

## Case study

### Willmott Dixon

Construction company using Thomas assessments to develop managers into more senior roles.

Tools used: TEIQue

Willmott Dixon was founded in 1852 and is now one of the UK's largest privately owned construction companies. It currently employs around 700 people and carries out projects across England and Wales.

The company fosters a people-focused, empowered culture and this helped it win Contract Journal's 'Best Place to Work in Construction' award in 2005 and 2006. The quality of its people and the support of its customers enable Willmott Dixon to deliver successful projects in sectors that include health, education, custodial, leisure, commercial offices, hotels and retail.

It supports a vision of strong, sustainable growth carried out by motivated people who enjoy exceeding customer expectations.



#### The challenge

Chrissie Chadney, Head of Human Resources comments, "As a company our success is defined by relationships; between employees, suppliers and customers. People are at the heart of our business and respect for people at all levels has always been a central aspect of Willmott Dixon's culture. Winning accolades such as Contract Journal's 'Best Place to Work in Construction', attracts talented individuals to the organisation, and means that our clients have the best minds in construction working for them."

"Our people focused approach sets us apart from our competitors and is a key factor in our success as a business. To maintain our exceptional levels of service and to remain an employer of choice for the construction industry it is vital that we preserve and nurture our distinctive people orientated culture."

#### The solution

"We use the Thomas Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire as part of our management development programme. The programme is designed to progress managers to more senior levels within the company. It is a modular course over two years and a major component is the development of a high level of self awareness. We use a range of instruments that help us get to heart of the managers' skills and qualities and address any shortcomings. By helping managers to understand themselves better and identify their strengths and limitations, we help them to perform better - this benefits their own careers and our business."

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Construction is a team activity, success is largely determined by how you manage yourself and your ability to manage others, so emotional intelligence is particularly relevant to our managers.”

Emotional intelligence describes an individual’s capacity to understand and control their own emotions, and recognise and manage those of others, so that they and others around them can be as effective and productive as possible at work.

“We use the questionnaire to explore the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace, how emotion management affects your behaviour and why particular facets of emotional intelligence, such as self-motivation, are important in our line of work. We also discuss ways of dealing with specific emotional responses to help managers perform to the best of their abilities.”

The Thomas EI Questionnaire is an objective way to measure emotional competences in a work context. It reports on a Global Intelligence Score, four factors of broader relevance and 15 further facets of behaviour:

The scores predict performance, tell you how well people understand and manage their emotions, how well they interpret and deal with the emotions of others and how they use this knowledge to manage relationships.

“Through using EIQ we have discovered that our most successful managers tend to have particular emotional characteristics. Most have an oversupply in the desirable emotional facets of self-motivation and adaptability.”

Self-motivation relates to an individual’s level of drive and persistence. An oversupply in this area would suggest that the individual would have a strong need for achievement and be driven by a need to work at an optimum level. An oversupply of adaptability indicates that the individual is able to respond and adapt to change easily.



“The managers on our development programme are the people who will be driving our business forward in years to come, so it is crucial they have the emotional intelligence to make the most of themselves and get the best from everyone around them. The Thomas EI Questionnaire helps these individuals, who are so crucial to the future of our organisation, perform to their potential.”

“Recognising these facets as differentiators between good managers and great managers helps us to pinpoint individuals who have a lower supply in these areas, and therefore are likely to require extra support.”

“With around 80% of our managers having an oversupply of self-motivation and adaptability we then look at other parts of the report where there may be an under or over supply and explore if that might indicate potential problems in the work situation. For instance stress-management is an area that is crucial to a manager’s success and one where a lot can be done to help managers cope better if they are struggling.”

“Construction is a very demanding business both for the individuals employed in the industry and for their families. Typically our senior managers will be in charge of projects costing 10 million pounds upwards, so it is in our interests as a business to ensure employees have the right emotional as well as practical skills to deal with the job. Success in our business is about more than your skills as a builder; it is about having the ability to inspire those around you. The managers on our development programme are the people who will be driving our business forward in years to come, so it is crucial they have the emotional intelligence to make the most of themselves and get the best from everyone around them. The Thomas EI Questionnaire helps these individuals, who are so crucial to the future of our organisation, perform to their potential.”