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## The Case for Personality Assessments in Executive Protection

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# The Case for Personality Assessments in Executive Protection

By [Alan Saquella](#)

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When it comes to hiring [executive protection](#) or security professionals, employers have much to consider today than in years past. To start, they need to ensure a candidate has the proper qualifications and skills to fill the open position. One way is to conduct **personality assessments**. On that note, it is similarly crucial that applicants have a dependable and trustworthy character.

Scrutinizing [potential hires](#) for such qualities cuts the likelihood of dealing with counterproductive work behaviors in the future. Correct, employers still use background and reference checks. Yet, these are losing effectiveness due to legal and regulatory restraints recently enacted in the United States.

To supplement the vetting process, personality assessments can help weed out candidates with negative attitudes. Also, they help set apart candidates who are more likely to engage in [harmful workplace behavior](#). When administering psychological assessments, however, it is critical your organization confirms they are legal.

## **On the Lawfulness of Personality Assessments**

There are numerous ways psychological personality assessments can violate a candidate's right to privacy and unbiased treatment during the application procedure. In the United States, [FindLaw.com](#) covers complex details. Still,

one major thing to keep an eye on is whether your psychological analysis is health/medical in nature.

For example, *personality assessments* that determine whether a candidate is suffering from mental illness could be considered unlawful. This is because they violate the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This piece of regulation makes it unlawful to discriminate against applicants for medical reasons. Outside of the U.S., other restrictions exist. Thus, the legality of such assessments must be reviewed by the legal and regulatory agencies of those countries.

This is precisely why using the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) during the hiring phase may be illogical. It is true to say that the MMPI assessment can theoretically be used to decide how a candidate's [personality traits](#) may factor into their work performance. Yet, the test's focus on psychopathology and finding mental illness could be seen as a quandary.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) recommends against using tools like the MMPI or Myers-Briggs Testing Indicator (MBTI) for this reason. Fortunately, there are options more well suited for pre-screening applicants and their behaviors.

### **Alternatives to the MMPI Test**

Since using the MMPI test could lead to legal and ethical issues for the enterprise, what alternative personality assessments can you use while hiring?

### **Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire**

Hiring managers often use the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, or 16pf, to assess potential employees. This tool utilizes sixteen different qualities to determine an applicant's personality, which can be linked to [job performance](#).

This test also meets the requirement to have personality assessments be more about job performance than psychopathology. In addition, it is unlikely

that any of these factors could be considered discriminatory since the 16pf is not medical in nature.

### **The Caliper Profile**

The Caliper Profile is another assessment that examines personality traits critical to job performance. The test presents applicants with statements and asks them to choose the one that is closest to their perspective. So, for example, the question might explain a situation and have them choose which reaction fits best with their values. The Caliper also has test-takers do the opposite, showing which sentiments are farthest from their viewpoint.

The Caliper is a useful tool in deciding how prospective employees may react to [various situations](#) based on their principles. It can also be customized so that employers can examine specific behaviors in which they are interested.

### **The SHL Occupational Personality Questionnaire**

The SHL Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ32) is an assessment that uses 104 questions to measure thirty-two characteristics, all of which can provide insight into how an applicant may behave on the job. The three major categories covered by the OPQ32 are:

- Relationships with People,
- Thinking Style and Feelings, and
- Emotions.

Naturally, all of these can help predict how a potential employee would interact with others and handle [stressful situations](#). However, the OPQ32 also sets itself apart by comparing the test taker's score to other applicants. In fact, it emphasizes where their strengths and weaknesses are.

### **The Hogan Personality Inventory**

The Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) is another often used assessment dating back to the 1980s. The HPI measures a candidate's temperament and compares it to the responsibilities of the role for which they are applying.

The test is made up of 206 true or false questions. These tackle areas such as:

- Service Orientation,
- Reliability,
- Stress Tolerance,
- Clerical Potential,
- Sales Potential, and
- Managerial Potential.

Given its range of categories and focus on specific areas, it is understandable that the HPI has been around as long as it has.

### **The DiSC Behavior Inventory**

The DiSC Behavior Inventory (DiSC) assesses an applicant's personality using four personality types alluded to in the test's name:

- Dominant,
- Influential,
- Steady, and
- Compliant.

Test-takers answer a series of questions highlighting their behavior and ability for teamwork.

Unfortunately, there are a few downsides to using the DiSC assessment. For one, candidates are choosing which adjectives and phrases apply to them, which could make it easy to lie. The DiSC also does not compare the applicant's scores to a baseline. According to TopResume, it is not considered a foolproof indicator of one's [work performance](#).

### **The Verensics Assessment**

Psychological assessments have often been used to evaluate a candidate's character. However, integrity tests are becoming a common way to judge

prospective employee's values and [predict their behavior](#). Integrity assessments can measure an applicant's tendency to engage in or avoid counterproductive work behavior, making them lifesavers for companies looking to avoid liability issues and high turnaround.

Verensics provides the best of both types of assessments, combining the typical integrity test with the longtime experience of corporate investigators and organizational psychologists. The result is an online assessment platform that can guide candidates to reveal values and behaviors they usually would not. The Verensics assessment is also uniquely designed to manage one of the most mentioned criticisms of assessments, which is faking.

Verensics' platform is a valuable tool to have in the company collection, especially when looking to gain a complete picture of prospective employees' values and behavior. Non-traditional tools like these can be game changers for those looking to replace older ones, like the MMPI and MBTI. Verensics uses the most advanced technology and appears to be the most cost-efficient alternative to the MMPI.

Finally, selection tools like Verensics supply excellent solutions for assessing applicant values and behaviors. Nevertheless, it must be noted that it is not a substitute for [skills assessments](#). Each EP or security assignment may require various skills, which should be assessed separately through a combination of

- Observations,
- Verification, and
- Professional references.