A User's Guide for the

HermanCheckStart ä

Assessment System

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the HermanCheckStart User's Guide. This Guide has been designed to complement the use of the HermanCheckStart Assessment system. Please also see the Technical Manual for additional technical information on the HermanCheckStart instrument.

HermanCheckStart Development Company
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THE HermanCheckStart ASSESSMENT DESIGN CONCEPT

The History of Personality Assessment Instruments in the Marketplace

Historically, assessment instruments have been developed for two very different markets. Each of these markets have demanded very different criteria. The first is a clinical market, consisting of psychologists and psychiatrists. Instruments for this market have the following characteristics:

- They produce reliable information.
- They produce specific information.
- They are generally based on current theories.
- They are very complex.
- They require a lot of time.
- They require expert interpretation.
- The process is quite expensive.
- There is a negative connotation with clinical instruments.
- They often include medical assessment elements.

The other extreme consists of simplistic instruments, used by consultants, trainers, and counselors. These instruments have the following characteristics:

- They are quick and simple.
- They require no interpretation.
- Their information is generalized.
- They are based on outdated theories.
- They use outdated methodology.
- They are cheap.

A third major market developed in the 1970's. **As the business world became more and more competitive, it became clear that the most significant advantage a company possessed lay in the people it employed.** Not only was it significant, but it was a singular advantage for each company. While products can be copied, and systems can be duplicated, the culture and performance of every population of employees is unique. More progressive businesses began to look to

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assessment information for an informational edge in making hiring decisions as they sought to build their work force. Some embraced the advice of industrial psychologists, without regard to expense. Many resorted to using the simplest personality tools, seeking to gain any degree of insight into the mystery of selecting top performers. Others looked for more business-oriented solutions, and a few instruments were developed specifically for that market. **It was through the experiences of the thousands of businesses that were early adopters of this technology in the 1980's and 1990's, that an extraordinary volume of empirical data was collected that would essentially rewrite performance management doctrines into the next Millennium.** More and more managers have forsaken the old beliefs that anyone can do anything if they work hard, are motivated, and are trained effectively. **The ability to measure interpersonal competencies or core personality traits which essentially remain the same throughout a person's life, has brought the focus of optimization of performance on to getting the right person into the right job in the beginning.**

As remarkable as these possibilities are, the sophisticated assessment instruments that make this possible have generally commanded such a premium price and required such expert support, that they were just not a practical solution for most businesses for all job categories.

General Design Elements for the HermanCheckStart Assessment

- It measures only fundamental interpersonal competencies that are directly related to job success. These competencies are based upon a construct derived from accepted psychological theories.

- **All text will be written in an inclusionary style. Obstacles to performance will be clearly identified, and potential interventions will be noted. The possibility of success will not be denied for any candidate.**

- The reports will be computer generated. Software will be built on standard industry platforms.

- The text will be customizable for special applications.

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- Behavioral interview questions relating to each type of position will be generated for each candidate.

- When appropriate, coaching and management suggestions will be included in the text.

- There will be a single summary page that integrates the three elements of the hiring decision: Attitude, Skills and Experience, and Interpersonal Competencies.

The HermanCheckStart Reports

HermanCheckStart offers various reports describing an individual's behavior in specific Job Categories. A unique feature of this menu of Job Categories is that it is possible to examine different aspects of job-related behaviors.

Job Categories Available and their descriptions:

Persuasive Sales
Telemarketing Sales
Retail Sales
Management
Customer Service
Administrative
Financial
Information Technology
Engineering
Healthcare
Food Service
Hospitality
Production
Warehouse
Driver

Persuasive Sales

Most sales jobs are Persuasive Sales jobs to some degree. In Persuasive Sales, the salesperson must make a sales presentation of some kind. This is generally done

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face-to-face and with or without visual aids. The presentation may be closely scripted, or it may be consultative, adapting to each new prospect. The sales process may require a high level of interaction during the sales interview, or it may be more one-sided, with the salesperson doing most of the talking. Persuasive Sales must be closed by the salesperson; the prospect must be persuaded to take action. The sales cycle may last several months, or it may be only that one meeting between prospect and salesperson. It may be complex or technically oriented, requiring extensive training, or it may be quite simple. NOTE: The cognitive portion of HermanCheckStart is recommended for Persuasive Sales positions.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Customer Service, Management

