

# Case study

## Business Link Nottinghamshire

Business Link Nottinghamshire (BLN) helps local enterprises start, grow and succeed. The organisation is committed to ensuring Nottinghamshire businesses have access to the very best and widest range of business support available.

BLN is one of the 45 Business Links that form the national business advice service and it has 92 staff (a combination of office based and remote workers). With a dedicated team of business advisers, BLN provides impartial advice and assistance that helps clients define their business goals and tackle key business issues.

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### The Challenge

It's vision is to create a new kind of business support organisation, efficiently connecting local companies with high quality global service provision. To fulfil this vision, BLN needed to ensure that its people could consistently deliver this level of service to clients. Ensuring it employed the right people in the first place was a key concern.

Valerie Barker, Human Resources Manager at Business Link Nottinghamshire explains “It is not enough to rely purely on an interview to give an all round view of a candidate. You need to take a holistic view of someone to be able to make an objective assessment as to whether they will fit the role. As an organisation we are judged on our interaction with clients, our customer service. To deliver this we need the right kind of people.”



“Our business advisers not only need sound business experience but they also need to have good personal skills, work to their own initiative as well as being quick and alert. An interview will only tell you so much.”

### The Result

BLN uses Thomas' PPA as part of their recruitment process. 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.

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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).

**“We had one person whose profile highlighted that he found meeting deadlines difficult. The manager found that he would leave the task until the last minute but the deadline was met.”**

Valerie Barker, continues “There are three key steps in the recruitment of people: applications, interview and the person’s profile. We will have a view of someone based on the CV and the interview. The profile affirms what we think. Sometimes we are in a position where we have two candidates with the same qualifications and experience. A profile will be able to tell us who is better suited to the job.”

BLN also uses Thomas’ Job Profiling software to create a template for the job they are recruiting for. Job Profiling enables you to quickly and effectively profile the job you are recruiting for. It gives you a template for a job into which you place a candidate with the best fit in terms of PPA profile.

It is designed to help you think of a job in a natural and intuitive way and is unique in its capability to quickly and effectively profile the job you are recruiting for.

Valerie Barker adds “Before you can recruit the right person to the right job you must understand not only the candidate’s profile but also that of the job itself. Just as the PPA enables you to understand the behavioural characteristics of an individual, job profiling also helps you identify the behavioural requirements of a job.

“By comparing the PPA to a person’s profile you are also able to see their shortcomings in the role. As a manager this is important as it will enable you to manage them to ensure this gap is filled. We had one person whose profile highlighted that he found meeting deadlines difficult. The manager found that he would leave the task until the last minute but the deadline was met. He therefore knew that constant reminders about a due piece of work would not be the best management approach and would only serve to antagonise. By standing back and allowing his team member to work to his own style the tasks were completed and everyone felt valued”.

