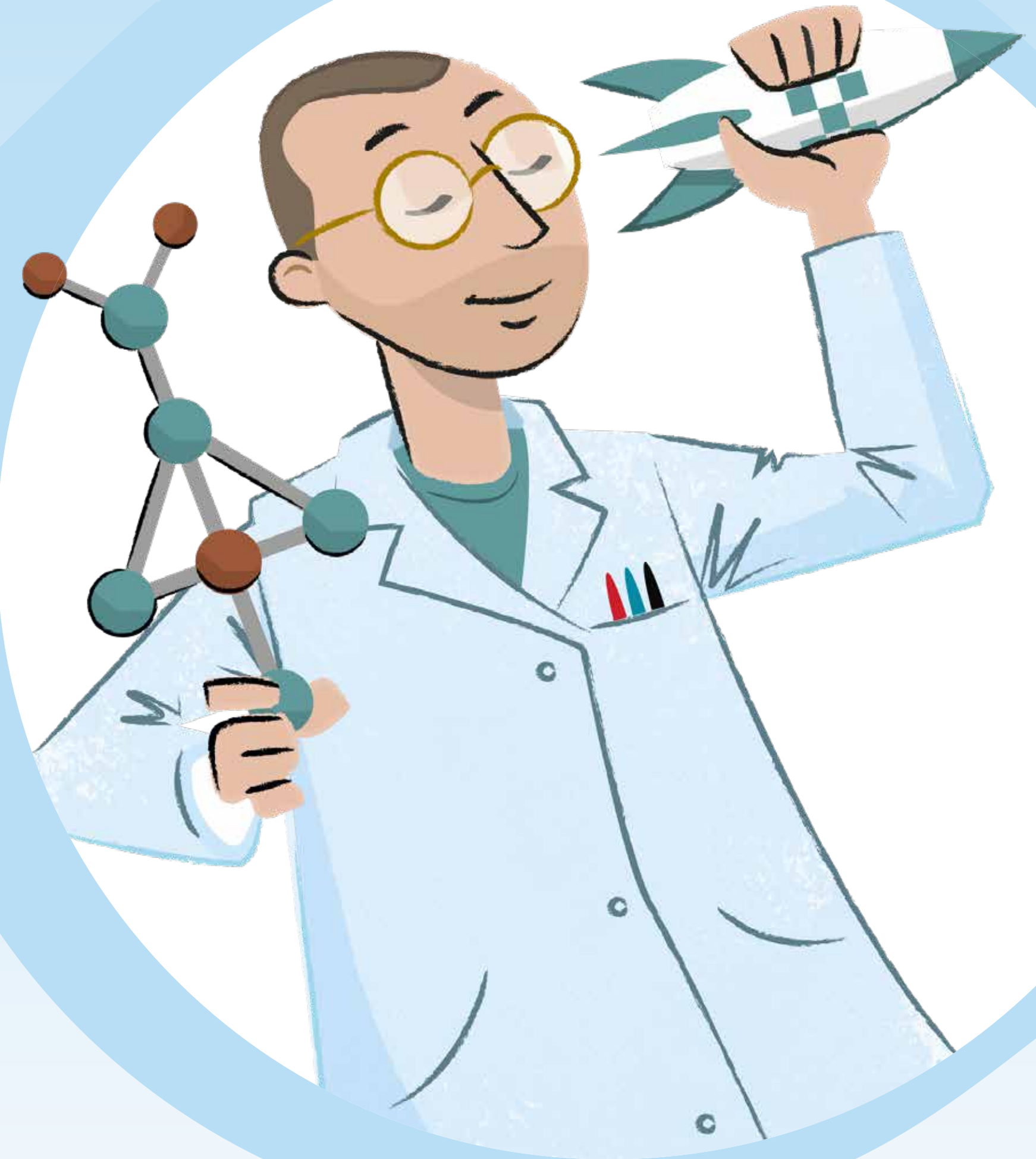




**QUICK GUIDE:**

Using science-  
based assessments  
**for more effective  
recruiting**



# Interviews aren't working

Interviews are an important part of the hiring process but they tend to be highly subjective. Appointing the wrong candidate based on interviews alone can be a costly nightmare.

So what is the problem? The issue is that most hiring managers do not apply a consistent, standard interview process for all candidates, so they cannot evaluate all of the interviews equitably. This means that at the interview stage at least, recruiters are not always comparing apples to apples.

Another failing is our tendency to go with our gut instinct. In other words, we are inclined to judge candidates based on whether we like them or not, rather than grading them on objective, job-relevant characteristics. While it is important to have a personable interview with potential recruits, the decision on whom to appoint should be impartial and fact-based.

