



“Profiling took the risk out of recruiting, we knew what types of behavior would be successful in the role of Graduate Engineer. Bad recruitment decisions cost us money: Benchmarking means that we are confident we will now make the right ones.”

Clare Wooler
*Human Resources Manager
BWB.*

BWB Consulting is an integrated environmental and engineering consultancy which offers a multi-disciplinary service to the property, development and construction industry. The services are centered around BWB’s core disciplines of environmental (land regeneration), transportation, highways, infrastructure, as well as civil and structural engineering.

BWB operates from offices in Birmingham, Derby, Leeds, Leicester, Glasgow and Nottingham, working with national and international projects in the UK as well as Europe. They recognize the importance of providing their clients with a pragmatic, responsive and commercial contribution so that complex planning and design issues can be resolved quickly, efficiently and economically

The Challenge

“We are facing a tremendous skills shortage in engineering at the moment. Skilled engineers with three to four years experience are extremely difficult to find and competition to employ them is fierce, especially from the banking and investment sectors,” says Clare Wooler, Human Resources Manager at BWB. “With such a small pool of potential talent we decided to focus on recruiting Graduate Engineers, giving them the training they needed to move forward.”

“The challenge when employing graduates is to ensure we have recruited the right ones. We cannot base our decision on previous work experience so we need something else to validate our impressions. We work in small teams so it’s essential the people on each team gel, work well together, and get along. BWB has a strong culture so for us it was crucial that any graduates we took on fit into the environment. We want people who are friendly, very persuasive and good at building relationship with people.”

“We also had to take into account the cost implications of making a bad decision. It costs BWB approximately £15,000 to train a graduate to a technically competent level. We take on three graduates a year, an investment of around £45,000 which would be wasted if they didn’t work out.”

Thomas International Case Study: BWB Consulting

“Benchmarking has given us a structured recruitment process in place that will identify which graduates will ‘fit’ within the BWB culture and be successful.”

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The Solution

BWB uses systems from Thomas International to ensure they recruit and retain the right graduates. To identify the right candidates for the role of Graduate Engineer at BWB the company completed a Benchmark on the 35 graduates they already employed. A Benchmark identifies the characteristics of the successful graduates thereby allowing BWB to predict candidates who are likely to succeed in the role of Graduate Engineers.

Each graduate working at BWB was assessed using two tools:

- On-demand Personal Profile Analysis (PPA)
- Tests for Selection and Training (TST)

The web-based PPA assesses an individual’s behavior 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 online 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).

TST provides a means to measure the fluid intelligence or ‘mental horsepower’ of an individual. Fluid intelligence is the ability to reason on the spot and solve unfamiliar problems where there is no prior experience to call upon. The tests provide a reliable, accurate and valid means of identifying if a person can quickly learn and retain new skills and procedures.

Thomas International Case Study: BWB Consulting

“The Benchmark took the risk out of recruiting; we knew what profiles and types of behavior would be successful in the role of Graduate Engineer. Bad recruitment decisions cost us money, benchmarking means that we are confident we will now make the right ones. It was clear from the Benchmark report that our top performing Graduate Engineers were motivated by meeting new and interesting people, worked best for a manager that supported their dreams and intentions and wanted time to build relationships in an environment free from data and detail. We now know these are the characteristics we need in the profiles of the graduates we recruit.”

“We also needed to be able to assess how quickly candidates could think on their feet. Our graduates are given a lot of access to clients very quickly and they need to be up and running and able to talk confidently to clients as soon as possible.”

“Historically, we relied on our gut feel at interviews – did we like the person sitting in front of us? Some candidates proved to be very convincing at interview but did not have the behavioral skills we were looking for to be successful in the role. Using the on-demand PPA at interviews provided qualitative data to back up our impression.

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ABOUT THOMAS INTERNATIONAL

For over 25 years, Thomas International has been a global leader in the provision of on-demand behavioral assessments and reporting used to recruit, develop and retain top talent.

Thomas International has a presence in 60 countries and availability in over 56 languages. More than a million Thomas International software-as-a-service (SaaS) delivered assessments are completed each year.