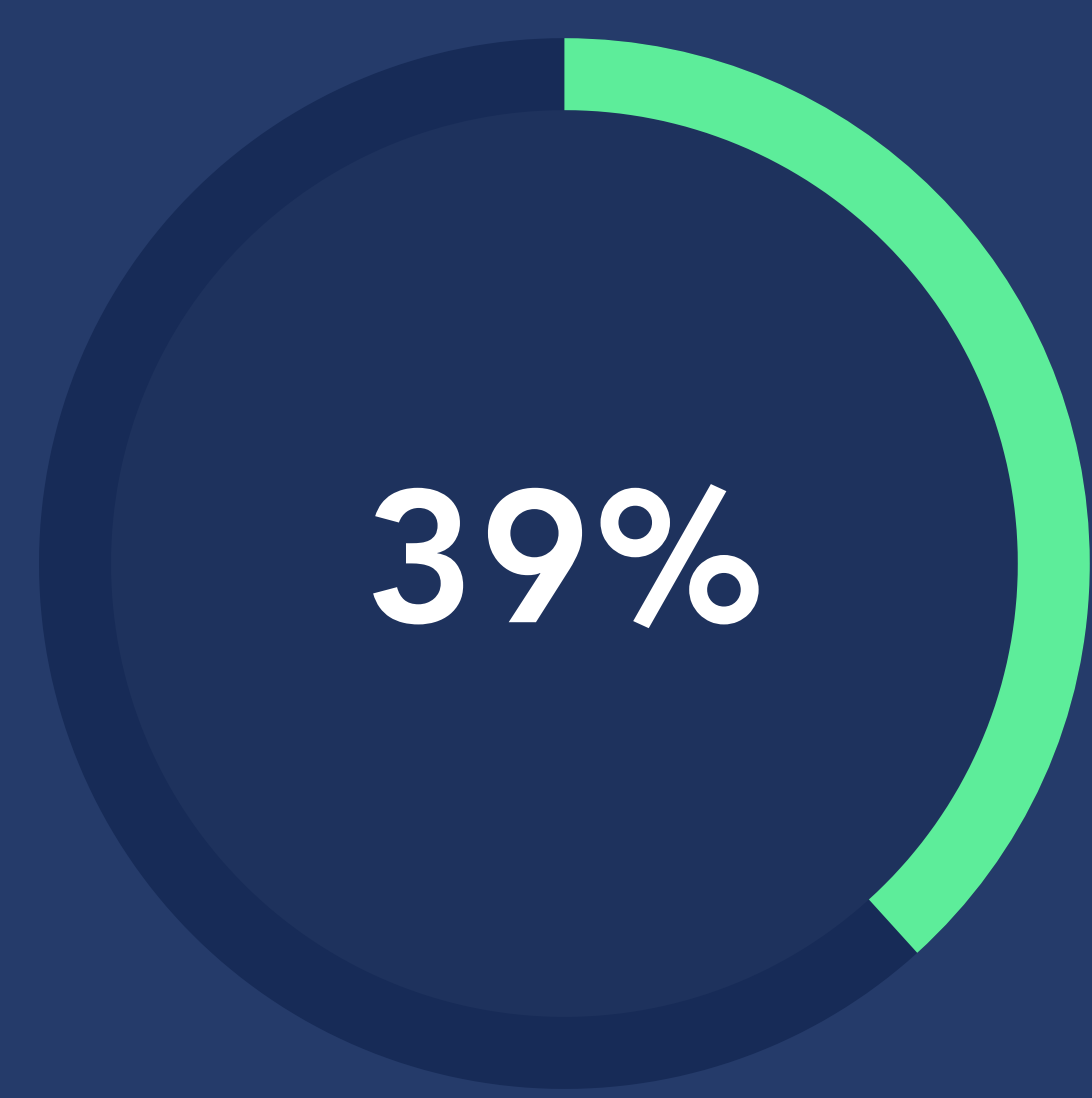
In today's digitally-connected world, one cannot deny the unprecedented amount of data that is readily available at our fingertips. The quantum and quality of talent data holds the potential to redefine the way organisations approach, attract, evaluate, and engage talent. Which explains how and why talent assessments can provide invaluable insights into defining, strategising, and organising the hiring, training and development activities.

But the talent assessments of today have undergone a sea of change with the introduction of new-age technologies including machine learning, artificial intelligence, gamification, and big data analytics. Many businesses are using newer and more innovative technologies to pave the way for a more comprehensive solution that offers many of these benefits under one platform.

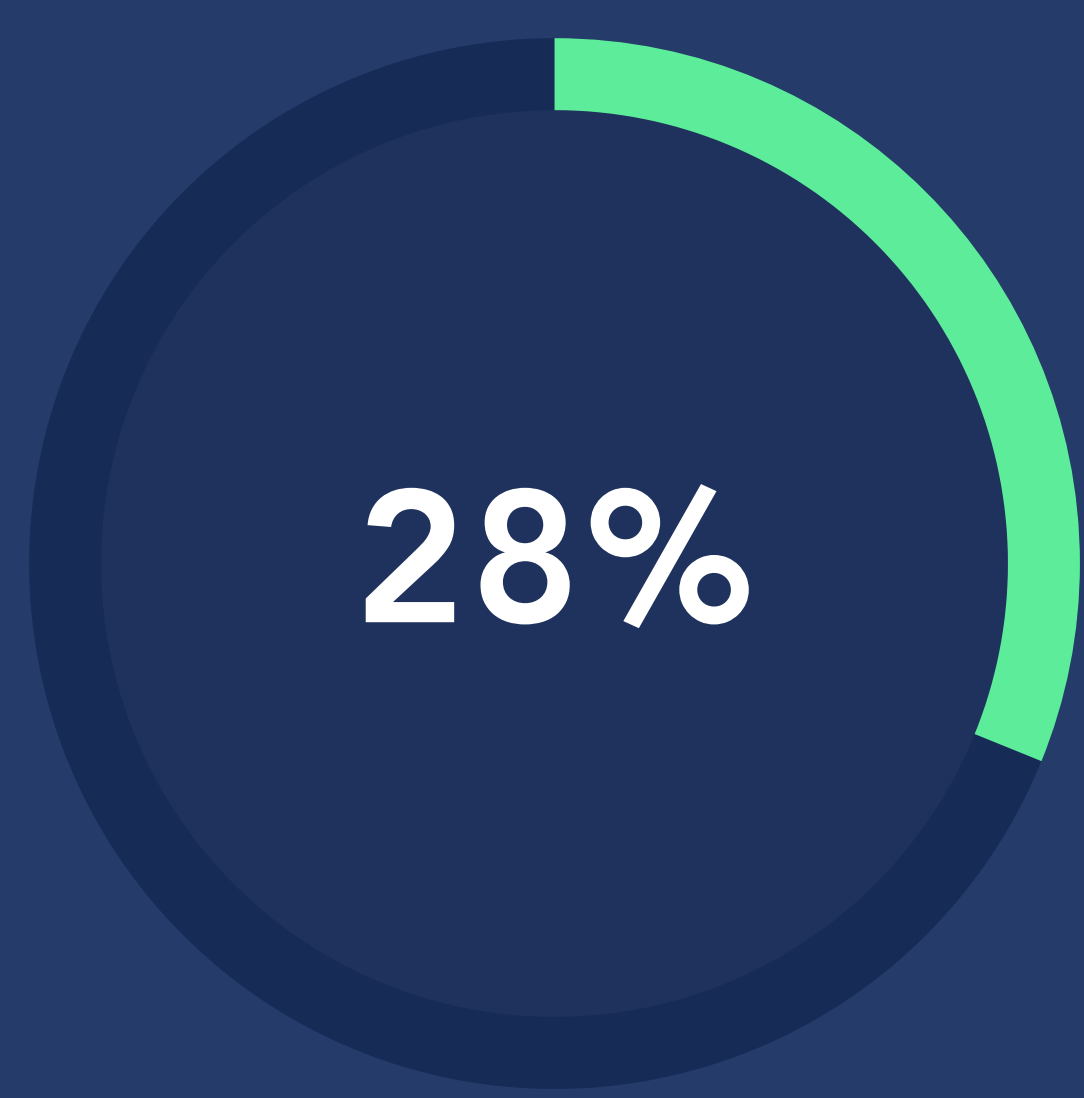
The complete process of a talent assessment can help to evaluate candidates' skills, knowledge, work style, and other characteristics to identify their capabilities and suitability for the role and culture fit. It is even more imperative today for companies to continually evolve their businesses with the changing market demands, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic still in our midst.



