

openspace

"Thompson Dunn can really add value in supporting people in periods of significant change. They have particular skills and experience to support this. The psychological perspective, coupled with an awareness of the business context allows for a much more holistic approach, which has true value."

WHAT IS ASSESSMENT FOR?

Much is being written currently about leadership development, the management of human capital, facilitating and growing a company's leadership pipeline and executive coaching.

At Thompson Dunn, we begin our approach to work of this nature by establishing a baseline, the point from which we start an intervention with a client. This is our assessment process and it forms the foundation for much of the work we do as psychologists, whether it is with individuals, groups or whole organisations.

Many clients who come to us for the first time might be curious as to why we insist on collecting a broad and deep sample selection of data before we begin to 'do' something. As external consultants we are aware of the expectation for us to find answers and seek resolution to people issues. Nevertheless, to do so without a thorough understanding of the current 'status quo' may mean we are answering the wrong questions in the first place.



How does this help a Chief Executive, HR Director, Board of a company or a busy hands-on manager? We have based our proposals for improvement and change on the basis of fact and assessment, not just observation or surmise. This factual evaluation of the skills and potential of future employees, current managers or potential Senior Executives gives considerable comfort to most hard bitten CEO's or HR Directors who want to make informed decisions about how to get the best out of their foremost asset, the Human Capital within their own business.

Coaching is often delivered to an unsuspecting public on the basis of a short questionnaire, the results of a single psychometric tool e.g. Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or a brief interview. At Thompson Dunn, we believe that establishing the individual clients' development needs based on a wide ranging psychological assessment is essential. This also includes an in-depth interview and wherever possible a 360 degree measure of that person's behaviour. In this way, we set the agenda for change based on an understanding, shared with the client, of what is going on at that moment in time, what needs to change and how this coaching intervention can prioritise the steps to progress. It is because we have created this baseline that we are then in a position to measure change over time. We know where we have started from and so does the client.

Absolute clarity about where each party stands and what each is contributing to the process enables transformational change to occur for many individuals, groups and organisations. We have spent the last 20 years developing this process. It works, at different levels and over differing life spans depending on what progress the client wishes to achieve. The point is that we are able to measure the distance travelled and reflect this back to the sponsors of the programme. Most CEO's and HR Directors want to know how their money is being spent and what has been achieved. We are in a position to give them very clear answers.



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