

Case study

Weymouth College

Weymouth College offers a wide range of full, part-time and higher education courses during the day, evening and weekends to over 7,000 students from across Dorset, the South West of England as well as the rest of the UK and overseas. The College offers excellent facilities and a team of highly dedicated and experienced staff who provide guidance and support as well as high quality teaching. £13 million was spent on new buildings to provide purpose-designed facilities for construction, engineering, catering, hair-dressing & beauty, and art & design. The College has an excellent reputation for providing education and support programmes and is committed to students of all ages to help meet their personal needs and aspirations.

How PPA is applied

Jacky Boucherat, Psychometric Co-ordinator at Weymouth explained:

“When we are working with very small businesses we use PPA to explain why certain people they have employed have not worked out the way they thought they would. PPA helps employers think more carefully about the right people. It highlights the importance of behavioural fit as well as qualifications to do the job. Recruiting the wrong person costs a lot of money so they want to ensure they get it right first time, which is where PPA comes in.”

Thomas International’ 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.



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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 find the PPA a completely non threatening way to start people thinking about their strengths and limitations. The reports are worded in such a way that they do not say “You are X, Y or Z”. They suggested responses to situations and environments, positive as well as negative. It allows individuals to take an



objective view of their behaviour without it becoming too personal. Wording such as 'might' is much less threatening to the person receiving feedback than 'you are...'. We use PPA as a starting point on the self awareness path."

"We have also used PPA in the context of mentoring and guiding individuals when setting up their own businesses. We use the strengths highlighted in that person's PPA Profile Report as the basis for giving advice and help in moving forward. It gives an excellent starting point. PPA builds a person's confidence by highlighting all the things they do well and the attributes they can bring to the business."

"We also find that people recognised themselves in the profile, they can relate to the pattern of behaviour and that in turn gives them control over it. By stepping back they have a greater chance to stop it."

PPA was also used in a team context when two very different businesses were merged. Both were bakers, the first very traditional, the second modern in its approach to business and more fast moving.

"We found that there was a lot of conflict between the different work styles. One company was loyal, consistent, thorough and dependable whilst the other was faster, more responsive. They found they were getting frustrated and upset with one another. PPA enabled them to understand why they each work the way they do and appreciate where others are coming from. Feedback also played an invaluable part in the process, it gave them permission to talk about their highest highs and lowest lows."

The College has also used Team Audit when they are working with teams:

"We were working with a project team that had been set up by the local council. They needed to recruit a new person. The role of the team had evolved so they needed to ensure they recruited the right person. Team Audit gave them a very clear picture of their strengths as a team and what their aims and objective were."

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PPA as part of the selection process

"When used as part of the selection process it enables us to get under the surface of an individual very quickly. It fleshes out first impressions and provides vital information on items such as what motivates or stresses them out. It helps answer the question of whether they would be comfortable in the work environment of the role applied for."

"We can also use the profile to get a much clearer understanding how they will deal with the pressures and demands of the job – how they will react. You tend to assume that others will react to pressure the same way as you. PPA highlights that different people react in different ways and so have to be managed in a way that responds to this."