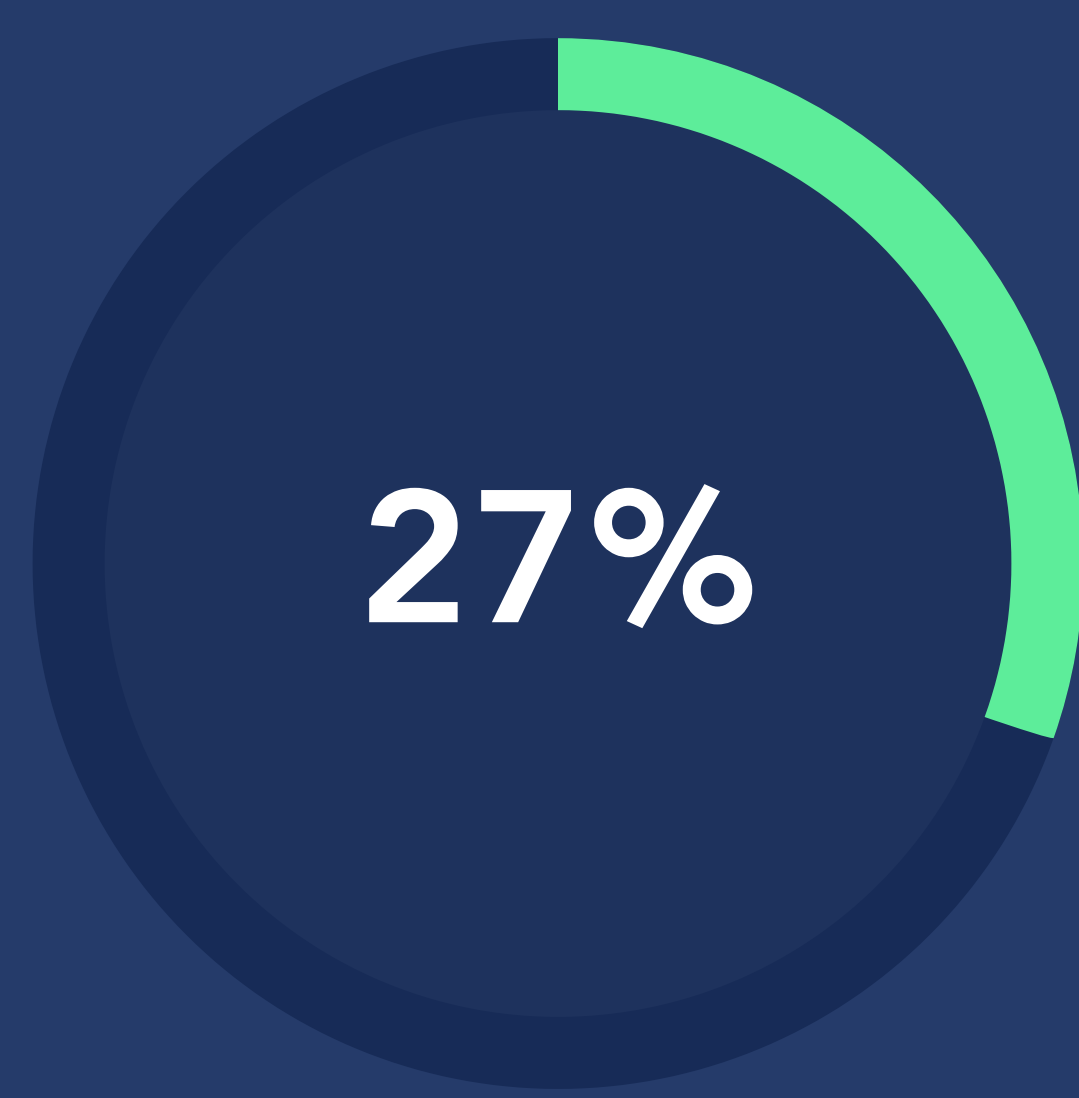
5 Challenges Driving HR Technology Decisions:



Recruiting and/or hiring (39%)



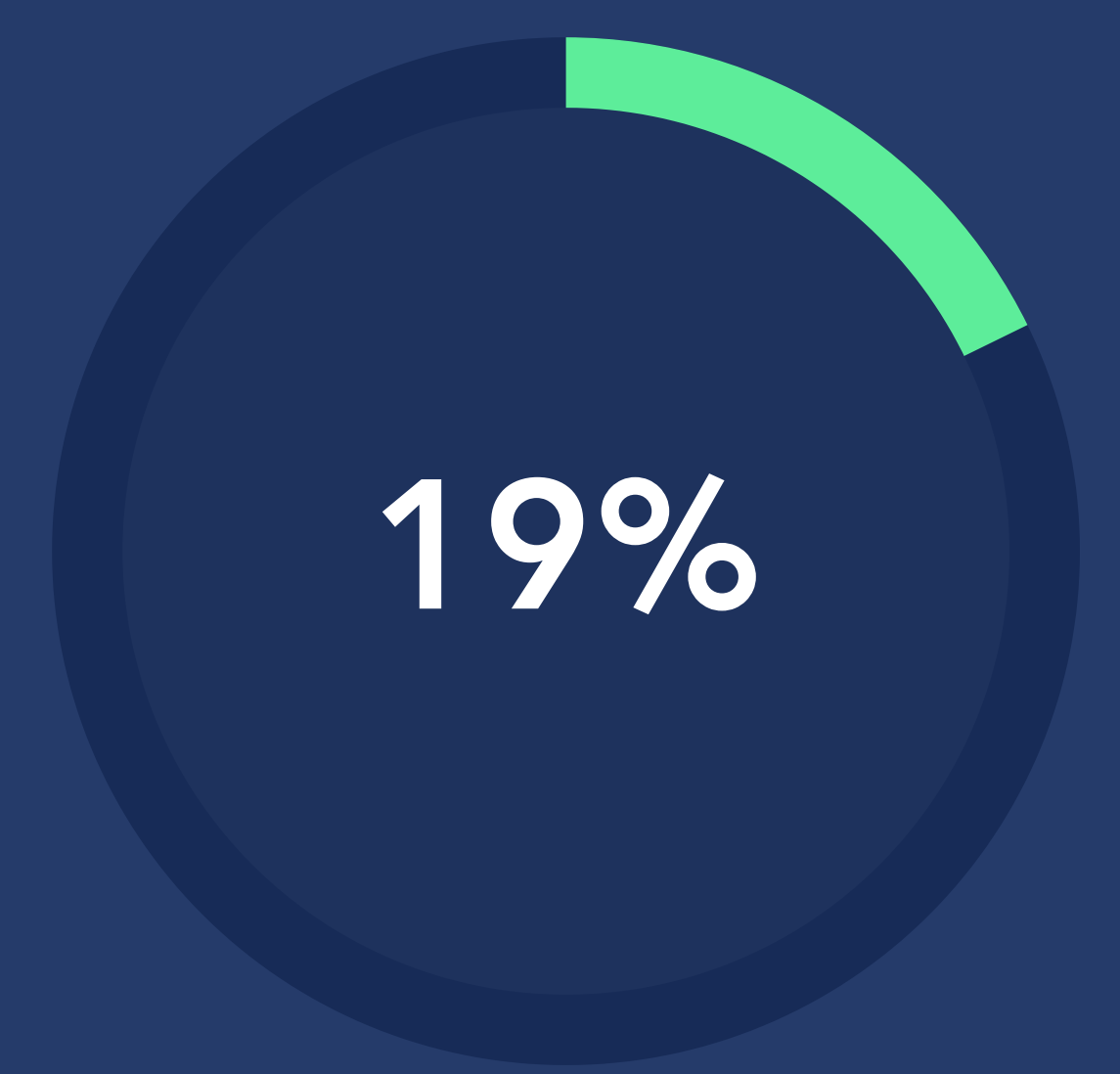
Learning and development (employee upskilling) (28%)



