

Welcome to the fifth issue of **Informed**, the newsletter from Informed Assessment.

Over the last few months we have continued to develop the range and spread of our services; around Christmas we were engaged by ICOPAL UK Ltd to recruit and assess a new maintenance engineering team using an integrated combination of attracting candi-

dates, response management, structured interviewing and psychometric assessment.

We also undertook the validation of the Hogan Personality Inventory psychometric questionnaire on behalf of the Direct Sales division of Telewest and the Company is already starting to see early and powerful "bottom line"

benefits through the contribution of a 10-15% reduction in staff turnover attributable to the approach.

Thank you again for your continued custom and support of Informed Assessment. We hope you find this issue interesting and useful and we look forward to working with you in the remainder of 2005 and beyond.

Recruiting and Assessing a New Maintenance Engineering Team for ICOPAL



ICOPAL is the Danish-owned market leader in building protection, specialising in the manufac-

ture and sales of a range of bitumen and polymer based products for roofing and waterproofing. As part of an ongoing investment programme, ICOPAL asked Informed Assessment to provide an integrated recruitment and assessment solution in response to its requirement to build a new engineering maintenance team. The programme was project managed by Barry Tollefson, Associate Director of Recruitment. As Barry explained,

"our objective was to provide a service which would deliver a pool of quality candidates as a result of a structured assessment process and remove the administrative burden from ICOPAL."

Following a thorough briefing process, advertisements were placed in both traditional and online media. Application packs were sent to candidates containing a structured application document, designed to elicit the most relevant information for short-listing purposes.

Initial assessment events

were held consisting of Informed Assessment consultants conducting structured interviews and a battery of ability tests, including fault diagnosis.

Candidates were then invited to a final interview at ICOPAL including completion of a personality questionnaire in

order to identify working style and "fit" factors. All of the candidates were offered confidential feedback on their assessment results.

Aware that we would encounter a scarcity of appropriately qualified candidates within some well known skill shortage areas, we targeted the use of additional on-line advertising, outplacement centres, informal networking and referrals. The campaign is now in its closing stages, with the possibility of additional recruitment being required once the first phase of recruits has 'bedded in'.

David Dare, the Manufacturing Director of ICOPAL, commented, "placing the campaign with Informed Assessment has enabled us to save a great deal of management time and has 'raised the bar' in terms of the skill level and experience of the people we have recruited. We would definitely use a similar process again for future requirements."

Engineering the Future...

Part of a major international group, ICOPAL is the UK market leader in the manufacture and supply of bituminous-based roofing products to the construction and allied industries. As part of ICOPAL's continuing programme of significant investment in its Trafford Park site, it is now seeking to build a world-class engineering maintenance team. ICOPAL is committed, above all else, to its people. In whatever role you join us, ambitious and talented time-served individuals with a proven track record of achievement within engineering maintenance will benefit from training and development and real opportunities for career progression:



Maintenance Technicians:

The focus of these roles will be the development and implementation, at a practical level, of planned and preventive maintenance across the plant. We require degree-calibre individuals with supervisory experience and excellent exposure to continuous/semi-continuous process environments.

Mechanical c£28,000pa + o/t + bens
With a solid background in engineering, you will be fully conversant with all aspects of operations and maintenance of mechanical process plant and ancillary equipment/machinery. You will ideally possess a basic knowledge/understanding of machine electrical equipment. Ref: M1001

Electrical c£28,000pa + o/t + bens
From working within a demanding manufacturing environment, you will have gained a comprehensive knowledge of electrical distribution, plant/machinery automation and associated machine electrical (and ideally mechanical) systems/equipment. Ref: M1002

Control & Instrumentation c£28,000pa + o/t + bens
From your comprehensive understanding of instrumentation/control theory and best practice, you will develop and implement instrumentation maintenance and calibration systems and process monitoring for productivity improvements. Ref: M1003

Piping/Welding c£25,000pa + o/t + bens
A coded/qualified welder with wide ranging, heavy process industry experience, you will control and coordinate all aspects of pipework repair, improvement and replacement projects from initial survey to final installation. Ref: M1004

For all roles, benefits will include paid overtime, 25 days holiday, contributory pension and subsidised canteen facilities. To request an application pack, please email your CV to Apply@InformedAssessment.co.uk Alternatively, post your CV or a brief letter with your name and address details to Barry Tollefson, Informed Assessment Limited, PO Box 290, Leyland PR25 5WP.

Please quote the appropriate reference number(s) when applying.
Any applications sent directly to ICOPAL will be forwarded to Informed Assessment. ICOPAL is an equal opportunities employer and committed to health & safety in all its operations.

Team Leaders:

In these 'hands on' roles you will also coordinate the day-to-day activities of shift-based tradespeople. CSG/HNC/HND qualified, you will have experience of supervising small multi-skilled teams and will be an effective problem solver and communicator.

