

Case study

Monarch Airlines



Monarch Airlines has a fleet of 23 modern aircraft and nearly 1,900 staff across a wide range of positions at their Head Office in Luton or at major airports across the UK. Each year they fly over five million passengers and work with a huge range of tour operators.

Although its cabin crew and pilots are very much the public face of the company there are many other positions operating behind the scenes to ensure everything runs smoothly and efficiently, maintaining Monarch's high standards. This includes skilled personnel in IT and accountancy, maintenance and engineers, customer services and sales staff.

Monarch Aircraft Engineering Limited is the technical arm of Monarch Airlines, catering for all engineering requirements of the Monarch fleet and offering engineering services to many well known airlines around the world. It employs 900 engineering staff. Base maintenance facilities are at Luton and Manchester

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with further line maintenance facilities at a number of locations in the UK and worldwide.

The Issue

Bronwen Philpott, Director of Personnel comments "My key responsibility is for ground and support staff based at Luton as well as our maintenance facilities at Manchester, Birmingham, Gatwick and Glasgow. We recruit a large number of managerial and key positions each year, internally as well as externally, and we wanted a tool that would help support and objectivise our recruitment decisions."

Monarch's Use of PPA

Thomas' Personal Profile Analysis (PPA) assesses an individual's behaviour in the work environment. It can answer questions such as – What are their strengths and limitations? Are they self starters? How do they communicate? What motivates them? The PPA enables people to become more self aware, which in turn gives them the means to consolidate their working strengths and compensate for their limitations.

The PPA is a series of 24 questions on a forced choice "first impressions" basis, taking no longer than seven minutes to complete. The answers are charted on a graph under the four headings of Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Compliance (DISC).

Monarch also use Thomas' HJA job profiling tool to create a template for the jobs they are recruiting for. Job Profiling enables you to quickly and effectively profile the job you are recruiting for. It gives you a template into which you place a candidate with the best fit in terms of PPA profile.

"Using a tool such as PPA gives our managers clarity and focus when they are recruiting for senior positions. We know that individuals can technically do the job from their qualifications but we need to know more about their behavioural style and attitude. People can put on a mask at interview and can come over extremely well. Interviewing can be down to technique and some are fantastic at it but will not necessarily be the right fit for the company.

PPA gives us a much better insight into people who will be the right fit for the company culture."

"Monarch is successful as a company because of the people it employs. We have a very flat structure. Each person is given as much scope as possible to grow and develop their own job, it is very much what you make of it. We give people the flexibility to grow into their roles. This type of work environment does not suit everyone, some need a clear job description and sense of direction. We want people who are behaviourally suited to this type of environment."

"We look for people with enthusiasm, a sense of brand loyalty and commitment to the company. The airline industry is very different from other sectors. Every day we are entrusted with lives of hundreds of passengers. They trust us to have the right planes, going to the right destinations and that the flight plans are safe. Many of our passengers use us to take them to their holiday destination. A lot of money is usually invested into the annual holiday and passengers expect us to get it right. Our people don't look at the clock 5 minutes before the end of day and think "Oh I will leave that job until tomorrow" it is essential from a safety perspective that they get it right."

Monarch use the Interview Questionnaire to delve deeper. These questions are a series of structured behaviour type questions, designed to get behind the candidate's mask at an interview. It helps understand their ability to do the job from a behavioural perspective.

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"We also use the HJA to profile the type of behaviour we want in a job. This exercise really forces the managers to think what behaviour is important to them in the role they are recruiting for. Rather than just saying "I want another Fred" they have developed a more open view of their requirements".

"PPA enables us to test with a candidate whether there may be a problem or not. Are they aware of their limitations and what are they doing about them? PPA gives us confidence that we have made the right recruitment decision. When we buy equipment it needs to be approved by a board director or even the CEO if major expenditure will be incurred. Recruiting, no matter what the role, incurs significant costs. We need to impress on our managers that they need to be as thorough as possible to make sure the first choice is the right choice. We want the right person not the best person."