Retention of key talent (27%)



Diversity, equity, and inclusion (19%)



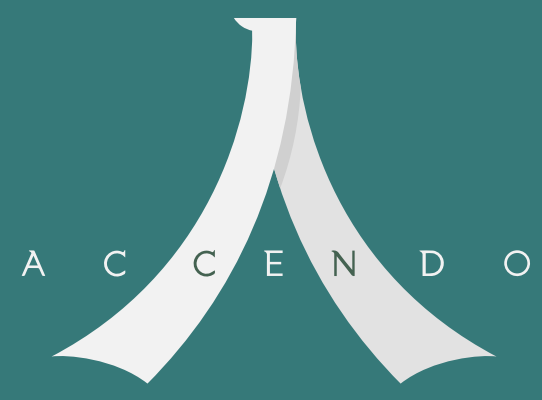
Manager and employee self-service capabilities (19%)

Source: PwC,



Types Of Assessment Tools

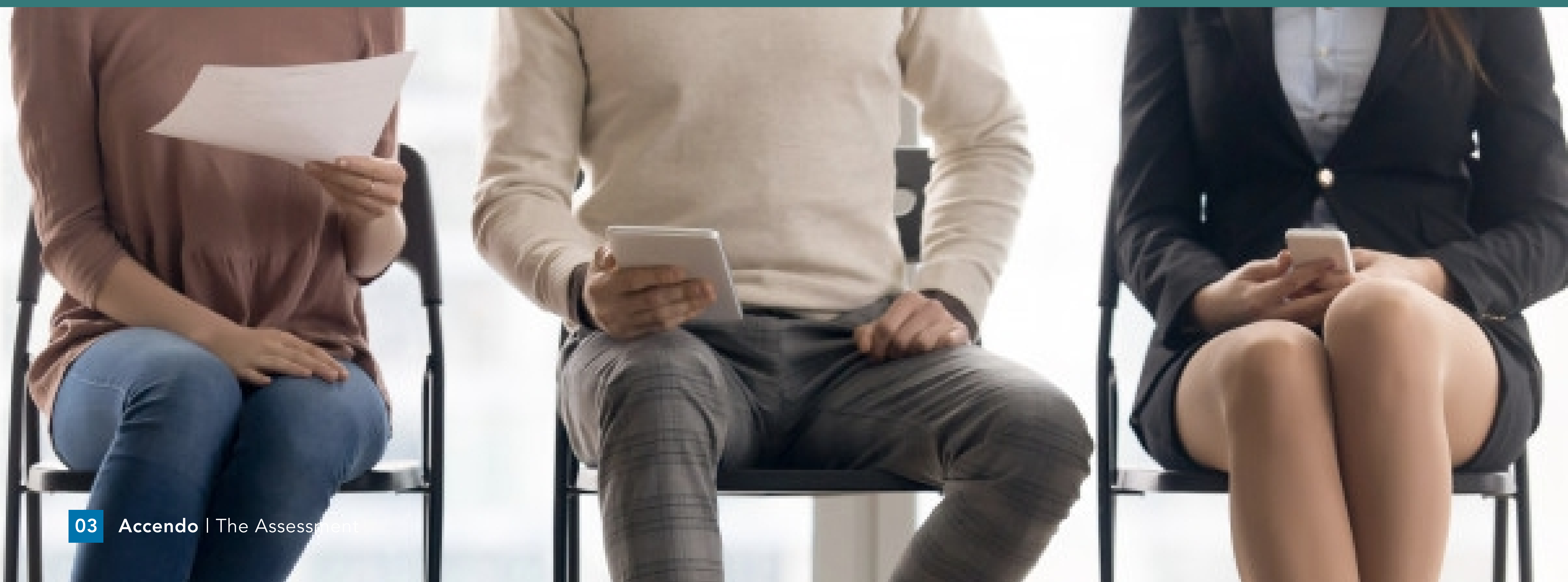
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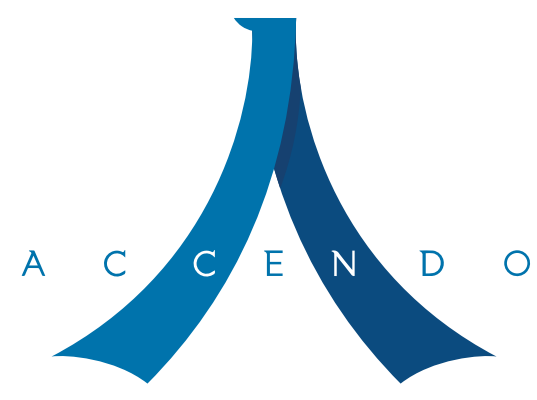


Core Elements of Talent Assessments

Talent is an individual's natural ability or skill that comes from five core elements, which are then assessed by the organisation's HR to fit a specific job role. At Accendo, our holistic approach to using talent assessments comes from capturing insights from the following angles:

- Behavioural preferences
- Behaviour in action
- Behaviour in context





Behavioural Preferences

This approach is designed to capture individual preferences of which there are no wrong or right answers. At the same time, it provides a baseline understanding of an individual's behaviours, interests, and motives. A suggested tool for this is a psychometric assessment.

