

The Development and Validation of the Adaptability Express Scale

Brian Dreschler, M.A.

The Adaptability Express scale was developed to help provide employers with a quick measure of a candidate’s attitudes and opinions toward acceptance of change and the willingness to learn. Specifically, the scale helps measure the extent to which a candidate is willing to make changes in his or her behavior in order to deal with changing circumstances while having a positive attitude.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADAPTABILITY EXPRESS SCALE

The 12-item Adaptability Express scale was created using assessment items from a validated measure of Adaptability/Flexibility. To simplify the Express scale for IVR administration, the response categories from the original scale were collapsed from six choices (Strongly Agree, Moderately Agree, Slightly Agree, Slightly Disagree, Moderately Disagree, Strongly Disagree) to a four-choice format (Strongly Agree, Slightly Agree, Slightly Disagree, Strongly Disagree) on the Express scale. Specifically, the slightly and moderately agree response options were collapsed to create the slightly agree option and the slightly and moderately disagree options were collapsed to create the slightly disagree option on the Express scale. The decision to collapse the response options in this way was made after analyses were completed comparing the distributions of the original scale and the Express scale. A sample of 13,217 retail candidates was used in the analysis which compared the skewness (degree of asymmetry in a distribution) and kurtosis (the relative peakedness or flatness of a distribution compared to the normal distribution) of the original and Express scale distributions. The results of the analysis, presented in Table 1, indicate that the two distributions are relatively similar.

Table 1. Comparison of Adaptability Scale Distributions

Scale	Skewness	Kurtosis
Adaptability (original scale)	- 0.41	0.01
Adaptability Express	- 0.19	- 0.43

A correlation was also computed between the original measure and the Express scale to determine the degree of similarity between the scales. The resulting coefficient ($r = .97$) indicates the Adaptability Express scale is comparable to the original measure.

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was computed in order to assess the internal consistency of the Adaptability measures. Table 2 provides the alpha values for the original Adaptability scale as well as the Express version of the scale. The Adaptability Express scale produced an alpha reliability coefficient of .63, while the original scale reliability coefficient was .58. These results indicate that the internal consistency of the Adaptability Express scale is similar to that of the original scale.

Table 2. Reliability of Adaptability Measures

Scale	Sample N	# of Items	Alpha
Adaptability (original scale)	13,217	12	.58
Adaptability Express	13,217	12	.63

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Compliance

The potential for the Adaptability Express scale to adversely impact protected groups (i.e., racial minorities and women) was assessed using the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC's) four-fifths rule. This rule states that the proportion of protected group members that are successful in obtaining a given score must be at least 80% (4/5) of the proportion of non-protected group members obtaining the same score. The proportions of protected and non-protected groups reaching a percentile score of 13 on the Adaptability Express scale were used as thresholds in the analysis. This scale standard is the recommended cut score set on the Adaptability Express scale when used in the selection process. Results of the analysis, presented in Table 3, indicate that the Adaptability Express scale does not adversely impact any protected group. That is, all of the passing rates of the protected groups are greater than 80% of the passing rates of the base groups. It is important to note, however, that these results must be considered preliminary due to the small sample of some protected group members. EEOC compliance will be periodically monitored and adjustments will be made to the scale standard to ensure compliance, if necessary.

Table 3. Adaptability Express EEOC Analysis

Race	N	Percentage Successful	EEOC Ratio	Compliance Met?
White	2,774	94%		
African American	334	94%	1.00	YES
Hispanic	141	95%	1.01	YES
Native American	4	100%	1.06	YES
Asian	72	90%	.96	YES
Gender	N	Percentage Successful	EEOC Ratio	Compliance Met?
Male	3,108	92%		
Female	1,438	93%	1.01	YES

Validation of the Adaptability Express Scale

The validity of the Adaptability Express scale was documented by a concurrent, criterion-related validation study. The study was conducted using 36 managers at a drilling company.

Correlations were computed between manager scores on the Adaptability Express scale and supervisor ratings of performance. Specifically, supervisors were asked to rate managerial performance on several job-related dimensions including:

- **Adapting to Change** – Responds to change with a positive attitude and emotional control, with a willingness to learn new ways to accomplish work activities and objectives.
- **Achievement Orientation** – Demonstrates a desire to set and meet challenging objectives, to find a better or more efficient way to do things and to compete against self-defined standards of excellence.
- **Energy Level** – Maintaining energetic work pace, endurance and timely performance of job duties.
- **Job Interest** – Showing enthusiasm, dedication, self-motivation, desire for additional training to improve job skills and company loyalty.
- **Management Skills** – Managing time while remaining alert and flexible to changing conditions, working well under pressure, handling crises effectively and resolving conflicts.
- **Problem Solving** – Analyzing business problems logically, identifying realistic solutions and making sound decisions.

- **Responsibility** – Taking initiative, accepting responsibility for own as well as subordinate mistakes, not blaming others or making excuses and trying to improve quality.
- **Technology Orientation** – Demonstrates ability and willingness to learn and use technology on the job. Recognizes the potential benefits of new technology.

Supervisors provided ratings on the dimensions using a 7-point rating scale ranging from Clearly Unacceptable Performance to Clearly Excellent Performance.

A Total Rating was also developed to provide a measure of overall performance in the study. The Total Rating dimension was derived by summing together the supervisor ratings collected in the study for each manager.

The results of the correlation analysis (Table 4) indicate that the Adaptability Express scale was effective in predicting supervisory ratings of performance in the sample. Significant correlations were found between the Adaptability Express scale and supervisory ratings of performance on three of the rating dimensions. Importantly, the Adaptability Express scale correlates significantly with the Total Rating ($r = .47, p < .01$). The correlations between the Adaptability Express scale and the remaining supervisory ratings also approach significance. These results indicate that high scorers on the Adaptability Express scale are more likely to be seen by their supervisors as energetic, motivated, dedicated, accepting of change and willing to learn on the job than low scorers on the scale.

Table 4. Correlations between Adaptability Express Scale Scores and Performance Ratings

Performance Ratings	N	r
Adapting to Change	36	.29
Achievement Orientation	36	.32
Energy Level	36	.38*
Job Interest	35	.40*
Management Skills	36	.23
Problem Solving	36	.23
Responsibility	36	.22
Technology Orientation	35	.32
Total Rating	30	.47**

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

CONCLUSION

The results described above indicate that high scorers on the Adaptability Express scale are more likely to demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that are associated with high performance on the job. The combination of significant validity coefficients, acceptable reliability and freedom from adverse impact indicate that the Adaptability Express scale can serve as a valuable screening tool in the selection process.