

PSYCHOMETRIC AND OTHER TESTS

There are many different types of test, usually designed by psychologists, which can provide additional information that helps form the employer's overall profile of you and, importantly, of how you may operate in their workplace.

Types of Tests

Personality tests

In personality tests there are no 'right' answers and it's therefore not wise to try and second-guess them. From your answers to questions designed to reveal your interests and motivations (often involving the selection of preferences from available choices), psychologists develop a profile of you which is then often matched with a profile of the person the employer is seeking.

Aptitude tests

Aptitude (ability) tests are used to assess your numerical, verbal, comprehension, and abstract or spatial reasoning skills. Sample computerised and paper tests are widely available – seek them out. Get your brain in gear by doing crosswords, number games and puzzles found in newspapers and magazines. Pay special attention to your weaker areas.

Handling Tests

Contact the employer and obtain as much relevant information as you can: What sort of test(s) will you sit? How long will it/they take, or is there no time limit? How is/are the test(s) weighted in terms of accuracy versus numbers of answers attempted? Will 'wrong' answers (where applicable – see 'Personality tests' above) be ignored or scored negatively? Can you use a calculator in numeracy tests?

While it's not always possible to find samples before the real tests (the employer and/or your Careers Service may be able to help), prepare yourself mentally beforehand.

Some tests are multiple-choice, others require 'true' or 'false' answers, others require you to express a personal preference or choose the next in a given sequence. The golden rule is to read, then re-read the requirements before putting pen to paper.

Afterwards

Good employers will ensure you receive appropriate feedback following tests. Take notes so that this valuable information isn't forgotten. Even if unsuccessful, take heart from knowing that test results tailored for one organisation don't mean that you will be viewed identically by others. And you've had a bit of practice...

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