Mechanical c£24,000pa inc. day-shift allowance + o/t + bens
You will have progressed to a supervisory role from your broad background in mechanical maintenance within a process or closely related industry. Ideally you also will have gained good working knowledge/understanding of basic machine electrical systems. Ref: M1005

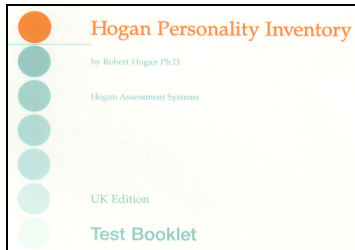
Electrical c£24,000pa inc. day-shift allowance + o/t + bens
You will have progressed to a supervisory role from your broad background in electrical maintenance within a process or closely related industry. Ideally you also will have gained good working knowledge/understanding of basic machine mechanical systems. Ref: M1006

Maintenance Tradespeople:

Electrical & Mechanical c£21,000pa inc. shift allowance + o/t + bens
A number of vacancies exist for time-served electrical and mechanical engineers to provide preventive, planned and breakdown maintenance to ensure availability and efficient operation of process plant and machinery. A strong team worker and effective communicator with good fault finding/problem solving skills, you will ideally have a good appreciation of both machine electrical and mechanical systems. Electrical Ref: M1007 Mechanical Ref: M1008

Delivering financial return: validation and profiling on behalf of Telewest

In Issue 4, in the first of our “Working Guide” articles, we cast a spotlight on the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI). Telewest in the UK recently drew upon Informed Assessment and the HPI distributors in the UK, PCL, to use the HPI to make a substantive contribution towards reducing staff turnover in its Direct Sales division.



Telewest is a household-name broadband media and communications group offering multi-channel TV, internet and telephone services to nearly 2 million homes as well as data, internet and voice solutions for 70,000 businesses. It employs a large Direct Sales force across the UK, but was suffering from unacceptably high staff turnover and significant direct and indirect costs associated with this, such as wasted management time in recruiting and training short-lived appointments.

Informed Assessment identified that the HPI would prove to add the most value in this process, given its proven record in predicting performance, its online capabilities and the way ‘customised’ scales could be created.

A sample of existing staff was selected to complete the HPI and care was taken to communicate the benefits of the programme to all concerned; this included reassurances as to the ‘ring fencing’ of results and the confidentiality of the data gathered, getting the ‘buy in’ from participants.

Performance data for the Direct Sales Staff was also gathered in the form of objective, quantifiable, open-ended measures.

The performance data was statistically cross-referenced to the HPI results. The purpose was to identify correlations to answer the crucial question, “what are we looking for – what makes a good Telewest Direct Sales person?”

Statistical analysis identified which elements of the HPI best predicted important aspects of performance. From this analysis, two Customised HPI scales were created. A number of existing / standard HPI scales were also found to contribute to the prediction of effective performance.

A user-friendly output was created – a “Suitability Template” – giving managers an at-a-glance picture of a candidate’s suitability using a red-amber-green classification.

A tailored training programme was

developed for line managers so they could use the new process effectively. The training also introduced a structured interview guide so that recruiting managers could explore areas of concern identified by the HPI Suitability Template in a user-friendly, structured and consistent way.

The process was sold internally through identifying the cost savings associated with reduced staff turnover and through involving line managers in the identification of potentially relevant HPI scales.

The process is now “live”, with regular reviews being undertaken to fine-tune the cut-offs.

Early results are extremely encouraging with attrition already starting to fall through this and other initiatives. Mike Winstone, the HR Director Consumer Division, said, “we can put about 10-15% reduced staff turnover directly to the introduction of this profiling project. This equates to 35-45 hires not going wrong. Conservatively, this has saved us a total approaching £80,000 when direct and indirect costs are taken into account”.



Psychometric assessment on behalf of Warwickshire Magistrates’ Courts Service

Warwickshire Magistrates’ Courts Service drew upon Informed Assessment in relation to an important appointment of a Justices’ Clerk. The interview panel wanted additional information to be available on the assessment day which would help them to arrive at a fair and objective picture of the candidates’ personality characteristics in the

areas identified as being most important for the job.

The Occupational Personality Questionnaire was administered to the candidates on the assessment day, and feedback was given to the panel before each interview linked to the job and person specification.

Vivienne McGhee, the Justices’ Chief Executive, said, “many thanks for your assistance with the appointment of a Justices’ Clerk. We found that the psychometric feedback was very helpful and enabled the panel to explore particular areas of interest during the interview process.”

Development workshops with Ryder

We have all seen vans and lorries on the motorway with the unmistakable and distinctive red Ryder logo without perhaps realising there's more to the name than meets the eye.