Telemarketing Sales

Telemarketing Sales normally consists of making a sales presentation of some kind over the telephone. In outgoing Telemarketing Sales, the salesperson telephones the prospects directly. In Incoming Telemarketing Sales, the salesperson answers calls from prospects who are responding to some form of advertising. In both cases, the salesperson is expected to persuade the prospect to take some form of action. This could be to make a purchase; to agree to an appointment for a face-to-face presentation of some kind; to participate in a marketing survey; or to agree to some other action. Some of these will require greater levels of persuasion than others.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Customer Service, Persuasive Sales

Retail Sales

A position in Retail Sales is exemplified by the sales staff of most retail stores found throughout the country. The location or advertising generates traffic and the success of the store depends largely on what happens once the shopper enters the store. There are many ways to succeed in the position of Retail Sales Associate, and those depend to some extent on the particular store and its marketing strategies, target market, and sales approach. This text is written so as to afford the store manager with a description of the sales and service behaviors that are most likely to be used by the candidate.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Customer Service

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Management

Whether the title is Manager, Supervisor, Director, Lead Person, or Head Teller, the responsibility of such positions is to produce results through the actions of other people. This may be done in a collaborative way, emphasizing teamwork, or it may be done in an authoritative style with superiors and subordinates. In every case, the person in leadership must deal with discipline and performance problems; provide feedback to others; develop plans; manage projects; and make decisions. NOTE: The cognitive portion of HermanCheckStart is recommended for all Management positions.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Financial, Customer Service

Customer Service

All businesses must deliver Customer Service in some form. HermanCheckStart 's Customer Service report is designed to describe the expected job-related behaviors that an individual would have when they are interacting directly with customers. This is certainly well-suited to specific Customer Service positions, however it is also an important component in understanding how any individual in any position will behave when dealing with customers.

Administrative

Secretaries, administrative assistants, clerical workers, and many others are responsible for handling paperwork and supporting the work of other people. Some of these jobs demand a high attention to details, and some do not. Some involve scheduling and time management, and others must react to events as they happen. Some are collaborative with an emphasis on teamwork, and others require working alone. Some involve answering the telephone and dealing with the duties of a receptionist. NOTE: The cognitive portion of HermanCheckStart is recommended for most Administrative/Clerical positions.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Financial, Customer Service

Financial

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Financial positions involve dealing with a high degree of detail accurately. Financial practices typically demand a high degree of compliance with established rules and procedures. Time management is usually important, and there are many critical deadlines that must be met. Depending upon the job, other requirements might include working closely with other members of a work group, decision making, problem solving, directing the work of others, planning and managing projects, and more. Some Financial positions are bookkeeping, accountant, controller, purchasing, CFO, teller, loan officer, cashier, and other jobs with financial responsibilities.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Management, Customer Service

IT (Information Technology)

IT positions include a wide range of jobs, such as programmer, software developer, hardware technician, Web designer, CIO, project managers, network specialist, systems analyst, computer sales, software sales, and more. Each position must deliver a set of job-related behaviors that may be unique to a particular situation or a particular company. HermanCheckStart 's IT report is designed to translate an individual's personality traits and cognitive ability into those job-related behaviors that are most common to IT positions. In order to acquire a more complete picture of how an individual will perform in a particular IT role, it is may be necessary to consider the information from several other HermanCheckStart reports.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Customer Service, Management

Engineering

There are many specialized areas of Engineering. The principal differences are found in the knowledge and skills required for those disciplines. There are job-related behaviors that are common to all Engineering positions. Some Engineering roles are more customer-focused, either in terms of sales or service delivery. The use of other HermanCheckStart reports is important to gain a more complete picture of these aspects of particular Engineering positions.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Persuasive Sales, Management, Customer Service

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Healthcare

Healthcare positions normally involve direct contact with patients. Most Healthcare jobs demand a critical attention to details. Rules and procedures are specific and must be followed closely. Organization is important, but often the individual must react to unexpected events. Healthcare jobs also involve working closely with other people. Some Healthcare jobs may require decision making, directing the work of others, dealing with high levels of stress, handling difficult situations, and more. Some Healthcare positions are nurse, orderly, doctor's assistant, lab technician, dietitian, pharmacist, medical assistant, emergency medical personnel, and other jobs related to the medical field.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Management, Customer Service

