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Aptitude: Measurement for success and equal opportunity

The degree to which a person has the aptitude to learn and acquire new skills and knowledge through training can be measured with the DAT GAB tests with greater confidence than by interview and reference alone. When assessing candidates for personal development, further education or a new job, testing the ability to learn is shown to have a higher integrity in the prediction of performance success than most other processes for selection, including personality tests, structured interviews and some types of assessment centres. The measurement of aptitude, and with it the ability to learn, assesses the candidate's power to be able to learn to do something combined with their willingness to want to do it.

The DAT GAB test looks at three types of reasoning to help in that assessment: Verbal Reasoning, Numerical Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning, with a useful fourth dimension of Educational Aptitude by analysing a combination of Verbal and Numerical Reasoning.

Where the DAT GAB tests can provide additional comfort for organisations is in the area of equal opportunities and fairness. The ordinary interview and CV processes adopted by many organisations are inherently biased. It can be very difficult to be entirely blind to overt differences between people. For this reason legislation is now in place to engender better working relations where hitherto there has been an imbalance or discrimination in areas such as race, gender or physical ability. On the other hand, it is also important to be able to make judgements about whether one candidate or another would fit within the cultural behaviours of the organisation, creating a potential for conflict when selecting on known or predictive performance alone.

Personality, therefore, cannot be overstated in relation to aptitude for learning. How well people acquire new skills and knowledge is predicated by their interest in the job, their motivations and their goals. The DAT GAB can provide a level of objectivity to selection that is becoming more and more important in work environments that need to look after the social harmony of the organisation as well as the ability to perform well. It is for this reason that administrators are encouraged to use DAT GAB in combination with other psychometric tests. Getfeedback's consultants can help you make those decisions.

Furthermore, the DAT GAB tests are aligned to normative data, to either data specific to occupational groups, or can be developed in-house to provide a data set unique to your organisations profile. This degree of versatility, when provided by Getfeedback, makes this tool exceptionally rich and valuable for your immediate needs and as a foundation for the future.

The DAT GAB tests are internationally standardised making them especially useful as benchmarking tools. They have been available and under continuous development since 1947, making this test one of the oldest and most respected aides to selection in the market. Getfeedback's technology makes them even faster and more cost effective than ever before.

Structure of the General Abilities Battery (GAB)

Verbal Reasoning

This test measures the ability to infer relationships between pairs of words. The test consists of analogies, requiring the candidate to select the most appropriate pair. For example, out of five pair combinations, there is an inferred relationship between a dog barks and a cat miaows, but not a dog barks and a cat scratches.

The Verbal Reasoning element of the GAB DAT test has 40 questions, a time limit of 25 minutes and can be useful in predicting success in academic courses as well as many occupations including business, law, education, journalism and the sciences.

Numerical Reasoning

This test is not designed to test the computational power of the candidate, but rather the ability to perform mathematical reasoning. For this reason, the difficulty level of the problems set is low. The test has multiple-choice answers and works with such mathematical ideas as logical number sequences and basic arithmetic.

The Numerical Reasoning element of the GAB DAT test has 40 questions, a time limit of 30 minutes and can be useful in predicting success in the sciences, mathematics and engineering and occupations such as sales administration, marketing and research.

Abstract Reasoning

This test assesses the candidate's ability to infer rules from non-verbal sequences. Each test item is a geometric series in which elements change according to covert rules that the candidate must then work out and use to predict the next shape or pattern.

The Abstract Reasoning element of the GAB DAT test has 40 questions, a time limit of 20 minutes and can be used to predict success where the facility to see relationships between shapes, size and volume are an advantage. Example occupations that benefit from high proficiency in this test includes design, computer programming and logistics.

Educational Aptitude

The combination of Verbal Reasoning and Numerical Reasoning scores creates a powerful measure of general educational aptitude and the ability to learn from teachers and books. This is particularly valuable where candidates are being selected for further training and development, especially where this might be provided within an academic environment.

Understanding where an individual's strengths and capabilities lie within their general aptitude to learning is invaluable in many situations. As a pre-interview selection tool, team development benchmarking tool and individual development tool.

Selection

Where general reasoning ability is required within a specific task or range of job families, DAT GAB is an invaluable pre-selection tool. It is especially helpful in situations where fairness and equality is a premium consideration, for example in large teams where skills and adaptability must be judged as objectively as possible. Exceptionally valuable when recruiting in environments such as a call-centre.

Staff Appraisal

Again, the ability to remain objective about strengths and weaknesses is an essential tool in devising and shaping further training and development. DAT GAB's ability to provide data that is not only specific to the individual but relative to an occupational norm, or relative to team members, may also help the organisation identify exceptional performance and may even challenge perceived views of how well an individual or group is working. DAT GAB is very helpful in locating barriers to performance.

