

Vodafone UK Dependability and Safety Instrument to *improve recruitment*

Summary

- With large numbers of applicants for Contact Centre roles, Vodafone UK wanted an effective assessment to ensure they hired the right staff.
- SHL was asked to validate the Dependability and Safety Instrument (DSI).
- Over 200 existing contact centre employees were tested using the DSI. Results were correlated with line manager ratings.
- An extremely strong correlation was found between top performers (rated by managers) and high DSI scores.
- The addition of the DSI into the recruitment process has improved the calibre of candidate and saved time and money.

The Background

Vodafone UK has 18.5 million customers and is part of the world's largest mobile community offering a wide range of voice and data communications. As a provider of mobile solutions for consumer and business customers, customer relationships and sales are core components of the company's business.

Vodafone UK is continually evaluating and improving its recruitment process to ensure it maintains its position as an industry leader. Carole Driver, Business Psychologist – Human Resources, has focused on raising the quality of the recruitment process in key areas including: updating selection and assessment methods; innovation in practice; and improving the candidate experience.

In line with these priorities, Vodafone UK wanted a solution which would improve their screening process for recruiting (high quality) call centre representatives within its UK contact centres. They worked with SHL to find an efficient and effective assessment, participating in a validation study for the DSI.

The Challenge

The quality, consistency and value of Vodafone UK's recruitment process have been clear corporate priorities and the company has strived to assess each of these elements. SHL worked to develop a solution for Vodafone UK's contact centres in the following business areas: Telesales, Consumer Credit and Customer Services.

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Gill Burgess, Head of Customer Service - Stoke, Vodafone UK



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Each of these business areas requires employees to be highly customer focused, dependable and reliable. The key challenge for SHL was to develop a solution which would make it easier to find candidates with these qualities.

SHL proposed the DSI as a solution to support Vodafone UK's recruitment process. This assessment is used to determine the likelihood that a candidate will be reliable, productive and a team player.

The test takes around five minutes to complete and gives recruiters the benefit of a single output score, to compare candidates and sift out those who are unlikely to be successful in the role.

The Solution

The DSI's key competency measures were tested out on UK contact centre employees. Employees participating in the study completed self-assessments and were also rated by their managers. This gave an average performance score for comparison with the DSI.

Key criteria relating to employee performance were used to evaluate employee competency criteria such as client focus, reliability and complying with company policies and procedures.

275 employees participated in the validation trials. About 80% of these employees completed the DSI and a competency self-assessment form. 60% of these were female and 40% male, with an age range from 18 to 64 years."

Results

The study showed that DSI scores correlate significantly with employees' overall performance, based on managers' ratings on the DSI.

The results were conclusive.

Nick Shaw, SHL's Account Director for the project, explains that the study found "those who scored highly on the DSI were almost three times more likely to be high performers at work."

Screened against the competencies set out by Vodafone UK, high scoring participants were three times more likely to be client focused; over ten times more likely to comply with company policies and procedures; and four times more likely to cope with pressure and be reliable.

Vodafone UK can also rest assured that the DSI assessment tool is fair. There were found to be no statistically significant differences in scores when compared with criteria such as gender, ethnic group, education and experience.



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The Next Steps

The DSI has demonstrated its effectiveness for finding candidates with the attributes that are vital for success in Vodafone UK's contact centre roles; as Gill Burgess – Head of Customer Service – Stoke, states:

"One of the benefits of using a dependability test at the pre screen stage of our contact centre recruitment, is that it helps us to make a more informed decision about how an individual may work in a customer centric environment, and whether they are a good match for this.

We are confident that over time it will help support our drive to further reduce our KPI metrics such as time to competency and attrition at Vodafone UK."

Vodafone UK's Resourcing team has confidence in the product and SHL's support in providing a solution that can be integrated into their recruitment process, as Carole Driver states:

"Vodafone UK is continually looking for ways to improve its recruitment process. We have recently turned our attention to the large numbers recruited annually into our Contact Centres. Three areas are of particular importance to us:

- Improving the candidate experience so they feel that they have been treated fairly.
- Ensuring candidates have enough opportunities throughout the selection process to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.
- Fit with the organisation's culture and values.

The DSI will play an important role in meeting these priorities."

Driver has further indicated that the buy-in from the business was a positive outcome: "There has been a strong level of support and interest from our managers throughout the project."

The DSI has been piloted in Vodafone UK's assessment process for its contact centres, as part of a three stage selection process. The DSI is used at the first stage, for applicant screening.

Incorporating the assessment at this stage of the process has increased the efficiency of the recruitment process. The second stage is a telephone interview, where the candidate is asked competency questions. The final stage of the recruitment process is the Vodafone UK Experience Day. Candidates participate in an assessment centre to learn more about the company and the role they've applied for.

This demonstrates that the DSI is effective in assisting organisations to improve recruitment processes. It can ensure consistency and quality and in the case of Vodafone UK, align with a streamlined, fair and best-in-class recruitment process.



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