Food Service

There are a wide range of Food Service positions, ranging from those in fine dining restaurants to fast food drive through windows. What they have in common is that each must deliver a positive experience to the customer. Some Food Service positions have clearly defined job requirements, with each action predetermined in an operating manual. This may even include the words that are to be used with the customers. Other Food Service jobs may involve reacting to the needs of the customers in a more flexible manner. Some jobs may require more attention to detail; some will require more customer interaction. HermanCheckStart is a good starting point for determining how an individual matches a particular Food Service position.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Management, Customer Service

Hospitality

There are many different jobs in the Hospitality industry. This HermanCheckStart report does not attempt to deal specifically with all of them in detail. What most Hospitality jobs have in common is that some established procedures are followed in order to provide a positive experience for the guests. Some jobs will involve more interaction with the guests than other jobs. Some will require a greater degree

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of flexibility than other jobs. Some will require decision making, problem solving, handling higher levels of stress, supervising the work of others, handling paperwork, planning events, and more. In order to get a more complete picture of some job behaviors, it may be necessary to consider the information from other HermanCheckStart job categories.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Customer Service, Management, Food Service, Financial, Driver

Production

Production jobs are generally involved in some type of manufacturing process. That process may be extremely mechanized or it may rely mainly on handwork. The quality of the product may depend upon strict adherence to a proven process, or it may depend on the independent decisions of an empowered work force. The HermanCheckStart Production report focuses on those job-related behaviors that are common to most industrial positions.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Management (Supervisor)

Warehouse

Warehouse personnel are generally involved in shipping or receiving goods. Attention to detail is important, as is consistency in following established procedures. Compliance with safety rules is critical. Warehouse personnel may work as part of a team or they may work separately. Some positions may involve directing the work of others.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Management, Customer Service

Driver

There are countless jobs that involve driving, such as route drivers, moving van drivers, delivery drivers, ambulance drivers, shuttle drivers, taxi drivers, bus drivers, long haul truck drivers, short haul truck drivers, tow truck drivers, and many more. The HermanCheckStart Driver report does not begin to be comprehensive enough to relate specifically to all of these types of Driver positions. The HermanCheckStart Driver report provides information on job-related behaviors that

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are likely to be found in situations in which Driving "supports" the principal business of the company, but is not "the" principal business of the company. Route driver, delivery truck driver, hospitality shuttle driver, and short haul truck driver are examples of positions that are generally appropriate for the HermanCheckStart report. The report will provide insights into the more specialized Driver jobs, but it may not address certain critical job behaviors that are unique to that particular position. The report will include activities such as maintaining a schedule, interacting with customers, handling paperwork, dealing with confrontation, following rules, consistency of service, and following safety practices.

Other HermanCheckStart reports that may be helpful: Customer Service

Methodologies for Using Assessment Instruments for Pre-Employment Selection Systems

Ever since the earliest concepts of personality styles introduced the world to the individual differences that drive the behavior and social interactions of all human beings, progressive business people have sought insights that might serve as predictors of job performance. While the simple four-quadrant constructs of DISC-type instruments hinted at these key personality factors, the psychometrics used in these assessments could not supply the level of information needed for serious decision making in business and legal environments.

During the last thirty years, significant and dramatic advances in computer technologies have enabled similarly dramatic parallel advances in psychometric science. Two principal developments stand out in terms of opening the doorway to remarkable possibilities in the business world. **The first is the generally universal agreement that there are certain traits of personality that essentially remain stable throughout a person's life.** These traits form a core set of behavioral characteristics that define a range of behavior that an individual can comfortably deliver. **While an individual may demonstrate behavioral characteristics outside of their core traits, it is only accomplished by expending large amounts of extra energy which causes the individual more stress.** When jobs are analyzed with respect to these behaviors, and the most critical elements of behavior are identified, it is possible to recognize the individual

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characteristics of personality that enable a high level of job performance with the least demand for additional energy or stress.

The second development of importance to the business world was the creation of assessment instruments that could accurately measure these personality traits in the population of job seekers and incumbent workers. This meant that it was now possible to select the individuals with the traits that most closely correlated with the ones required for success in a particular job. **It was also possible to recognize the incongruities in certain job requirements and to see how to redefine them in a more productive manner.** Potential employees could now see which jobs held the greatest promise with regard to their inherent abilities.