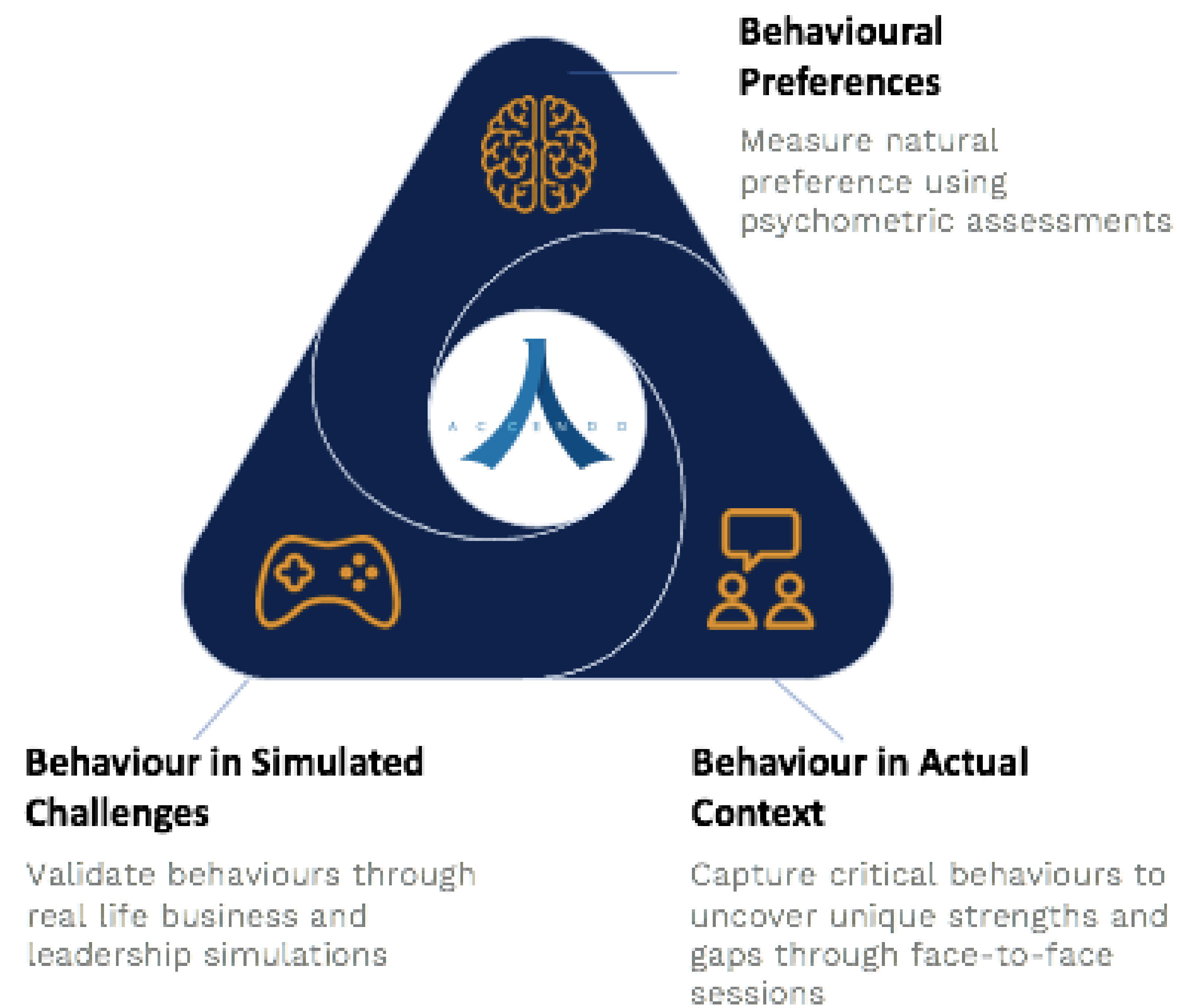
Behaviour in Action

This approach validates self-rated preferences through simulated business challenges or ability tests while uncovering the differences of actions versus behavioural preferences. Recommended tools include simulations and cognitive assessments.

Behaviour in Context

This approach gathers evidence or feedback that is contextualised to the organisation. The data points here are used as a basis to further validate the individual's strengths and gaps. Tools suggested for this are the 360-degree feedback method and a face-to-face interview.



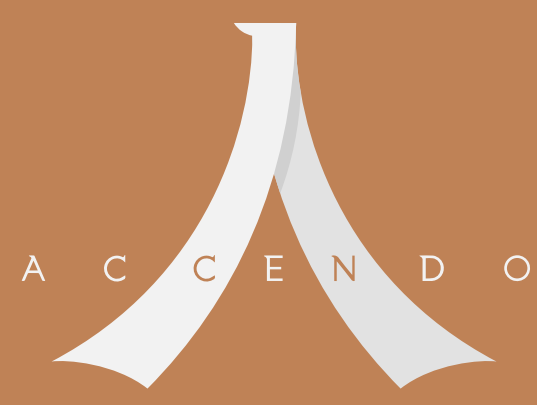


Evaluating Talent based on their Levels of Proficiency

A candidate's education, professional experience, and achievements are independent variables of their knowledge and accomplishments. One way to assess a person's proficiency levels and ability is by conducting a skills assessment test. Proficiency is the level of expertise and competence for each skill required for a role. There are four typical proficiency levels which are:

- **Basic** – the ability to perform job duties with guidance to improve and excel.
- **Working** – the ability to complete diverse tasks with minimal supervision in addressing unusual situations.
- **Extensive** – the ability to perform without assistance, improve processes, and focus on broader issues.
- **Expert** – the ability to guide and troubleshoot, demonstrate deep knowledge and expertise, and lead projects and people.

Each proficiency level is attached to a particular skill. Identifying these levels for each job profile while conducting your talent assessments enables you to make sound and smart hiring decisions.



Types of Talent Assessments

Each type of assessment has its own useful applications depending on your objective. The right tools enable you to accurately evaluate your candidates for a specific position by assessing their hard and soft skills, potential, and knowledge.



01

Assessment Type

Psychometric Assessments

This assessment type possesses high validity and reliability, has great use cases in both talent acquisition and management to help HR make better, faster, and accurate talent decisions.

Why Use Psychometrics?

Psychometrics help minimise the chances of a bad hire by providing additional objective data to aid in decision-making. This additional data also acts as a filter for businesses with a high focus on cultural fit and vision alignment as a measurement criterion. These tests remove unconscious bias due to their science-based and data-driven nature, allowing hiring managers to analyse a candidate's fit objectively. As expected, it goes towards maintaining standards for scientifically measuring personality traits and aptitude, which makes the recruitment process fair.

Psychometrics also give companies more information about potential hires or promotional candidates that they might not get from other sources, effectively assessing potential as it looks into strengths, weaknesses, and aptitude. These assessments can help to reduce or diminish the chances of a bad hire by allowing companies to match the right talent with the right roles and ensure productivity speed, higher employee engagement, and higher retention rates.

02

Assessment Type

Business Simulations

Business simulations allow the mimicry of a particular process or situation by placing candidates in a life-like environment with intelligent back-end algorithms to experiment, learn different scenarios, and fail safely before applying to the organisation.

Why Use Business Simulations?

Business simulations reflect the real world, emulate challenges that organisations face, and give candidates a view of on-the-job challenges. They are a risk-free environment, allowing candidates to learn from their mistakes and witness the consequences of their actions in a safe setting without impacting the business. Business simulations also allow candidates to learn by experience.

Studies have shown that we remember 80% of personal experiences but only 10% of what we read. Thus, retention becomes higher through simulations. Business simulations also promote higher learning engagement due to their experiential and hands-on nature as well as accelerated learning. That's because simulations give participants a bird's-eye view of processes allowing them to understand a wide range of concepts and materials in a short amount of time.

03

Assessment Type

Game-Based Assessments

Game-based assessments (GBAs) combine the science of psychometrics with the engagement and fun of video games, which can be used in conjunction with or instead of traditional psychometric testing solutions. They provide job seekers with a more engaging and realistic experience and provide employers with thousands of data points that can be used to select candidates more accurately.

Why Use Game-Based Assessments?

