

EXPOSED — PERSONALITY TESTS DISGUISED AS SALES ASSESSMENTS

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Yesterday, I met with a long-time client who, in his previous company, used OMG's Assessments to identify what needed to change in order to double revenue from \$30 million to \$60 million. In his new company, which is already about 12x that size, he wants to double revenue again. He said, "I just wasted two years with the _____ Assessment. The assessment he referred to was a personality assessment marketed as a sales assessment. It could have referred to any personality or behavioral styles assessment.

Many people are not going to like this article. **I am about to expose the findings in personality based and behavioral based assessments that companies have been marketing as sales assessments** for the last dozen years.

First, you'll need to read this piece, *Personality Assessments for Sales, The Definitive Case Study*. Really, you need to read it first!

There isn't a tremendous difference between personality assessments and behavioral styles assessments. Popular behavioral styles assessments, like the various versions of DISC, produce findings along 4 dimensions (categories) while some personality assessments, like those using the PF16 as their underlying instrument, can measure traits in as many as 16 dimensions.

But **Personality Assessments and Behavioral Styles assessments are not predictive of sales performance**. They don't conduct Predictive Validity studies as we do because their assessments don't predict. Instead they conduct Construct Validity studies, which only show to what extent an assessment measures a specific trait. And **not the traits you want to know about, but the traits they can actually measure**.

So here's the problem. Their marketing material usually says something like, "Salespeople must be able to Prospect, Question, Manage Objections and Close. They must have Product Knowledge. They must be accountable, have drive, be self starters and be coachable." You read those words and say, "yes, yes. That is exactly what we need." And the masquerade is on.

As I wrote in the other article, personality based sales assessments don't really measure what you need to know. Instead they report on what **they** can **actually** measure. In the table below, I'll list some of the most common "findings" in personality and behavioral styles tests that are marketed as sales assessments, describe what is really being measured, and compare that to what Objective Management Group (OMG) measures and reports.

Finding	Measures	OMG Finding	What OMG Actually Measures
Drive or achievement	General need to achieve	Desire	How important it is to achieve success in sales
Resilience	General ability to cope with adversity	Bravery	The sales specific scenarios that will be problematic and the individual's ability to handle them
Rejection	How the individual reacts to generally not being accepted or not have their ideas accepted	Difficulty Recovering from Rejection	How getting hung up on or getting a 'no' will impact them.
Emotions	Emotional steadiness	Ability to Control Emotions	The likelihood that when a salesperson is caught off guard or in an uncomfortable situation they will panic and lose control of the sales call
Sociable	How comfortable they are in social situations and whether they say the right things	Bonding and Rapport	How quickly they develop relationships with their Prospects
Confident	Whether they are a confident person	Record Collection	The sales specific beliefs that support or sabotage their sales outcomes
Trainable	Whether they have the incentive to improve their sales competencies	Trainable	whether they have the incentive to improve their sales competencies

These are just **some** of the most common findings. Since OMG's Assessments are so sales specific, there are literally dozens of findings covering everything that can possibly happen in sales including, but not limited, to prospecting, closing, qualifying, account management, farming, use of the sales process, ability to handle stalls, put-offs, objections and work remotely, growth potential, development needs and more. What's most important to understand about assessments is that:

- The questions in the personality tests are asked in the context of social settings, not sales settings, **so none of the findings are sales specific.**
- Because the findings in personality assessments are not sales specific, **they are not predictive.**
- Personality assessments are generally one size fits all, without regard to your market, its challenges, your competition, your pricing, the resistance your salespeople will face, your compensation plan and how specific selling strengths and weaknesses will impact those conditions.
- Assessments of your existing salespeople **should** be useful for development. If you don't have sales specific findings, **you are only developing them as people**, not salespeople.
- How is OMG Different? Assessments are only a **minor part of an effective sales force evaluation.** The most important part is to be able to learn:

- What impact **sales management** is having on the salespeople
- Whether you've been hiring the right people
- Whether your sales force can execute your strategies
- Whether your **systems and processes** support the sales force
- How effective sales management is
- If you can develop more of a **sales culture**
- Whether the salespeople can **make a transition** like — account manager types to hunters and closers; presenters and quoters to consultative sales types; transactional sale to a solution sale; etc.
- **Who can be developed?**
- If you're attempting to down-size or right sales the sales force, who are the individuals that actually have the ability to help you **do more with less?**
- How much better can they get?
- What it will take?
- What the **ROI** on development would be
- Why you get the specific results you get
- What is the quality of your **pipeline?**
- Etc.
- When used for Hiring and Selection, an assessment must be an **accurate predictor of sales success** for a particular sales role in your particular company, calling on your particular market, with its particular challenges and competition. A personality assessment won't consistently identify the people who will succeed while OMG's Assessment, with its 95% Predictive Validity, will. We can differentiate between Hirable (they meet our criteria and yours); Hirable – Ideal (they are hirable and they will ramp up more quickly than normal); and Hirable – Perfect (they are hirable ideal and they meet additional customized criteria that match up with your most effective producers).

In summary, whether you are using a personality assessment, behavioral styles assessment, psychological assessment, or psychometric (describes all of the above) assessment, it's the marketing that is sales specific, not the findings. Use them at your own risk.