Incorporating this technology of performance information into the selection process of any business is relatively easy as long as the following steps are followed:

Selecting Additional Assessment Instruments

There are thousands of instruments available in the world, yet only a few have the technical capabilities to deliver the level of accurate information demanded for serious business decisions. Buyers should look for instruments developed no later than 1995; those will have benefited from the new technology. Buyers should look for instruments specifically designed for pre-employment assessment. Such instruments can usually offer significant legal advantages as well as improving selection. Buyers should become educated as to what is important in the decision. A quick reference book for this is **Right Person- Right Job, Guess or Know** by Chuck Russell. In a one-hour read, it is an ideal primer for any business executive to learn the fundamentals of which assessments are right for what purpose; the essential legal issues that are relevant to their use; and the breakthrough applications that are possible today.

Relating the Information to the Job Requirements

There are two methodologies for relating the measured behavioral characteristics of an individual to the characteristics required for success in a particular job. The classic approach has been to test successful incumbents in the same job and through the analysis of the data, generate a success profile or benchmark for that job. This would reflect the critical interpersonal competencies necessary for

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success on that job. Candidates are then compared to the success profile or benchmark for the particular job they are seeking. The critical gaps are then evaluated as to the combined capabilities of the employer and the candidate to bridge them and achieve success in that job. This method is quite effective when executed properly. The critical variables are the quality of the input data available to generate the benchmarks and the stability of the jobs. An insufficient sample of incumbents or a poorly selected sample can result in misleading benchmarks. If the jobs are changing frequently or the environment of the jobs is in flux, the reliability of the benchmarks will also vary. When using this type of methodology, it is important to have experienced oversight integrated into the system on a consistent basis. The other methodology is designed to operate across a greater number of jobs or in situations that do not permit the careful oversight required by the benchmark systems or success profiles. It is known as **synthetic interview resonance**. Using a simple interactive technique, the broad behavioral environment of a job is mapped against the construct of certain interpersonal competencies.

Then, text is written that specifically describes the integration of those competencies into the behavioral environment of the job. **As that text is read by a person familiar with the job, a positive or negative resonance is generated by the description of the candidate's behavioral characteristics in that environment.** This type of report is written in an inclusionary style that does not deny any candidate's ability to perform any job. It does however describe the adaptations, stress, energy, or other costs that would be necessary to achieve an acceptable level of performance. This methodology is variable centered on the reader. Therefore, as the job changes or the environment changes, the reader's orientation changes accordingly, allowing the assessment characteristics to remain stable.

The second methodology is well suited to business applications involving large populations of employees, disparate locations, limited human resource support, changing job responsibilities, changing market conditions, or limited budgets. For critical executive positions, key sales roles, or other vital areas of responsibilities, a combination of both assessment methodologies is recommended.

Effective Use of the Appropriate Information

Once the proper assessment and the most effective methodology have been identified, the pieces must be incorporated into the business' existing processes in

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the most effective configuration. These processes might include but not be limited to such things as multiple interviews, integrity testing, drug testing, reference and/or background checks, and skills testing. A basic strategy is to use the least expensive and most accurate methodology at the earliest possible opportunity. The HermanCheckStart Assessment system's unlimited license structure was designed to play that role, delivering high content information directly related to individual candidates' relative match to the job requirements at a cost far lower than interviewing or other forms of testing.

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FREQUENTLY ANSWERED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE HermanCheckStart ASSESSMENT

The HermanCheckStart Assessment Guide has been designed specifically so that users and non-professionals can quickly and easily understand all of the important, technical and regulatory issues that are important in the use of assessments. The HermanCheckStart Assessment was designed to be a user friendly assessment system.

Q. Now that our company has decided to use the HermanCheckStart Assessment system, what benefits will we receive?

A. A company utilizing the HermanCheckStart Assessment system can expect to receive a number of benefits. First and foremost it provides the company with an objective view of perspective candidates for selection and promotion. **Unlike an interviewer, an assessment is never distracted, rushed, tired, biased and it does not experience any of the other problems that interviewers face everyday.** In true scientific form, it always asks the same questions in the same order. When candidates respond, each and every one is responding to exactly the same set of questions.

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Using the HermanCheckStart Assessment system will help companies to avoid putting a right person into the wrong job or a wrong person into the right job. For the company, this means not entering into long and expensive learning curves with employees that are poorly matched to particular jobs. For the employees, this means not investing time and energy in jobs that are unlikely to reward them on the same scale as the effort that will be needed to succeed at that job because of a poor match of interpersonal competencies.