Unlike traditional assessments, GBAs are progressive and adaptable. Apart from amplifying the recruitment experience for both recruiters and candidates, GBAs offer more enjoyment and engagement as they are fun to use, designed to be mobile-first and friendly, and feel natural to Gen Y and Gen Z candidates. GBAs also help reduce the drop-off rates that some companies experience, as candidates are more likely to complete a series of games than a lengthy test.

GBAs also enhance the employer brand by allowing recruiters to leave a lasting and positive impression on applicants who are also prospective customers. They convey a fresh and dynamic employer perception which creates a competitive edge for companies in an increasingly global war for talent. As GBAs are fast-paced and immersive, they can reveal the candidate's natural behaviours and reactions that can't be witnessed with traditional testing methods.

04

Assessment Type

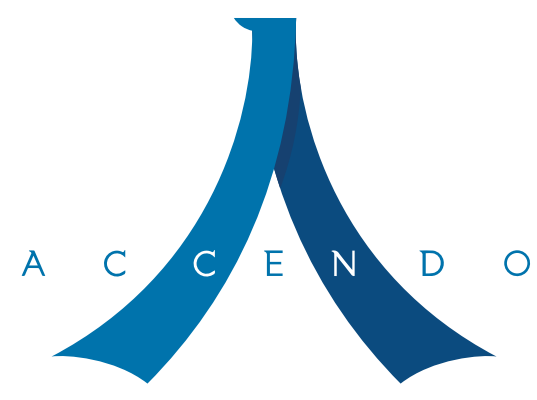
Video Interviews

The pandemic has caused HR teams to turn to technology to make talent processes much more streamlined and to provide better candidate experience, and video interviews are one such tool. Video interviews are rapidly being embraced by organisations globally when acquiring talent as it enables efficient, reliable, and engaging methods to connect with candidates.

Why Use Video Interviews?

Video interviews allow companies to sort through a pool of candidates and determine who is qualified, inevitably investing time into the best talent and saving in-person interviews for more in-depth discussions. Video interviews also reduce hiring costs as a lengthy process can leave a position available for too long, which can be costly for the business.

Invariably, companies can save money by reviewing the recorded interviews with candidates on a video platform, proceeding to the next hiring phase, and closing the hire faster. Conducting video interviews help to standardise the hiring process and eliminate certain biases by maintaining total uniformity across the board. When it's time to make a selection, hiring managers can ask candidates the same questions, compare their responses, and analyse their replies without being swayed by small talk.



Here is a compiled list of global talent assessment tools that you can consider implementing in your talent processes:

1. [Accendo](#)
2. Applied
3. Mercer | Mettl
4. Adface
5. Aspiring Minds
6. Codility
7. HackerRank
8. Criteria
9. Harrison Assessments
10. Cubiks
11. HireSelect
12. SHL
13. Cappafinity (Koro)
14. Testdome
15. Thrivemap
16. Pymetrics
17. HR Avatar
18. Plum
19. Skillsarena
20. Predictive Index
21. The English Quiz
22. Harver
23. Hogan Assessments
24. HireMojo
25. Hirevue

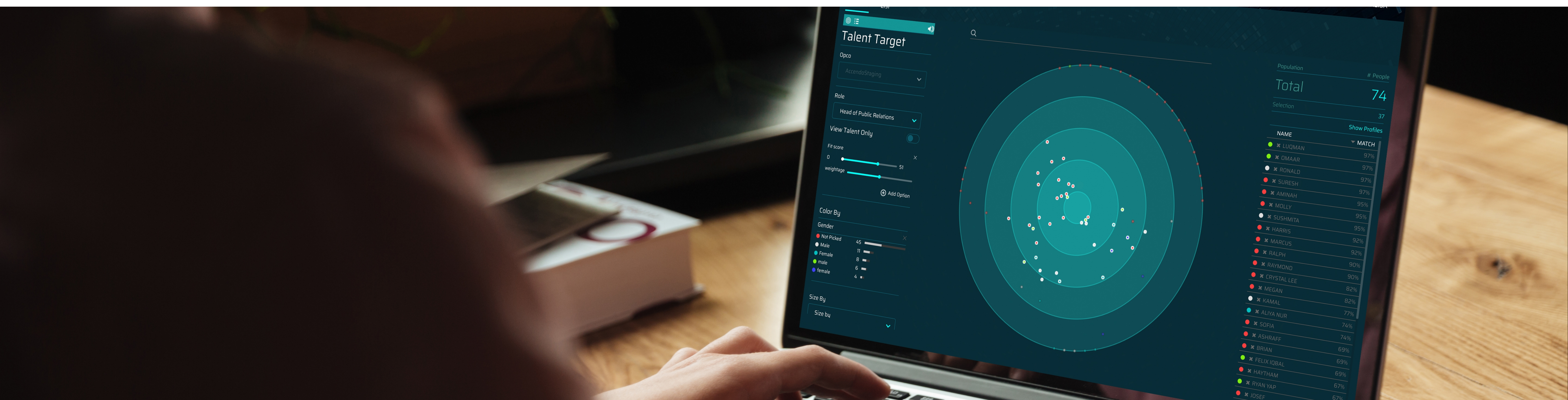
01

Best Practice

Use The Right Tools And Software

Hiring the right talent is imperative for any organisation to continually evolve their businesses with the changing market demands. This means that talent assessments must be optimised with technology for cost-effectiveness and objectivity when recruiting suitable candidates.

Efficient and scalable talent assessment software programmes will help organisations to make data-driven decisions based on the candidates' skills and abilities, while reducing the risk of bias. At the same time, proper assessment tools can benefit organisations in recruiting the best workforce.

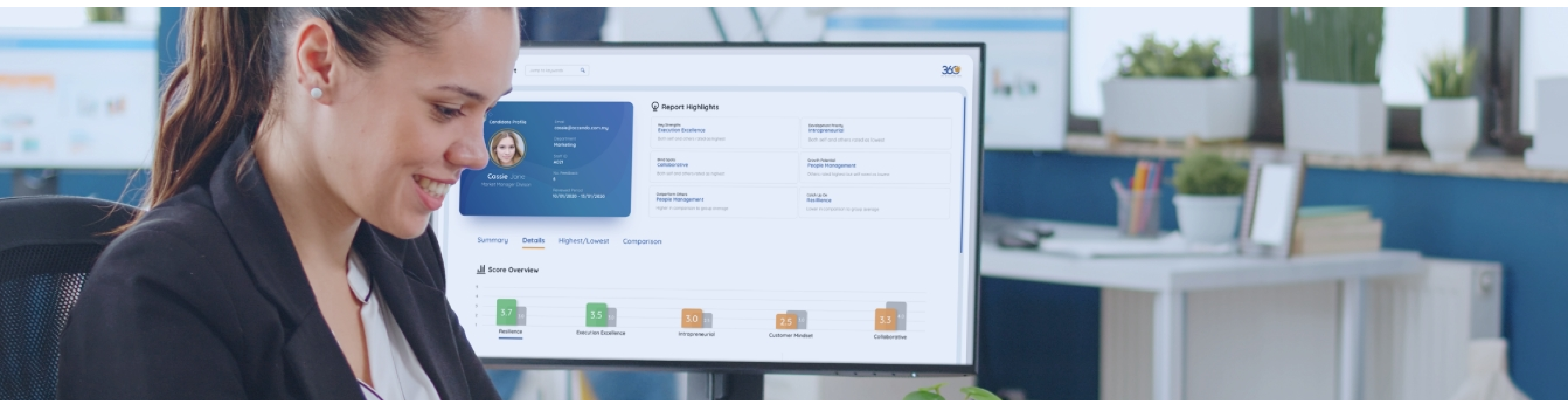


02

Best Practice

Create The Right Candidate Experience

Creating the right candidate experience does not have to mean big bold interfaces with over-the-top messaging and loads of free gifts. Organisations tend to chase these things but forget the essentials of experience and end up overspending with no substance, leading to poor candidate experience. These components are essential to getting your talent assessments right:



02

Branding

Whether it is done intentionally or not, organisations are already creating a brand. The culture and organisational behaviour are the products that potential job candidates are “buying into” when they agree to spend most of their waking hours working for you.

