Predicting Healthcare-Supply Sales-Representative Performance

2015

THE SCIENCE OF PERSONALITY

Introduction

Hogan recently collaborated with a healthcare-supply manufacturer and distributer to identify characteristics associated with successful performance for Sales Representatives. We sought to enhance the current selection process by adding the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI; a measure of day-to-day behavioral characteristics), Hogan Development Survey (HDS; a measure of behavioral tendencies that may hinder job performance), Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory (MVPI; a measure of key motives and drivers), and the Hogan Business Reasoning Inventory (HBRI; a measure of reasoning style).

The process for creating predictive selection profiles consisted of a number of steps. The research study began with a job analysis to collect data from high-performing Sales Representatives. Hogan collected information from focus groups, job descriptions, and Hogan's Job Evaluation Tool (JET). Next, we aligned this information with predictor scales on the HPI, HDS, MVPI, and HBRI. We then used validity generalization strategies, including job family meta-analysis, transport validity, and synthetic/job component validity, to identify the HPI and HDS scales most predictive of performance.

Hogan also conducted local validation with Sales Representatives. First, 243 Sales Representatives completed the HPI, HDS, MVPI, and HBRI. Next, we were able to collect performance data for 225 of these individuals. This included supervisor ratings of 8 overall performance items, 15 competency items, and 7 critical thinking items, as well as objective data (i.e., Sales Quota). Finally, we examined relationships between assessment results and performance data to create a selection profile comprised of individual characteristics most predictive of performance.

Hogan Personality Inventory Results

Sales Representatives with the following characteristics tended to receive higher performance ratings:

- Competitive, driven, and goal-oriented
- Skilled at making a sale using direct, straightforward communication
- Practical, level-headed, and process-focused

Hogan Development Survey Results

Lower performers exhibited the following stress-induced behaviors:

- Loud, overbearing, and have difficulty engaging in active listening
- Eccentric, impractical, and lacking focus
- Lacking attention to detail
- Deferential and indecisive

Motives, Values, Preferences Inventory Results

Higher performers indicated the following key values and drivers were most important for success:

- Focus on functionality and substance
- Personal responsibility and self-reliance
- Privacy, task-focus, and minimal interruptions
- Making money and a focus on the bottom line
- Driven to "win" in order to be the best, not to be noticed or acknowledged
- Making experience based and intuitive decisions

Hogan Business Reasoning Inventory Results

Higher performers indicated having a reasoning style focused on:

- Seeing the big picture, inferring relationships, and detecting gaps to identify potential opportunities, challenges, and problems

Based on these findings, Hogan developed a profile to identify candidates who are: (a) confident, competitive, and driven to produce high impact results; (b) socially engaging, relationship focused, cooperative, and friendly, yet still able to voice opinions; (c) understand customer needs and have a focus on the bottom line; (d) have the ability to identify problems and integrate different viewpoints to pragmatically solve problems; and (e) are organized, task oriented, and focused on providing timely follow-up to customers.

Profile Performance

Profile results related to a variety of key performance indicators (see Table 1). Furthermore, results indicated that current Sales Representatives identified as moderate/high fits:

- Achieved higher PRF Scores across all performance metrics
- Were 4 times more likely to be rated as strong overall performers compared to low fits
- Were 5 times more likely to be ranked as a top Sales Representative compared to low fits
- Received higher "Potential for Advancement" and "Sales Ability" ratings from supervisors
- Were 2 times more likely to be rated as "Intellectually Sharp" compared to Low fits

Also, 83% of Sales Representatives rated as high performers across most performance metrics (identified by their Average PRF Score) were categorized as Moderate/High fit using the profile. Overall, these results indicate that by using this profile, the healthcare-supply manufacturer and distributer could select high performing Sales Representatives.

Table 1. Correlations between Hogan Profile and Key Performance Indicators

	Corrected
Average PRF Score	.41**
Overall Performance	.44**
Rank	.46**
Potential for Advancement	.43**
Sales Ability	.27**
Intellectually sharp/agile and handles complexity well	.36**

Note. N = 174-234; * p < .05; ** p < .01; Corrected = correction for unreliability in the criterion measure.

Average PRF Score by Hogan Fit Level