Q. Granted that preventing job mismatches is important, what other benefits should be expected?

A. Depending upon the existing selection process, clients usually experience two principal operations benefits from using the HermanCheckStart Assessment system. First, **the cost per hire decreases.** As unsuitable candidates are screened out at an earlier point and before more expensive elements of the selection process come into play, there is an immediate reduction in the hiring expense. Secondly, because a higher level of information in terms of being accurate and reliable is now available, **hiring decisions are expedited, reducing the time-to-offer.** This can be a significant benefit in industries or locations in a tight, competitive job market.

One of the most important benefits gained by utilizing the HermanCheckStart Assessment system is the fact that **morale is positively affected because candidates and employees realize the importance of selecting the right person.** Those who are selected feel special because they know that the company has taken great pains to make sure that they will be successful. Candidates understand that the company is committed to having the highest quality and the most productive people on the staff.

Q. How does the HermanCheckStart Assessment fit into what we are currently doing?

A. The HermanCheckStart report functions as an additional data point within your current process. **The HermanCheckStart Assessment also provides a battery of behavioral interview questions on the type of job the interviewer has selected.** These questions are generated from the candidate's individual scores. Behavioral interview questions have proven to be the most effective in

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eliciting meaningful answers from job candidates. An important feature of the HermanCheckStart Assessment is that the set of questions is matched to the candidate's scores. This means that the same questions are asked of each candidate with the same scores, yet for each individual, the particular set of questions will address the particular strengths and weaknesses of that particular candidate relative to the job in question. This ensures that **all questions are job-related and are adjusted for individual differences.**

Q. What job category reports are available?

A. There are currently many job category reports available. The list below also contains complete descriptions of the categories in the section presented earlier in this manual called "The HermanCheckStart Reports"

Q. Why were these positions chosen?

A. These positions were chosen because they represent the majority of categories used by employers.

Q. Can you print more than one report for each person?

A. The HermanCheckStart system allows you to print whatever reports can help you make more informed decisions. **The unlimited usage feature of HermanCheckStart 's pricing structure encourages you to use the product extensively.**

For example: When interviewing candidates for a Persuasive Sales position, you would certainly choose the Persuasive Sales report option first, but you may then choose to review the Customer Service report to provide a focus on the customer interaction aspect of sales. The same individual may later be considered for a management role. At that point, you may choose to review the Management report as a part of that decision making process.

Many companies have many people in multiple roles. Additionally many roles are not purely one type or the other. They often encompass portions of each of the described roles. That is, a manager may also assist with sales and customer support. A support person may also do customer service as well as some

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supervision. By choosing these roles, and utilizing multiple reports, and employer can understand how a perspective employee can function in many of the various responsibilities which they are required to discharge.

Q. Will other job categories be available?

A. Yes. The HermanCheckStart reports are always being revisited for possible additions.

Q. Can the reports be customized to reflect my company's own job categories and terminology?

A. Yes. Please discuss your particular needs with your HermanCheckStart representative. A wide variety of customization possibilities are available.

Q. How were the requirements of the job categories used in the HermanCheckStart Assessment determined?

A. A team of business consultants, sales consultants, management consultants, psychologists, and others, all with extensive experience in using assessment technologies to analyze and predict job performance across a wide range of positions, were involved in the crafting and review of the HermanCheckStart text. Only those characteristics that had general acceptance across the mainstream of the workplace were included. As more industry-specific job categories are added, specialists in those industries are called in to ensure the pertinence of the text. It is also important to note that the HermanCheckStart text is written in a purely inclusionary style. **No one is ever denied the possibility of success in any aspect of any job.** Rather the HermanCheckStart report describes the challenges and adaptations that may be necessary to achieve an adequate level of performance. More importantly, the report describes the individual's strengths and the ease of performance in those areas. **The HermanCheckStart Assessment actually reveals a far broader spectrum of an individual's competencies than standard interviewing.** Its report can compare the same candidate to several job categories quickly and easily.

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Q. Is there a coaching and training recommendation report available as an option?

A. Actually, coaching and training recommendations are included within every report where it is appropriate.

Q. What do I need to use the HermanCheckStart Assessment System?

A. The HermanCheckStart Assessment system software must first be installed on your computer system. The software requires a computer with 16 megabytes of RAM that is using the Windows 98/2000 or the NT operating system. It can be completed on a pencil and paper version with the answers then being entered on the screen. The directions are simple and self-explanatory. Once the answers have been entered, any type of report can be selected and printed.