Why employer branding strategy is important

Having an employer brand can attract talent that will help to drive business revenue and growth. Your employer brand could be the difference between getting high-calibre candidates and getting stuck with those who slow you down. A 2016 survey by Careerbuilder found that 64% of candidates admit they research a company online prior to applying, while 37% said they will move on to another job opening if they're unable to find information on the company.

Integration and consolidation

As organisations try to make their talent practices more rigid and valid, they tend to add on processes and often forget about continuity. Too many tools and forms can negatively impact candidate experience as it seems like repetition. When conducting talent assessments, always keep in mind to integrate processes and consolidate data.

03

Best Practice

Leverage On Data

Each year, organisations set goals that focus on future growth, and one of the goals includes sourcing potential talent. Talent assessments are the processes that can help to provide organisations with candidates to ensure a better fit through job-matching capabilities. At the same time, data and insights can help with workforce planning.



03

Leverage On Data

Understanding how to leverage this data effectively can guide HR leaders through crucial decision-making for talent management and succession planning strategies. The important thing is to understand the types of talent data available and how that data aligns with the organisation's workforce planning strategy by optimising the 4 key areas below:



With data, everything becomes transparent. Even interviews are shortened as they become data-driven. Decisions are made quicker and therefore become scalable.



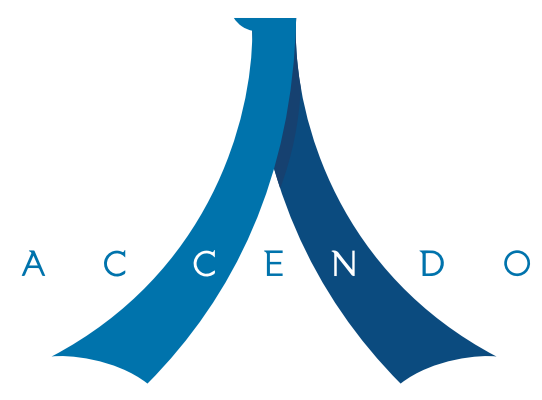
Talent assessment processes allow for the possibility of collating data to view candidates in a holistic manner. The lens through which you are able to view candidates becomes more powerful when things like metadata are taken into account.



Leveraging data can increase the accuracy of your talent assessment process. Combining multiple data points increases tool validity, outputs are more accurate, and the chances of bias in the process are slim to none.



With data being easily collected by multiple assessment tools, scaling becomes easy. The ability to customise these tools by job levels and job industries while not affecting the efficiency of the process also makes scaling affordable.



Limitations

Talent assessments may be highly valid and reliable, yet organisations often find themselves at a disadvantage as a result of the high costs and time invested.

- ⚙ The implementation is expensive in terms of costs, effort, and time.
- ⚙ Once implemented, it can result in additional overall costs for the organisation.
- ⚙ Not every organisation is equipped to implement the talent assessment process.
- ⚙ It may appear challenging to get support from every department.
- ⚙ It can lead to conflict between management and human resources.
- ⚙ A lack of deeper understanding can lead to a loss of trust

Designing An Assessment Centre

03

Define Objectives And Criteria

1. Definition of High potential and top talent

You need to define what “HiPo” and “top talent” mean within the context of your organisation and for the needs of each team.

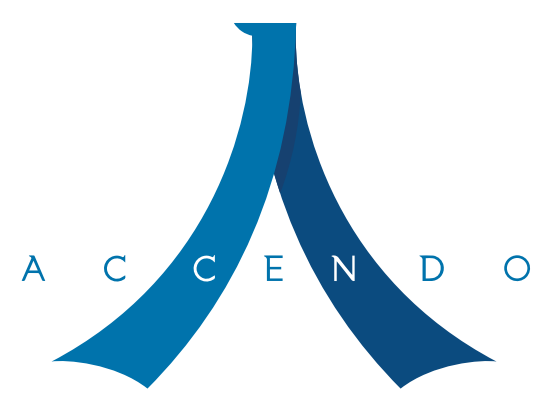
2. Discuss criteria for critical roles

Have a discussion with management on what criteria are needed for potential employees to excel at their positions. Do this for every role, as the requirements will vary.

3. Measure skill sets and prioritise them

Once you have defined the skill sets needed, determine how to measure them. Prioritise the skills for each position before proceeding with the most qualified candidates.





4 Establish Effective Assessment Processes

1 | Use well-structured methods and strategies

A well-organised process will guarantee the best people for your organisation and directly impact your business success.

2 | Write clear job descriptions for internal and external job boards

The roles you are selecting should have a clear job description before you advertise them on job boards online.

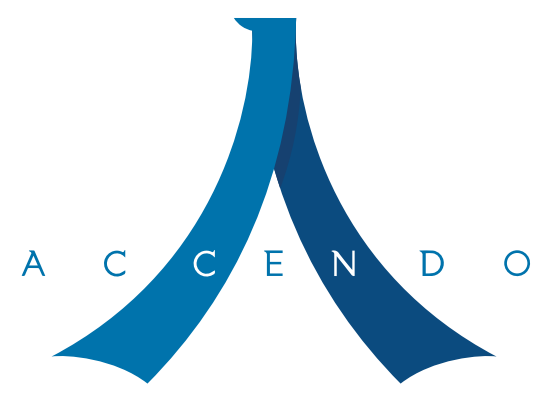
3 | Administer skills tests to assess candidates

After that, you can administer skills tests to assess the candidates' skills, experience, and knowledge before screening them effectively.

4 | Conduct structured interviews for evaluation

Identify your best candidates and conduct structured interviews to evaluate them better and deepen your observations on their strengths and weaknesses.





Keep Candidates Updated Regularly

1. Regularly update applicants on their application

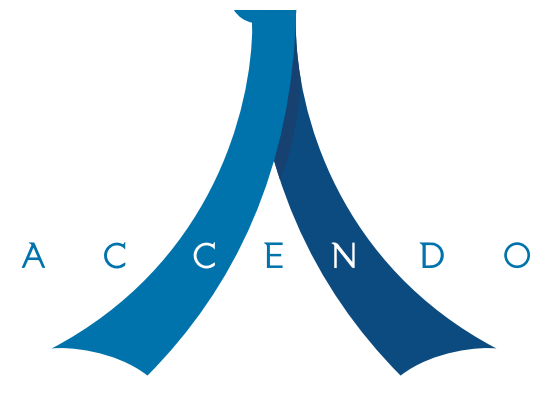
Keeping your applicants, whether internal or external, in the loop on the status of their applications does wonders in boosting your employer's reputation. It is also in your organisation's best interests to keep applicants informed.

2. Attract top talent with a strong employer brand

According to a LinkedIn report, 75% of candidates evaluate an employer's brand when applying for a job. In comparison, 69% will not apply for a position if they don't like what they see, even if they are unemployed.

3. Constant communication ensures a smooth hiring process

Companies often overlook communication with potential employees, but it's a key element of your overall employer brand. With a better reputation, organisations will attract more top talent candidates to fill the open positions.



