

# Executive Briefing



*Being a student for life merely means opening our mind to allow it to absorb new things, no matter what our age.*

## Department of Labor Standards and Profiles International Products

The Department of Labor recommends a set of standards for behavioral trait, interest, and other employment or educational selection tools in the United States. Profiles International, Inc. focuses on these standards when developing its assessments.

Thirteen standards are referenced by the department and summarize the aspects of proper assessment development and usage. By considering these standards, Profiles endeavors to provide quality instruments that offer dependable and relevant results for our users. While the details associated with our tests' quality are explained in each of the associated technical manuals for our products, the following summary helps to assure the user of our products'

dependability, utility, and overall quality. Each of the thirteen standards is referenced as follows:

**1. Use assessment tools in a purposeful manner.** While usage of an assessment may be seen as a consumer-related issue, we take seriously the guidance we provide to the user in ethical and relevant practices concerning our products. Such guidelines are found in the User's Guides provided with our products, as well as in other customer-related literature. They include, but are not limited to, appropriate samples to population generalizability of each assessment (e.g. using a sales assessment for sales candidates) as well as building benchmarks and job match

patterns based on the actual performance of a relevant sample group.

**2. Use the whole-person approach.** We utilize a wide range of assessment tools in our products. We assess in areas such as behavioral traits, occupational interest, and thinking style scales to measure the whole person.

**3. Use assessments that are unbiased and fair to all groups.** The large collection of data we have acquired for our assessments is analyzed on a regular basis to identify any impact that may be related to differences in gender, ethnicity, national origin, or age groups. As an additional feature, our benchmarking and job match pattern processes

help to ensure that differences in scores are based on performance, not spurious individual qualities that are protected in our society.

**4. Use assessments that are reliable.**

Statistical analyses of assessment scores and other data are conducted by our research team, in order to identify the reliability coefficients associated with this standard. Our products meet or exceed the standards for reliability of scores and are consistently reviewed to maintain awareness of the trends of scoring as time passes. Often our research yields advances that stimulate the creation of newer versions of an assessment and reliability is maintained in each new version as well.

**5. Assessments must be valid for the purpose they are being used.**

As it relates to validity, it is not the assessment itself, but the results from the use of the assessment in a given application in which we are interested. The results of our assessments (the scores of a sample, for instance) have been collected and analyzed for various representative groups that use each of our assessments. Each assessment serves various applications and job types and this categorization is relevant when conducting validity studies. Our User's Guides define the process each customer must take when developing valid job match patterns. This helps to ensure validity for each individual user while our internal studies used in the development of the products conform to these same guidelines for validity studies. For example, two important criteria considered in validity studies: the relevance of the sample group with the type of job that is intended to utilize the assessment for selection purposes, and the quality of the criterion with which scores are compared. We hold these criteria to be of utmost importance in our analyses, and have consistently seen results that emphasize the relevance and predictability of scores from our assessments.

**6. Assessments must be appropriate for the target population.**

To help ensure the proper usage of our assessments and to enhance utility for our customers, each assessment is developed with sample research groups that reflect the kind of users for whom each assessment is intended to serve. For instance, the Profiles Sales Indicator was developed using a sample of salespeople from across the nation. This process ensures that reasonable assumptions and generalizations may be made concerning the scores of future users. This is also assured through our validation studies, as described in #5 above. Relevance and applicability of the results of an assessment help to ensure that generalizations may be made for practical use of each assessment.

**7. The instructions and other documentation must be comprehensive and easy to understand.**

Being thorough while being easy to understand is a delicate balancing act that we strive to achieve in all of our documentation, including our Executive Summaries, User's Guides, Technical Manuals, and other documents. This is achieved by maintaining an awareness of the needs of our customers, the requirements of ethical assessment development, and the awareness of feedback for those who use our products. This feedback has assured us that the information provided is both succinct and readable. We remain responsive to the feedback provided by the users of our products, making adjustments when warranted. The utilization of electronic documentation, including our User's Guides for each product provided directly to the customer via our website, has facilitated this process phenomenally.

**8. If the assessment requires proctoring and/or administration, those performing this function must be properly trained.** One of the most attractive aspects of Profiles International's assessments is the ease with which each assessment is administered, thanks to the online availability of each assessment. Minimal instruction is required to have a candidate or employee take an assessment. Coaching is provided to customers in our literature and through training to help ensure appropriate testing conditions.

**9. It may be necessary to provide consistent and uniform testing conditions to obtain consistent results.** As with #8, coaching provided in our literature and by customer service personnel helps to assure that companies and consultants are providing their candidates and employees with optimal testing conditions. Additionally, our products have been modified over the years to exclude timed administration, traditionally a source of error in administration of assessments.

**10. Provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.** As the Profiles International range of assessments are available online, the issue of user accommodation becomes minimized. The responsibility for comfortable and non-distracting testing conditions are dealt with by each individual company that uses the assessments. We have provided support to our clients for assessing those with special needs, for example, becoming Bobby AA Approved for use with the visually and mobility impaired. As with our internal policies, we encourage customers to aid in any way possible those who require additional adaptations to the testing environment.

**11. Assessment security must be maintained if the results are to be useful.** The anonymity of the test taker is assured, since results are computer-processed and reports distributed by the user. In no case may a user acquire results from any test taker for whom they are not authorized. The assessment administration software created by Profiles International assures this condition. Specifically, our database storage is protected by firewall technology and backed up hourly.

**12. Assessment results must be maintained in a confidential manner.** While it is up to the client company to maintain appropriate security for assessment results in any on-site documentation after testing is completed, we take seriously the need for privacy in results stored in our databases. In no case may an unauthorized individual acquire this information out of the database. Appropriate securities are in place so that this is guaranteed.

**13. Accurate interpretation of results is necessary.** Another benefit of using our products is the various reports available – with various versions provided to accommodate the needs of the management team, the individual and a development team, or other authorized entity within the user's company. While the reports are computer-compiled, all interpretation has been done by appropriately trained professionals. The reports are then written in business language so that the reader does not have to interpret what is being said. This ensures a balanced description of the test taker, based on their responses to the items on the assessment.

Ensuring that these standards are met is important, for each is significant in assuring quality assessment development and accurate measurement. These standards were not established by the Department of Labor lightly, nor have they been lightly interpreted by our research staff. We take pride in the efforts of our team to ensure quality products and continue to strive for excellent results.