

**Maybe It's Not the Job, But
the Customers**

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**A Brief History of Context in
Validation**

- Local validation studies required
 - Context extremely important to validity coefficients
- Meta-Analysis demonstrated that "contextual" differences were really measurement error
 - Same job, same predictors, no matter where the job was being performed.

And Then There's Technology

- Computer technology has changed how jobs are done and how we assess for them
 - Straight typing moved to software knowledge
- Technology has not only affected the tools employees use, but also the tools that customers use

Technology and Customer Service

- Customers can go to chat rooms, forums and databases to find answers
 - Much more DIY culture
- Companies have enabled more access to help
 - Phone, chat, e-mail, and remote access
 - Cost efficient for them
 - Offers more perceived control to user

Does Technology Impact Valid Hiring Practices?

- Companies want to know if they have the right people in the right positions
 - Are some people better at chat than phone interactions?
 - If so, can these differences be predicted by assessment?

Background of Project

- Multiple years of validating tests for phone representatives
 - Originally a concurrent study, now predictive.
- Company moving towards chat/e-mail for agents
- Criteria based on customer surveys and monitoring of calls
- Some agents are exclusive in a modality while others handle all forms of customer input
 - Data is separated by type of call.

Job Analysis Led to the Following Predictors

- Reasoning
 - Numeric
 - Abstract
 - Verbal
- Basic Math
- Reading Comprehension
- Agreeableness
- Self-Confidence
- Conscientiousness
- Openness
- Work Drive
- Customer Service Orientation
- Empathy
- Biodata

Results--Aptitude

| Test/Measure | Performance on Phone Contacts (n of agents=646) | Performance on Chat Contacts (n of agents =168) |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Numeric Reasoning | 0.16*** | 0.15* |
| Abstract Reasoning | 0.15*** | 0.24*** |
| Verbal Reasoning | 0.12*** | 0.21** |
| Basic Math | 0.05 | 0.19** |
| Reading Comprehension | 0.22*** | 0.22** |

Stronger or equal coefficients for Chat contacts

Results--Personality

| Test/Measure | Performance on Phone Contacts (n = 646) | Performance on Chat Contacts (n of agents =168) |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Agree | 0.07* | -0.13* |
| Self-Confidence | 0.08* | -0.07 |
| Conscientiousness | 0.07* | -0.12 |
| Openness | 0.05 | 0.08 |
| Work Drive | 0.11** | -0.06 |
| Customer Service | 0.07* | -0.03 |
| Empathy | 0.06 | -0.02 |
| Biodata | 0.21*** | 0.28*** |

Personality not as strong of a predictor as aptitude, but is a predictor for Phone contacts, but not for Chat contacts.

Implications For Client

- Separate scoring when agents are being hired for a specific modality
- Must pass for both to handle both types of customer input

Implications for Assessment

- Results indicate that there are differences in what customers are looking for when contacting the company
 - A customer who comes in looking for help on chat is much more interested in getting the problem solved than the interaction with the agent
 - Perhaps demographic, or people who choose to use the phone tend to want more interaction

Implications for Job Analysis

- If the job requires customer contact, the method(s) of contact is critical to the how well the job is performed
- Even for non-customer contact jobs, this aspect of context could affect performance
 - Remote workers
 - Telecommuters

Q & A