Q. How should the HermanCheckStart report be used?

A. The HermanCheckStart Assessment was designed to, first of all, take the measures of personality described and project behavior related to those measures. Secondly, the HermanCheckStart Assessment describes the relationship between the job and the personality. An example would be that if a candidate measured as an assertive person in a sales position then they would be someone who could very easily ask for an order. A submissive person would be expected to have some difficulty being assertive enough to ask a prospect to make a buying decision.

The intent of the instrument is to provide decision support to managers who are making hiring and promotion decisions. By providing them with behavioral descriptions of typical work related behaviors of candidates, they can understand how the prospective employees may perform in a number of typical work situations. By understanding that a person applying for a sales position, for example, who has difficulty asking for an order (due to submissiveness), a manager should realize that direct selling would be difficult for a candidate. This challenge would not categorically indicate that a candidate would be unable to perform a task or job. It would be prudent that, now alerted, the manager should investigate thoroughly other qualifications which the candidate possesses to compensate for this possible limitation. With the text of the instrument being written in an inclusionary manor, the converse would also be true. That is, if a person in a service role were extremely cooperative, it would not categorically indicate that they

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could perform flawlessly. The rest of the traits that a candidate possessed would need to be taken into consideration as many different combinations of traits could interfere with performance.

Q. What does the HermanCheckStart Assessment measure?

A. The HermanCheckStart Assessment measures six work-related interpersonal competencies or personality traits. These competencies are:

Extroversion...This is a well established scale that at a high level reflects characteristics which include, being gregarious, outgoing behavior, being engaging, a propensity toward risk, the desire to talk rather than listen, and preferring to interact with others rather than be alone. At a low level, the scale indicates characteristics which include preferring to be and work alone, not engaging others, avoidance of risk, and being reserved.

Rules - Rules is a construct that was established to measure people's tendencies to observe and comply with rules, regulations, and established policies and procedures. The hypothesis that this construct follows is that persons who are high in rules-oriented behavior exhibit a conventional manner. They tend to be amenable to following established policies and procedures, and generally prefer a well ordered environment. Those individuals who are low in rules-oriented behavior exhibit traits which reflect innovation, a tendency to look for shortcuts in procedures, an ability to work with few guidelines, and a preference for minimal structure in the environment.

Assertiveness... Assertiveness is a well established psychological construct. It measures behavior at the high end of the scale, of those who are forthright, willing to speak their mind, face conflict and controversy, and take charge, among other things. The converse of these behaviors are reflected at the low end of the scale and include a submissive nature, a preference for following as opposed to leading, a tendency to avoid conflict, and a reluctance to state one's opinions directly.

Team... The team construct is a hypothesis that suggests that the high end of the scale, describes those persons who are primarily cooperative, put the needs of others before their own, value harmony, tend to be more fulfilled by engaging in consensus related activities, and consequently would be more team-oriented. The

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people described by the low end of the scale would tend to be extremely competitive, particularly on an individual basis. Such persons generally put their own needs first; prefer individual recognition; and often view their team members as either their audience or as competitors.

Organization... Another well recognized psychological construct, this measures on the high end, people who are planful, precise, orderly, punctual, and comfortable with details. On the low end, the Organization scale measures people who tend to be spontaneous, preferring little or no planning. They have a relaxed view of time, and tend to focus on the big picture rather than the details.

Sensitivity... This construct measures the traits which reflect immaturity, worry, anxiety, and tendencies to have generally inconsistent and negative moods. Sensitivity measured on the high end of this scale represents people whose emotions are subject to frequent external influences. The low end of this scale measures behavior that is characterized by stable moods, freedom from worry, lack of anxiety and apprehensiveness, and a generally positive outlook.

Q. Why were these six elements chosen?

A. These six traits were picked because they are traits which bear significantly on the person's performance in the workplace regardless of the job. Additionally, these components are readily understandable as well as being behaviorally recognizable. During the initial development phase of the HermanCheckStart Assessment, a list was compiled of the characteristics that managers and supervisors most wanted to be able to predict when evaluating job candidates. Next, the characteristics on the list were correlated with behavioral competencies and personality traits that have been shown to be measurable. Those that lacked a history of reliable assessment in the business world were then eliminated. For example, *motivation* was one of the prime factors identified as desirable by the managers, but there has never been a successful methodology for measuring that factor. On the other hand, *assertiveness* was also a highly desirable factor, and it has been measured dependably in business settings by both the NEO-5 and the Prevue Assessment. **In other words, the HermanCheckStart Assessment is built upon a well-established foundation that has seen abundant research and application.**

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Q. The HermanCheckStart Assessment system includes a social desirability scale. What is it and why is it important?