Educational and Career Guidance

Each of the three aptitude tests, combined with the composite Educational Aptitude analysis, will provide the individual with strong indications of likely success in career options. The information will help to inform how an individual's career might be developed, for example through on the job training or via external courses in higher education, and may even indicate a recommendation for a complete reassessment of career path. DAT GAB is especially useful for matching aptitude against job complexity.

Norms

Occupational testing is only effective when it is objective and accurate, which means that it needs to be specific to the group being assessed. For this reason, the DAT GAB draws on a wide range of norm tables gathered from many thousands of tests over many years that continue to be developed both in the UK and in the USA. Norm tables that represent the diversity of applications for which the DAT GAB can be used are exemplified in the breadth of occupational tables available to test administrators. For those undertaking large numbers it is also possible to build in-house norms that relate to the particular circumstances of that organisation.

Item Writing and Standardisation

The current data sets have been completely revised against new and more pertinent items within the test frameworks. For the revision process, guidelines were developed that included principles for increasing difficulty, and written descriptions of each item. Each one was then reviewed by a wide group of measurement specialists, editors and psychologists for appropriateness, accuracy, plausibility of distractors (wrong answers) stereotyping or bias of any kind, reading level, overall quality and clarity. Test construction took place in 1988 involving approximately 84,000 individuals. Items were chosen for final inclusion only if they met with certain statistical criteria including biserial correlation coefficient within a range of 0.35 to 0.70. Each test was also developed to have an appropriate spread of difficulty.

Standardisation Study

The UK standardisation programme, undertaken between September 1994 and June 1995 across 1690 individuals, investigated major occupational and educational groupings leading to the generation of reliability and validity data to support UK norm tables. The programme also aimed to achieve near equal numbers by gender and representative percentages of minority groups.

Reliability

As indicated by the Kuder-Richardson Formula #20 (KR#20) the DAT GAB has a high degree of internal consistency with coefficients ranging from 0.80 to 0.94. Complete tables of standard errors of measurement (SEM) are obtainable on application.

test administration

We deliver the service your way

Businesses operate in different ways. Some want to be very hands on with the use of psychometric tests. Others want the process to be as low noise as possible. So it's no use getting a business to operate in a way that is unhelpful and uncomfortable. That's why we have a number of different ways of deploying our psychometric test.

We give you the technology you need, when you need it

We take a modular approach so that you can buy the bits you need, as and when you need them. You can link them together with other tools at any point in the future – for example your existing performance management and succession planning technology.

We make a proper job of the technology

Our web based tools are cheat proof, hack proof, idiot proof - and candidate proof. Some essentials:

- DAT GAB is available through Getfeedback's web system and is delivered on-line.
- Candidates are sent a secure link via email.
- There are 3 tests of between 40 and 50 questions per test.
- Total approximate time required to take all three tests is just over an hour and can be completed in one sitting or in three parts.

Please note that in line with the test publishers guidelines for ability tests every possible step must be taken to ensure that the question sets are protected, and that the individuals completing the assessment are the individuals named. By purchasing this test you agree to ensure that everything possible is done to ensure this.

How do you want to do it?

Eliminate the testing headache – Fully outsourced – We manage your testing on your behalf

Set up

Customised site set up – if required

Ongoing the process is simple.

- You give us a candidate list
- We set up and administer the tests
- You receive the results on an agreed date
- You get an hour with an occupational psychologist to help you make the most of the data OR each candidate gets an hour with us to run through their feedback (optional if BPS accredited)
- You get the right people in the right roles

Online testing for speed and convenience

Each candidate receives an email containing full instructions and a link to their questionnaire.

Equip your team with a quality testing system – Self managed – We train you to use our system

- You tell us whether you would like a fully branded testing site or use of our standard site.
- We train your internal team to use our system.
- You get started testing your candidates

Set up costs

Set up of customised branded site (if required)

Training to use the system

Ongoing costs

All you pay for is the cost of the questionnaire. The report is generated automatically.

How much does the DAT GAB cost?

Assessments

DAT GAB.....£ 20

Prices are per test per candidate

Administration

Fully Outsourced service.....£ 50

Price per test per candidate

Fully outsourced administration charge can be discounted for high volume users

Self managed service.....£ 750

Training for up to 4 people to use the online administration centre

Customised Online Test Centre

Client branded portal.....£ 1100 per day

Standard web portal takes 2-3 days to set up

NB: Administrators must be qualified to British Psychological Society Accreditation Level A – in the absence of BPA Accreditation, Getfeedback can provide support at £200 per hour.

To discuss any aspect of the administration process and/or pricing, please contact James Shimmen to discuss your specific requirements on 01491 845 532