Even today, many companies rely on CVs and interviews when selecting and appointing their new recruits. For them, pre-employment assessments are but a vague concept. The point is that when used correctly, these tools are game changers for the hiring process.

**On its own, an unstructured interview will uncover only 14% of a candidate's abilities, marginally better than the 3% revealed by number of years of work experience<sup>1</sup>.**

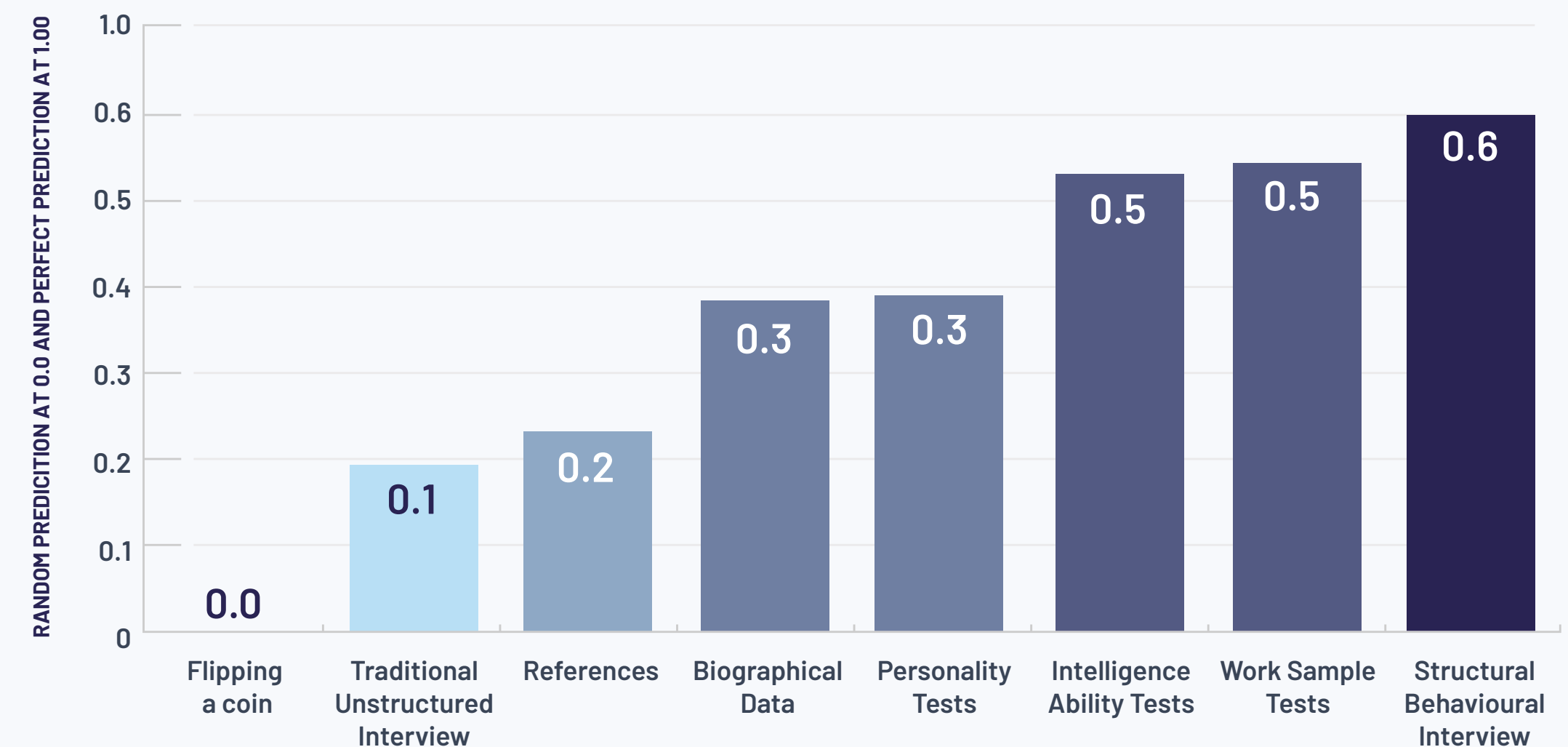
# Forewarned is forearmed

There is a difference between what a candidate says they have done in the past; what they have actually done, and what they may be capable of doing in the future. The challenge for the recruiter is to sift through the extraneous data and collect accurate information that will predict their future performance.

Traditionally, this involves a variety of methods, such as setting them tasks, looking at work samples, conducting unstructured interviews and/or using references. Some recruiters also adopt more science-based forms of assessment. Various information-gathering tactics, along with their predictive power, are illustrated below:

## Strategies

Random prediction at 0.0 and perfect prediction at 1.00



## Face the facts

It's time to dispense with spontaneity and gut instinct in the recruitment process. Revealing a candidate's past behaviour can predict their future performance, so the key to a successful hire is to combine a structured interview approach with other science-based activities, such as personality and cognitive assessments.