A. The social desirability scale came into wide spread use in the late 1950's. At that time psychologists were using first generation assessment instruments and were finding that candidates could manipulate their answers by analyzing the intent of questions or by choosing favorable descriptions of themselves. Candidates would readily choose those adjectives or phrases which they felt described the ideal personal traits or competencies for the position they were seeking. This caused a great deal of concern about the accuracy and the validity of those instruments. To protect the validity and accuracy, social desirability scales were developed. These have been variously known as "faking good/faking bad", "impression management", and measures of distortion. They are basically all checks which ensure that a person's report is reliable. **It allows the users of the HermanCheckStart Assessment system to be confident that the reports that they are reading reflect a true picture of the candidates.**

Q. Why are there not quantified scales or graphs included in the report?

A. There is a hierarchy of usability that is important to consider when designing reports. The lowest level of usability is data or simple numbers. This data must be analyzed or interpreted by experts or thoroughly trained individuals to produce information that is meaningful to lay people. This level of simple interpretation is provided in the HermanCheckStart General Report. The participant's behavior is described, but without context to any particular job. **In order for the information to drive actions or enable decisions, it must be correlated with actual situations.** It must be integrated into practical applications that anyone can understand. The degree that information restricts the accessibility of action through the use of scientific scales or esoteric terminology is the degree to which the instrument, no matter how accurate, fails to translate its potential value into pragmatic value in the business world.

The HermanCheckStart Assessment was designed from the beginning to offer value to the non-expert, to the average businessperson, who specializes in areas other than psychology and psychometrics. Therefore, the HermanCheckStart job category reports deliver information that has been translated into real world

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situations. It clearly explains the context of the participant's behavior in any of the job categories included in the software. **The decisions and actions suggested by the information are not only clear to almost any reader, but they are essentially driven by the reader's own point of view.**

Q. How detailed is the measurement of the HermanCheckStart Assessment?

A. The HermanCheckStart Assessment system was designed to identify the extremes of behavior on each scale. The scores are sorted into above average, average, and below average. It is not designed to measure minor gradients in behavior such as with a sten (ten-point) scale. **Psychologists have long understood that the defining strengths and weaknesses of individual performance are generally found in those elements which are extreme when compared to the norm.** The HermanCheckStart Assessment system identifies those extremes and comments appropriately.

Q. Sometimes the reports on candidates seem to read the same in some areas. How many different versions of the reports are there?

A. The HermanCheckStart report is written to describe specific behaviors within the context of specific job categories. The reader will easily be able to distinguish different characteristics among different participants. However, it is important to remember that the HermanCheckStart report's goal is to identify the extremes which are by definition exceptions to the average range. There are more people within the average range than there are at either extreme. Similar people will have similar reports. For each job category, in the personality section each of the six scales has two-report segments each for the high range, the average range, and the low range. All together there are 729 possible permutations of reports possible for each job category.

Q. Most narrative reports from other instruments are interesting and seem to be fairly accurate. The problem is that after I read the report, I still do not know what to do. How is HermanCheckStart 's report different?

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A. The HermanCheckStart Assessment's narrative report is written quite differently than the reports common to most assessment instruments. First generation instruments, second-generation instruments and even some psychometrically advanced instruments generate narratives that are written in a broad generalized style that is designed to trigger a resonance with a fairly broad sample of the population. The information is often valuable, but it can often be difficult and problematical for the assessment user or client to apply the descriptions to the job in question. This becomes even more difficult as the diversity of jobs increases while the information stays in its generalized form. An example of this is excerpted from a leading instrument's low Extroversion report.

> "*This person is self-sufficient, quiet and reserved, only occasionally soliciting companionship. He feels that life has enough excitement without going out and looking for it. It is unlikely they would initiate a conversation or other social contact.*"

The extreme form of this is seen in very simple instruments which have narrative reports resembling little more than horoscopes. This exploits a characteristic of human beings that is evidenced in what psychologists call the *P.T. Barnum Effect.* This refers to a commonly repeated experiment in which a simple assessment is administered to a group of people. Each of the participants is given an identical personality report written in a broad resonance style. Typically, seventy percent or more of the people will describe the report as accurate. The generalized wording stimulates some level of resonance across a wide spectrum of participants despite the obvious diversity of the group.

