

# How to feedback...

## Thomas EIQ

### Preparation

As with any interview, preparation is critical before the results of an EIQ are fed back to a candidate. Key questions that need to be addressed are:

- Why was EIQ administered?
- What outcomes/objectives should the interview seek to achieve?
- Has the candidate given consent to the assessment?
- What is the profile of the person (PPA) who will receive this feedback?
- What communication style should be considered to match to this profile?
- How much does the candidate know about the Thomas EIQ?

Once you have answered these questions there are three main areas of preparation to cover:

**1.** Prepare yourself by reading through the report and identifying the facets which appear to link to your feedback objectives.

**2.** Prepare the candidate by explaining the report using the Thomas Model Visual, and factor/facet definitions. Explain that the results (not scores), are calculated from the response they gave during the self assessment and provide a **broad** brush for discussion. There are no good or bad results. Explain that the results are usually very stable but can fluctuate with life changing events and probe gently to check if there have been any (divorce, illness, family/personal traumas, etc.).

Explain, using a visual, the normative distribution of the results. Avoid the use of terms such as high and low. Focus the candidate on the terms **average** (the centre), **above average** (to the right of centre or potential oversupply) and **below average** (to the left of centre or potential undersupply). Help the candidate understand these terms are not describing them, but how they rated themselves compared to the UK working population or norm. Which grouping have they placed themselves in? Finally, explain the purpose of the interview and ask them to think about areas they would like to explore in more depth. Tell them the areas you wish to discuss and the reasons why.

**3.** Give them the report to take away to read and plan the interview to follow within 2-3 days if possible to reduce any stress build-up in the individual. Reassure them that the results are confidential. Tell them how they will be filed, who will have access to them and how long they will be kept.

### EI asks questions and is not predictive

EI should be used in much the same way as PPA. It is a developmental interview tool but is far more sensitive and interpersonal because of its construct (i.e. personality/ beliefs/values and attitudes). It is also not work-related although the reason for its application may be to discuss work behaviour and/or potential to develop interpersonal skills.

The interviewer should therefore think carefully about the areas to discuss, the style of question to use and how to encourage the candidate to take ownership of the results - even if they disagree with them. The discussion should be positive and focus on developing a **realistic** level of self awareness, leading to what might be **useful** as developmental targets. If the application of EIQ is to look at work-related coaching, then the EI demands of the job must be considered and questions prepared to probe any likely areas of mismatch.

The tonality should be non-judgemental. The questions asked should be planned around showing the person what you **see** (results) not telling them what you **think**, and getting them to engage in exploration of how to use particular facets effectively, or how to modify their behaviour to compensate for areas in which they may have a potential undersupply when dealing with specific situations.

## Tonality and terminology

The following examples may help you to develop an effective personal feedback style when using both EIQ and PPA. The interpretations chart should be used to feedback the likely positives and negatives of each facet result, with more emphasis being placed on results that fall between the 1-29 and 70-99 as these are where less of the Norm group would have positioned themselves on the continuum scale.

- **Above 70 percentile**

The answers you chose place you in the top 30% of the UK working population – suggesting that you believe that you...is that **true**?

- **Below 30 percentile**

The answers you selected place you to the **left** of centre, suggesting that you believe...is that **true**?

If the candidate disagrees with this interpretation, feedback the **average** interpretation (30-69 percentile), and ask them if this is a more realistic evaluation.

**Average** is a wide band so it may be important to agree exactly where on the continuum they feel they are. Are they at the higher end, the middle or the lower end of **average**?

This may be important if the 'job demands' indicate one position and the candidate is placing themselves at the other end.

Consider also asking the candidate to give you live examples of how and when this facet reveals itself, as it may be that it does so in their private lives but **does not** appear at work. This in itself can reveal likely developmental targets.

## 12 power questions to consider

1. What is preventing you from...?
2. Where do you feel stuck?
3. What would you do if you could?
4. How would you handle that if it occurred again?
5. Is that true?
6. In an ideal world how could that be improved?
7. How useful is that in...?

8. Where would that be useful...?
9. What would you like to have happen?
10. What needs to happen for that to happen?
11. What support would help you to...?
12. How can we/I help?

## No good or bad scores

It is critical to stress that there are no good or bad results. It may be **useful** for a Doctor working in the A & E Department of a hospital to have lower levels of **emotionality** than a Doctor who works in a children's hospital.

The **demands of a job** must always be the prime consideration when assessing the **value** or lack of it in a particular score or result.

Therefore if improving an individual's behaviour has little value in their eyes, it is unlikely they will make the effort to do so. Outlining the potential value of changing or modifying behaviour is therefore a key objective when using the results of an **EIQ** to improve performance.

**Important** - it is critical to focus the interview on **improving self-awareness** and **behaviour - not** on improving the facet score as the research on test-retest theory suggests many elements of a person's EI are set and may not change a great deal over time.

## Why do some people score very high?

Should a candidate score very high on **all** facets, this is unlikely to be accurate. One of the reasons may be the individual avoided answering in the middle of the continuum. Check how they selected their answers and get them to re-evaluate using the positive and negative interpretations scores chart. Some candidates have openly admitted to scoring themselves at the extremes of the scale and some were also put off scoring to the left of centre because of the **red colour** used in this band - favouring the **green**, which they believed was more positive.

## Opening the interview

At the interview take a few minutes to re-clarify why EI has been administered and what outcomes are ideally desired. Ask the candidate what they thought of their results and if there were any surprises? Make a note of any areas that they disagreed with for discussion later in the interview.

Ask the candidate where they would like to start, or if this is not appropriate, tell them where you wish to begin and why.

## Focus on important areas only

Resist the urge to cover the whole report unless this is the purpose. Discuss areas that are likely to impact on performance and relationships in **that** person's world or job. Use real live examples if you have them to link to facet interpretations. For applications of under-performance have **facts** available.

Tell the person what you **see** or what you know, and then link to the facets that may be **useful** or are likely to be contributory factors. Use the **power questions** to encourage commitment to agree some action.

## Facets are independent and interdependent

Listen to the person carefully and be alert to where behavioural information and any comments about their values and beliefs may be indicated in their results chart. Note these and bring them into the conversation at an appropriate time.

Be aware that **emotion kicks in** before logic, so it is quite usual for a person to feel **aggressive** (assertiveness too high), but not express it because their regulation skills are high (emotion regulation is equally high). Look for these potential links and ask questions to seek clarification. Never assume. Remember the main objective is to help the person become more self-aware. Many people will find their own coping strategies if this is achieved and coaching may not be required. For some it may be just a case of finding a mentor to help them.

## Closing the meeting

Clarify what has been discussed and why. Confirm any **action** agreed and record this. Thank the person for their contribution and time and invite feedback from them on what they got out of it.

Tell them how the information will be filed and who has access to it. **Follow it up** and plan reviews if appropriate.