In addition to truck rental, the Company provides vehicle maintenance, leasing, supply chain services and a distribution operation – in other words it is a logistics company that offers an integrated operations solution.

Not resting on their laurels as a big player in the market place, Ryder saw the need to bring sales and operations closer together. They based this on the premise that operations staff will be closer to the client than anyone.

The solution to achieving this strategy was seen as a high energy impact session at a Ryder conference. During discussions between Informed Assessment and Ryder at executive level, it became clear that this was more of a long term organi-

sation development programme to complement the strategic business plan with the aim of capturing hearts and minds and changing attitudes.

Informed Assessment was ideally placed to help the Company kick start this process with a business development workshop programme for front line staff. This was put together by Informed Assessment and the Director of Business Development by drawing on the wealth of knowledge and experience of senior operations managers.

The actual workshop sessions were a joint effort between Ryder and Informed Assessment with the aim of:

- Positioning business development as a core activity of the Ryder business
- Understanding the Ryder business development process
- Appreciating the contribution everyone can make to business development
- Giving Managers the tools

and confidence to develop business.

With a mixed group of front line key operations / transport / contract managers as well as business development personnel, the workshop covered such topics as business position, opportunities and new integrated team operating arrangements.

These were delivered with a few surprises – building a Ryder 'truck' as well as producing collages of the company position now and in the future by using a variety of cut outs from a range of general magazines. Initial scepticism was soon overcome, as demonstrated by the time required to extract scissors, glue and magazines from the greatest initial cynics!

The strategy is still unfolding, so watch this space on Ryder developments!



News & Views

Informed Assessment's new Website

We are pleased to announce the upgrading of our website; the site now contains back copies of our newsletters in PDF format and case studies. It also contains useful briefing information for candidates to give of their best at psychometric assessment and assessment centres (including links to other relevant sites). Please pay us a visit at www.InformedAssessment.co.uk and let us have your feedback!

Assessment and Development Product Supplier News

Peter Saville has set up a new psychometric assessment company called Savilles; it will come as no surprise that the company will spe-

cialise in the development and support of psychometric assessment products!

SHL has recently updated a number of the norm tables associated with some of their most commonly used test batteries.

Some thoughts about leadership

The Times ran an article recently on "What does Leadership Mean to You?"

Here are some of the thought-provoking quotes:

"Leadership to me is picking good teams and putting them together.

And also putting yourself out for those people, helping them when they're stuck."

David Arculus, Chairman, mm02

Know what you are good at, understand yourself and then make sure that the people around you compensate for your weaknesses. If you pick people who are the same as you, you will fail."

Mervyn Davies, Chief Executive, Standard Chartered

"Leadership is about clarity of direction. What are you trying to do and are you able to communicate that to other people? You need courage to

tell some people that they're not doing things well enough, and how they can do better. A lot of people duck that".

Donald Brydon, Chairman, Smiths Group

"You need hard analytic skills, but you also need the soft side of bringing people with you. And the higher you go in an organisation, the more important the soft side becomes."

DeAnne Julius, Non Executive Director

Win a bottle of champagne

Tell us in a quote what leadership means to **you**. The best three quotes (one for each year we have been in business!) will each win a bottle of champagne and will be featured in Issue 6 of *Informed*.

The Lighter Side of Assessment and Development

When ideas go wrong....

The Sunday Times and the Daily Mirror last year reported upon the unfavourable staff reaction in a well-

known DIY store to the result of a management brainstorming session. The outcome from the session was that staff were asked to sing 'Mahna Mahna', from the Muppet Show, to customers at their store in East Kilbride. One assistant said, "We returned from lunch and the managers were sitting in a semi-circle and looking pleased with themselves. Then one of them blurted out 'Mahna Mahna' without warning." The store's spokesman was quoted as saying, "It's a different way to say good morning".

Customer buying psychology

Spare a thought for lastminute.com, which reported financial results last year were proving more difficult to predict, because, they said, "more clients are booking at the last minute".

Personality of the Stars

Alan Sugar can now arguably be described as a star as a result of his appearances in *The Apprentice*, and his unlikely catch phrase, "you're fired!"

Make of this what you will when he described his approach to team working in a recently published magazine:

"I have to be team player, but I'm the captain. No one has ever given me directions."

A picture tells a thousand words...

(Thanks to Bronwen Houghton for the picture)



Please submit any Personality of the Stars Insights, or other Lighter Side of Assessment gems to us for future inclusion in Informed.

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At Informed Assessment, we are committed to delivering work to a high standard. We work ethically and professionally with clients, candidates, participants and suppliers. We work in partnership with our clients and focus on providing practical solutions to their needs. In achieving our goals, it is important to us that all parties are treated with respect and have a positive experience of the process.