The HermanCheckStart Assessment uses a technique called **virtual interview.** This technique has text which is written specifically to integrate the described behaviors into the context of specific job requirements. **It is much as if the candidate was describing their behavior in those circumstances.** An example of this is excerpted from a low Extroversion Sales Candidate report:

> *"There is an emotional factor in virtually every buying decision. While they may have mastered sales skills and may know everything about what they are selling, their presentation seldom has the emotional content of top salespeople. Their prospects may discount the message presented because of their quieter style. It is important that they partner with others who excel in enthusiastic presentations."*

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The interviewer would experience either a positive or negative resonance with the described behavior and the job requirements in question. This narrow band resonance then provides the information for effective decision making by the user. The text is descriptive of the candidate's personality traits, interpersonal competencies, and the behavioral requirements of the job. **The report does not deny any candidate's ability to perform any job. It does describe the adaptations, stress, energy, or other costs that would be necessary to achieve performance.** This inclusionary style is valuable for the job candidate because it allows them to recognize both the "Right Person-Right Job" compatibility and the potential problems within the context of a positive presentation.

Q. Who developed the HermanCheckStart Assessment?

A. The HermanCheckStart Assessment was developed by a multi-disciplinary team of specialists and professionals working in a cross-functional manner during each stage of the process. It is the first psychometric instrument to be developed through such an integrated approach rather than a linear process. It also was not centered on the expertise of any one individual or specialist. Joining psychologists and statisticians were assessment applications consultants, business consultants, software designers and information architects. A selected group of end users also provided ongoing feedback as the various parts of the system took shape. This strategy served to preclude the single-pointed thinking and intrapersonal bias that has often handicapped other assessment development programs.

Q. In the United States, the tests have to comply with regulations set forth by the EEOC, the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), and the 1991 Civil Rights Act. Does the HermanCheckStart ™ Assessment system comply with these and if so how?

A. Job related testing and assessments are essentially the only way to document objective and nondiscriminatory hiring practices. In a hiring process, only the testing components are purely objective. Hogan, (1990) correctly points out "bias is a social component of the decision making process, not a feature of the test results; therefore the primary advantage of test use is that tests,

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unlike interviewers, are incapable of being influenced by the applicant's race, gender, national origin, religion, age, or disability." Under the uniform guidelines on employee selection procedures (1994) a selection process must provide fair and equal employment opportunities to all applicants. The operative principle must always be to avoid adverse impact or non-performance related discrimination against any minorities. The HermanCheckStart Assessment system does not include any norms for race, gender, natural origin, religion, age or disability. This excludes adverse impact or non- performance related discrimination from the assessment part of a selection process.

The HermanCheckStart Assessment system offers a unique benefit in terms of establishing documentation of a nondiscriminatory selection process. The challenge with most other instruments used for pre-employment screening is the undue emphasis that can be placed on the assessment report. **Any selection decision must incorporate information from a number of data points.** The candidate's attitude and presentation during the interview process is important. The skills, education, and experience brought to the job must be evaluated. **The HermanCheckStart Assessment system provides an extraordinarily simple summary page by which a wide spectrum of elements can be integrated into a composite numerical rating that creates a common standard by which a diverse population of candidates may be compared in a holistic manner.** The summary page can easily be combined with other components of an existing process or vice versa.

Q. Now that we know that the instrument is accurate, how can we get the most out of our usage?

A. Use it on every candidate and every employee. The license includes a year of unlimited use. A company does not save money by limiting its use of the HermanCheckStart ™ Assessment. **A company which has a higher percentage of Right People in the Right Jobs is in a more competitive and profitable position.** By using the instrument on everyone, morale will improve, and employees will feel special about being selected in a company that cares enough about their employees to make sure that they fit the job and that the job fits them.

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PLEASE NOTE:
ONGOING UPDATES TO THE CONTENT OF THIS MANUAL OCCUR FREQUENTLY INCLUDING ADDITIONAL "Frequently Asked Questions". These updates can be found on the website:

www.HermanCheckStart .com

You may also call Toll Free 888.477.3883 at any time for additional information.

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