

# Best practice in **recruiting safer drivers**

Dr Lisa Dorn, Research Director at DriverMetrics® takes a look at why psychometric assessments provide an excellent starting point when it comes to selecting drivers

**PSYCHOMETRIC** assessments are standardised psychological measurements of knowledge, abilities, attitudes or personality traits. Psychometric assessments have been extensively used in clinical and educational settings for decades.

Their popularity has also continued to increase amongst all business sectors for recruiting new staff. In this context, Psychometric assessments work by scoring a candidate's responses to a set of questions, designed to measure a specific psychological construct, such as personality or leadership style. The way in which a candidate scores provides an indication of their suitability for the role given that constructs have been found to be related to real-world outcomes like job performance.

When it comes to recruiting drivers, traditionally, they are recruited using standard assessment components including an interview with references from previous employers, a licence check and possibly an in-vehicle driver assessment. One of the major difficulties with the interview process is that it can be fairly subjective and drivers may perform well in an assessment drive when under observation.

The traditional approach to driver recruitment often relies on gut instinct. On the other hand, Psychometric assessments are more objective and are commonly used for selecting train drivers (Rail Safety and Standards Board, 2006). These assessments determine trainability, reaction under pressure and vigilance. Such assessments are also very common in both civil and military aviation for both pilot and cabin crew selection.

Psychometric assessments can also be used for selecting drivers and DriverMetrics has been a pioneer in this field. The DriverMetrics profile has been constructed based on psychometric principles and measures driver behavioural tendencies. The scales have been assessed for reliability and validity across over 75 peer-reviewed academic publications. The scales measure constructs that are associated with driving performance, crash involvement and committing violations so the profile provides the ultimate insight into a candidate's potential for being a safe driver. There are many competencies to consider when selecting drivers to minimize a major source

of risk for fleets. Key behavioural tendencies have an impact on driving performance at work and these should be assessed alongside other competencies. Decades of research in driver behaviour has shown that certain driving behaviours are more likely to lead to crashes and companies are keen to recruit the safest drivers.

One of the criticisms of using a Psychometric assessment for recruiting drivers is that candidates may self-report their driving behaviour in an overly positive way. However, the DriverMetrics profile includes measures of the tendency to create an unrealistically good impression of their driver behaviour.

## THE ADVANTAGES OF USING DRIVERMETRICS FOR RECRUITMENT

- All candidates are given a standardised assessment, it provides a more fair and accurate way of assessing a candidate.
- DriverMetrics can measure a number of driver attributes including thrill seeking, aggression and vulnerability to driver fatigue along with positive attributes such as hazard monitoring and good coping strategies.
- Research has demonstrated that the scales are predictive of many different aspects of driver behaviour such as proximity to other vehicles, unsafe overtaking, reaction times, mood, violations and crash involvement etc.
- The profile identifies a driver's behavioural coaching needs post-recruitment.
- Previous research has found that the DriverMetrics scales are a better predictor of driver behaviour than the assessment of general personality traits.
- DriverMetrics is currently being administered across different cultures and has been benchmarked based on geographic regions and different driver groups.

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