

Development and Validation of the Service Express Assessment

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INTRODUCTION

The Express Attitude Profile series was created to provide quick yet accurate assessments of job applicant attitudes in key areas. The Service Express assessment was designed to best approximate the content and validity of the full Service Relations Profile in a brief, 10-item format.

PROCEDURE

Items were selected from the extensively validated Service Relations Profile for the Service Express assessment. The ten items that, in combination, proved to be the strongest predictors of service industry performance in previous validation studies were selected to constitute the Service Express assessment. The criterion-related validity of Service Express was demonstrated with incumbent employees in five different samples: a national hotel chain reservation center, a national car rental reservation center, two healthcare centers and one grocery chain (total sample size of 664). The employees responded to the questions on the Service Express assessment and were rated by supervisors on their service to customers or patients, their relations with coworkers and their overall job performance.

RESULTS

The Service Express assessment was highly effective in predicting supervisor evaluations, with a validity coefficient that averaged $r = .30$ across the five samples (See Table 1). These results indicate that high scorers on the Service Express assessment are seen by their supervisors as significantly more helpful, friendly and cooperative than low scorers on the assessment. The reliability of the Service Express was assessed using a diverse sample of 12,767 applicants for jobs in a variety of service industries. The Service Express assessment produced a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .66, indicating an acceptable level of internal consistency. Individuals scoring in the lowest 16% of the norm sample on the Service Express assessment were classified as "High Risk"; those scoring above the 16th percentile were classified as "Low Risk". The "High Risk" vs. "Low Risk" classification had no adverse impact on any ethnic group or gender.

For illustrative purposes, a series of comparisons was made between the service-related behavior of "Low Risk" and "High Risk" employees (measured via self-report). Striking differences were found between the two groups:

- Employees who were classified as "High Risk" by the Service Express assessment were twice as likely as those classified as "Low Risk" to have failed to help a customer when it was time to go on a break
- "High Risk" employees were three times more likely to have shouted at a customer
- "High Risk" employees were three-and-a-half times more likely to have refused to help a customer because the customer wanted something that was not in the employee's department or not their responsibility

CONCLUSION

These results indicate that the Service Express assessment is an effective screening tool to avoid costly hiring mistakes stemming from employees who disappoint customers and cause problems with existing staff.

Table 1: Correlations between the Service Express Assessment Scores and Supervisor Evaluations in Five Samples

| Sample | Correlation | Sample Size |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Grocery Chain | .26 | N = 199 |
| Hotel Reservations | .30 | N = 164 |
| Car Rental Reservations | .26 | N = 109 |
| Healthcare | .39 | N = 64 |
| Healthcare | .32 | N = 128 |
| Average | .30 | N = 664 |

Figure 1: Percentage of Employees Who Have Refused to Help a Customer When it was Time to Go on Break

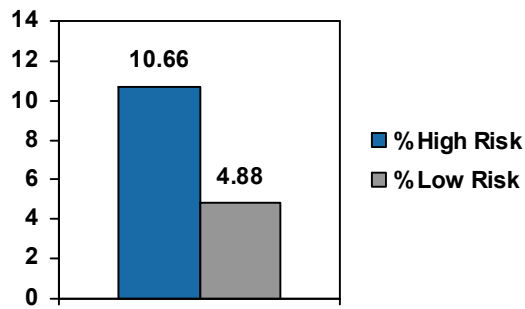


Figure 2: Percentage of Employees Who Have Refused to Help a Customer because What the Customer Wanted “Wasn’t Their Responsibility”

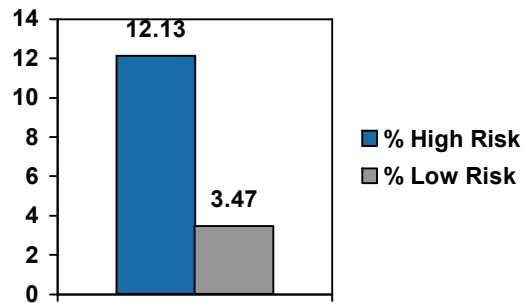


Figure 3: Percentage of Employees Who Have Shouted at a Customer

