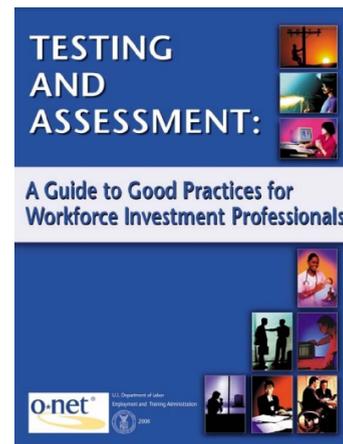


# Executive Briefing on Assessment and Testing in the Workplace:

## How to choose an appropriate tool and summary of US DOL's assessment principles



Psychometric assessment tools come in a great variety and quantity. Since the early 1900s many businesses have employed assessments to support their recruitment, retention, development, and succession planning strategies. However, few are aware of the changing regulation and the U.S. Department of Labor's position regarding the use of tests and assessments in areas of employment, particularly pre-employment.

It may surprise some to learn the US DOL actually supports the use of a sound testing and assessment strategy. In "[Testing and Assessment: A Guide to Good Practices for Workforce Investment Professionals](#)," the USDOL recognizes that, "employers face the challenge of attracting, developing and retaining the best employees." The document goes on to say that a solid assessment strategy can "maximize chances for getting the right fit between jobs and employees."

Indeed, organizations that select appropriate and reliable tools can dramatically reduce all employee-related costs and improve productivity by [millions of dollars](#)! That is because assessments provide a powerful and unbiased data point to every talent related decision. Better decisions always lead to better outcomes and help your organization achieve GREAT results faster. Best in class companies use assessments in hiring, onboarding and development of their employees.

It is important to note that organizations can be negatively impacted by improper use of assessments and can open themselves up to litigation. US DOL's document provides 13 principles that employers should follow when considering and/or designing an assessment initiative. The principles are summarized here. For a complete copy of the document, go to [https://www.onetcenter.org/dl\\_files/proTestAsse.pdf](https://www.onetcenter.org/dl_files/proTestAsse.pdf)

1. **Use assessment tools in a purposeful manner.** Assessments are most valuable when used for the purpose they are designed. However, inappropriate use, resulting from not having a clear understanding of what you want to measure and why, can be harmful or, possibly, illegal.
2. **Use the whole-person approach.** Use an assessment or a combination of assessments that give as much information as possible about the skills, behaviors and other attributes most important to your organization.

3. **Use assessments that are unbiased and fair to all groups.** Assessments that deliberately or inadvertently discriminate or create adverse impact can prevent employers from achieving a qualified and diverse workforce.
4. **Use reliable assessments.** Will the same person get the same results each time they take the assessment? Reliability ("r") is expressed as a statistical coefficient between 0.0 and 1.0. r = 0.90 or above is "excellent": 0.80 – 0.89 is "good": 0.70 – 0.79 is "adequate".
5. **Assessments must be valid for the purpose they are being used.** Validity is the most important criterion for selecting a proper assessment instrument. Validity is expressed as a statistical coefficient. A v-score of .35 or higher means the assessment is "very beneficial" in determining the presence of desired characteristics. 0.21 – 0.34 means the assessment "is likely to be useful" to the employer. A v-score of 0.11-0.20 means the usefulness of the information derived will "depend on the circumstances" under which the assessment is being used. An assessment is "unlikely to be useful" when v= 0.11 or less.
6. **Assessments must be appropriate for the target population.** Assessments designed to assess construction workers may not be appropriate when applied to financial industry workers or nurse practitioners.
7. **The instructions and other documentation must be comprehensive and easy to understand.** The results of the assessment program are directly related to the ability of the person being assessed to understand the instructions for taking the assessment and the test questions themselves.
8. **If the assessment requires proctoring and/or administration, those performing this function must be adequately trained.** Some assessment instruments require extensive training or certification to administer, proctor, or score assessments. The time and the cost of such procedures should be taken into account.
9. **It may be necessary to provide consistent and uniform testing conditions to obtain consistent results.** Classrooms, conference rooms, or other facilities may be necessary to isolate assessment takers from other distractions to ensure the integrity of assessment results.
10. **Provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.** No group should be disadvantaged by the assessment or the conditions under which the assessments are taken.
11. **Assessment security must be maintained.** Assessments should never be accessible to the general population.
12. **Assessment results must be maintained secure and confidential.** Look for assessment vendors that utilize secure methods, require passwords and maintain confidentiality of the results and personal data security. The results should not be released to other organizations or individuals without consent.

13. **Accurate interpretation of results is necessary.** The conclusions drawn from the assessments are likely invalid when interpreted inaccurately, thus leading to poor decision-making. Assessment reports, documentation and testing manuals should be easy to understand.

Application of these guidelines, combined with high quality assessment tools, will help employers make better hiring and other talent decisions. If you are still looking for an assessment tool or the best assessment strategy, we are your assessment experts! We are standing by to answer your questions and make recommendations for assessment tools that can be used throughout an employee's lifecycle: from hire to retire. Empower your organization with assessments! [Talk to us today](#) or [learn more](#).



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