# Taking it to the next level

When hiring, it is essential to use the best predictive tools, but it's also important to be sure that you are extracting the right sort of information on which to base your hiring decision. There are three distinct levels of assessment that can be explored within an interview, each of which provides different types of information.

**The best interviews will examine all three levels, but most rarely go beyond the first two.**

## Level One: appearance

Unfortunately, the saying "You never get a second chance to make a first impression" encapsulates how most interviews work. Whether we like it or not, we all make an unconscious, snap assessment of someone we meet, based on their appearance, within milliseconds of meeting them.

**This reaction is influenced by their:**

- attractiveness
- likeability
- competence
- trustworthiness
- aggressiveness

This may be a perfectly normal and spontaneous human trait, but it provides very little insight to a candidate. Nor does it reveal their true capabilities and predict their future performance.

To find out more, we're going to have to dig a bit deeper.

## Level two: knowledge

A level two assessment often focuses on a candidate's resume and extracts information about their past work experience and skill set. Because of this, it is a more objective and less reactionary assessment than level one.

### **Judgements are based on:**

- Acquired skills
- Training
- Experience
- Education
- Credentials

## Level three: attitudes and beliefs

Now we're getting somewhere. The deepest level of assessment happens here, as elements of the person's attitudes, sensibilities and beliefs are revealed. Investigation at this level uncovers who the person is and what makes them tick. This understanding is paramount, because having a grasp of someone's personality and temperament is key to aligning them with the right role, the most appropriate modes of communication and the correct management style, all of which will contribute to their long-term success.

### **Level three assessments includes:**

- Internal motivation
- Persistence and determination
- Mature character
- Aptitude and intelligence
- Temperament

Level three insights may be the most difficult to collect, but they provide the best information with which to make a successful hire.

**46% of newly-hired employees will fail within 18 months, due largely to poor interpersonal skills, an area frequently overlooked during the job interview process.<sup>2</sup>**

## The real cost of a bad hire

The danger of relying only on the first two levels of assessment is that you may end up giving a job to the wrong candidate. This can be a costly nightmare, especially once all of the expenses are included. In fact, CareerBuilder estimates that a poor hire for an entry level role costs companies around \$15,000<sup>3</sup>. With that level of loss, it makes sense to take the elevator to all the way up to level three and make sure your new hire is the right fit for your business.

Bad hires cost more than money. They are bad for your business and can undermine productivity. They sap the energy of others and nurture a culture of underperformance. They create more work for those around them and this effects company morale. Plus, bad hires mean lost wages, lost productivity and the cost of finding replacements.

Why risk all of this hassle? Let's look at how you can improve the interview process and extract the level three information you need.

# Hiring with Assessments

So you have decided you want to improve the predictive power of your interviews? One of the best ways to ensure all three levels of assessment are covered is to use a structured interview. While this approach is effective, used on its own it is not a predictive guarantee (see chart on p3). This is where Assessments come to the fore.

Even with the best questioning technique, there are areas of a candidate's psyche that may be hard to delve into. Science-based personality assessments tease out a candidate's inner qualities, such as their creativity, adaptability, drive, leadership, teamwork and organisation skills. Further, cognitive assessments unearth abilities like logical reasoning, mental flexibility and working memory. Together, they give you an impartial level three understanding of the person in ways a traditional interview simply cannot deliver.

In summary, science-based personality and cognitive assessments can deliver insights that:

- help shape interview questions
- provide a deeper understanding of an individual's personality and temperament than by interview alone
- offer a better sense of future performance levels and ability
- ensure a better job fit with the job
- start the interview off at a deeper level with less reliance on levels one and two
- allow candidates to be compared fairly





## Summary

Every new hire is important. They have an impact on the existing culture, on current staff and business performance, so hiring managers need to draw on every available resource to improve their ability to predict success. This includes being aware of the three distinct levels to be investigated when assessing a candidate:

- **Level One - provides feedback based on appearance**
- **Level Two - delves deeper into a person's knowledge and skills**
- **Level Three - reveals vital insights to their temperament and attitude**

All three levels should be used be probed, but the most useful information about future performance is subsumed within level three. Science-based personality and cognitive assessments provide a vital means to unlock vital insights to a candidate's personality, intelligence and behaviour.

This information provides the best basis on which to make your appointment. Furthermore, by learning who your candidates are before they start their first day, you are better placed to nurture a workforce that will achieve your corporate goals.

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