Where To Use Talent Assessments

It is evident that talented employees will stay with their current employer if they are given the opportunity for development, motivation, and a chance to realise their potential. Therefore, it is necessary for organisations to ensure their employees' skills and behaviours align with critical business strategies. The solution is talent assessment and is divided into three categories:

- Talent Management
- Talent Acquisition
- Future Readiness



01

Talent Management

Talent management is the systematic process of identifying a vacant position, hiring a suitable candidate, developing the skills and competencies required for the candidate to match the role, and retaining them to achieve long-term business objectives.

This section covers:

- Succession planning – Identify and develop the next generation of leaders to ensure business and strategy continuity.
- HiPo identification – Identify high potential employees who can produce 90% more work and give about 20% more effort.
- Internal mobility – Accelerating the internal movement of employees to new career and development opportunities within the organisation.



02

Talent Acquisition

Talent acquisition refers to identifying and acquiring talented employees to meet the needs of an organisation. This approach includes identifying, acquiring, assessing, and hiring candidates for roles advertised within the company.

This section covers:

- Graduate programme suite – Nurtures young talents to become future leaders and build a leadership pipeline.
- Recruitment – A winning talent acquisition strategy to bring in the brightest minds and the right talent.
- Sales profiling – Bring the right front liners into your company and generate up to 5x more profit.



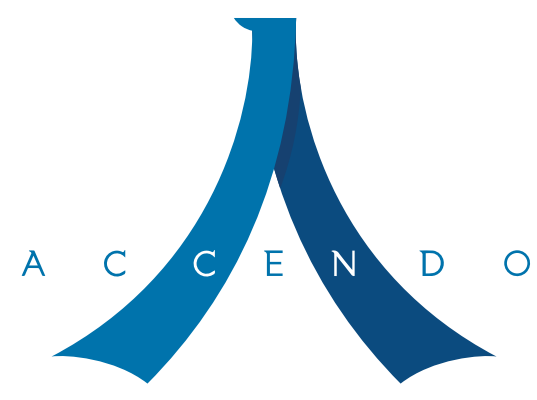
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Future Readiness

Future readiness is designed to measure a candidate's readiness to thrive in a digitally disruptive economy. This includes skills in technology and science and non-technical competencies such as social and emotional learning, which are increasingly critical for employees.

This section covers:

- Digital mindset is important in ensuring business success in today's fast-paced world.
- Career pathing serves to build an engaging process to attract and retain the best young talents.

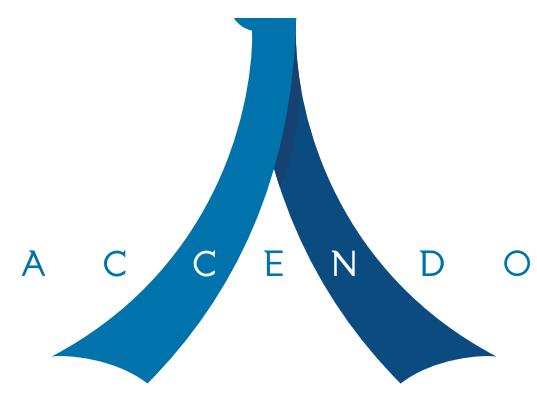


Expectations At An Assessment Centre

Assessment centres can vary in duration, format, and content. While many assessment centres are usually organised in-house, there have been instances where some are outsourced to a third party and may be held in a conference room of a hotel.

Most assessment centres may last for two full days, depending on the position you applied for. A range of activities includes written assignments, mock presentations, role-play, personality tests, and exams. Group activities may also play a role in an assessment centre, including group business exercises where each applicant takes turns in playing a senior figure.

This applies more when recruiting for managerial positions where leadership skills take precedence. There may also be social or networking opportunities, such as a lunch, dinner, or even a coffee break. Be prepared to ask intelligent questions while getting to know the other applicants.



An Assessment Marketplace Vs. Individual Assessment Provider

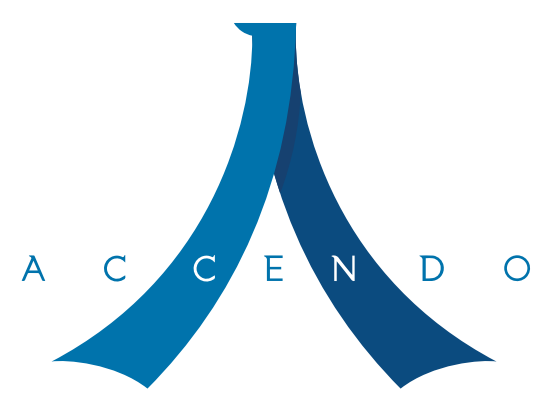
With businesses moving towards streamlining, consolidation and integration, HR needs to look for these in their architecture. One particular area that has not moved in that direction is how organisations purchase and utilise talent assessments. This is because the traditional way organisations procure their tools is from individual assessment providers.

With the rise of the assessment marketplace, HR can look forward to a single platform in which all assessment needs can be met and overcome operational challenges by similarly adopting streamlining, consolidating, and integrating. Below are three key challenges faced when dealing with individual assessment providers and how the assessment marketplace overcomes them.

Onboarding Multiple Assessments

There are many different types of talent assessments in the market today, from psychometrics to simulations and video interviews. Companies are increasingly looking at onboarding various types of these assessments to try and raise their talent decision validity. Yet, the problem many organisations face is that individual vendors often specialise in only one specific tool. It means that psychometric vendors will only carry psychometric suites, while simulation companies only have business simulations. The factor that causes an operational challenge here is time. Specifically, the time one takes to source for vendors of different specialisations and evaluate the other stack of tools needed before purchasing and implementing.

An assessment marketplace solves this problem by having many types of tools already available in its library. Above that, vendors of an assessment marketplace take care of the sourcing and evaluating stage by pre-qualifying the tools available on the platform. Organisations who opt for an assessment marketplace only need to go onto the platform, select the types of tools they would like to use, and rest assured that each assessment type is the best of the breed. Not only is the selection time shortened, but the expertise in various assessment types also sits with one vendor; and with this, support is also readily available.

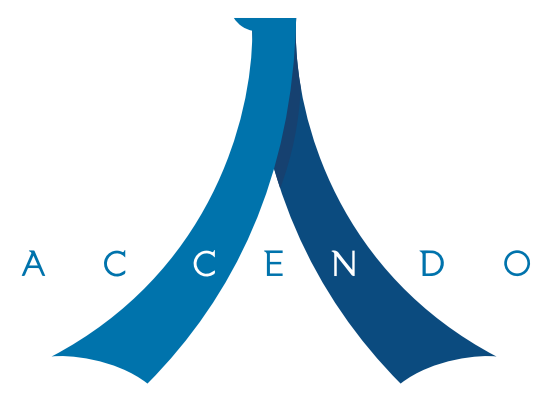


Candidate Experience

The hiring process is often cumbersome and tedious as those involved in the hiring process have to filter through thousands of applications to select a group of suitable candidates. At the same time, candidates who are involved in the assessment centre process may feel like they are being dragged into a scene from *The Apprentice* as a result of the stress and uncertainties.

Some key trends in talent assessment worth noting include adopting an efficient and effective hiring process, building a strong digital presence, and upscaling to exciting job descriptions. These can go a long way to enhancing and ensuring positive candidate experience, while at the same time, helping organisations to improve their brand and reputation.





Preparing For An Assessment Centre

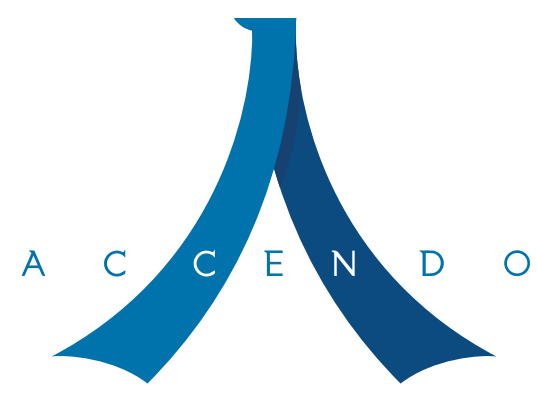
Assessment centres can appear daunting and make candidates feel anxious; however, with proper preparation and understanding of what employers are looking for, candidates can still set themselves up for success.

- Prepare for interviews – competency-based interviews may include a candidate’s latest work experience or some challenging situations during their time at university.
- Practise mock assessment tests – abstract, numerical, and verbal reasoning assessments are usually conducted in assessment centres.
- Formal dress attire and punctuality – candidates may also be assessed in attire, behaviour, and punctuality.
- Focus on work etiquette – carrying meaningful and productive conversations, asking intelligent questions, and making introductions are important elements of a professional work etiquette

This is the one chance for candidates to prove their mettle, which means they need to be at their best in the knowledge department. Having said all that, assessment centres are nothing to be afraid of. If anything, they are an indicator of a candidate’s competence. Successful candidates will eventually reap their benefits when they sign the employment contract.

Conclusion

04



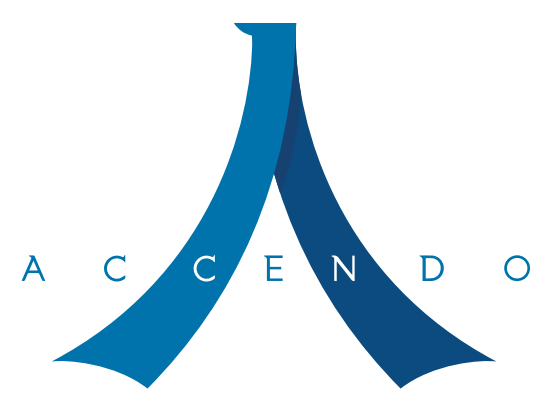
Kicking Off Your Talent Assessments Journey

A gap widens between what used to be effective leadership practices and what is needed to drive sustainable performance in today's business environment. It is obvious that traditional methods for identifying talent through interviews alone are not enough. To compensate, organisations are turning to more sophisticated and innovative forms of executive assessment.

Organisations who give strong consideration to talent assessments can reap the rewards of a candidate's strengths and weaknesses to make a difference in its business success and performance.

To kick-start your own talent assessment, keep these things in mind: Leverage solutions and technological advancements, choose the right platform, and harness big data. With these principles in place, your talent decisions will be made with the utmost validity whilst being resource-efficient.



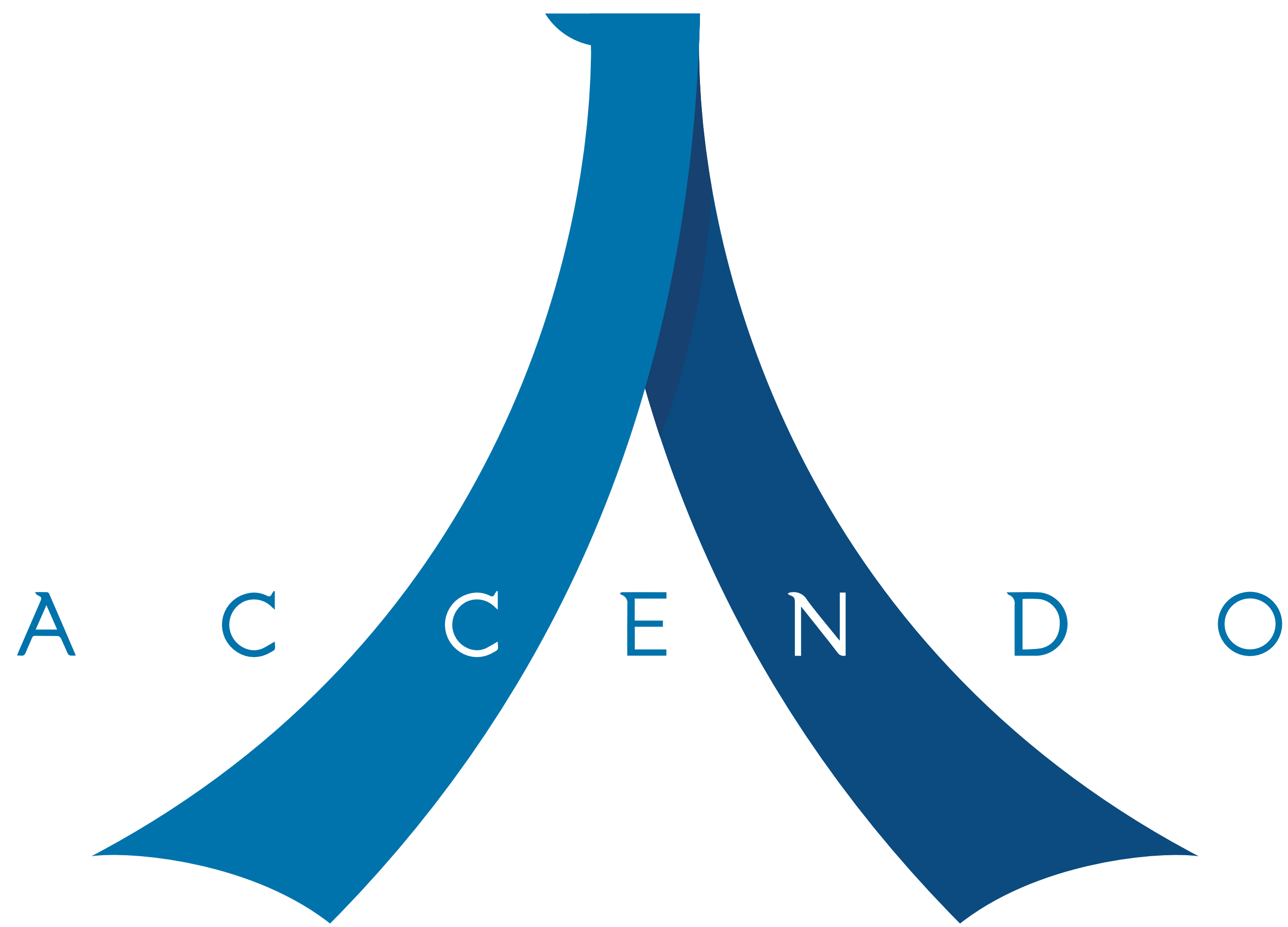


Postscript: Managing Talent Assessments In The Age Of Covid-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic swept through the world, people began leaving their jobs in droves and eventually igniting what is now known as The Great Resignation. Some left to find better opportunities while others left for good. COVID-19 didn't just change the workplace; it might have changed the workforce and the way things were done at work itself.

There is still a light at the end of the tunnel for HR leaders - the opportunity to respond and move to agile planning. An approach that may assist to continually reshape the workforce and incorporate changes in business and skill needs during the pandemic and beyond. One that relies on talent assessments and succession planning to build a continuous pipeline of talent.





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