How **Less** Can Really Be More

Hiring with Targeted, Data-Driven Assessments

Insights from a Clevry validation case study in a South African call centre

Hiring in a contact centre is no easy feat. The pace is fast, the stakes are high, and the volume can be overwhelming. It quickly becomes clear that identifying high-performing talent quickly and accurately is both a business imperative and a competitive advantage.

While many organisations have selection frameworks and processes in place, the question we explored with one client was whether those processes could be refined even further – by embedding psychometric assessments that are both precise and practical.
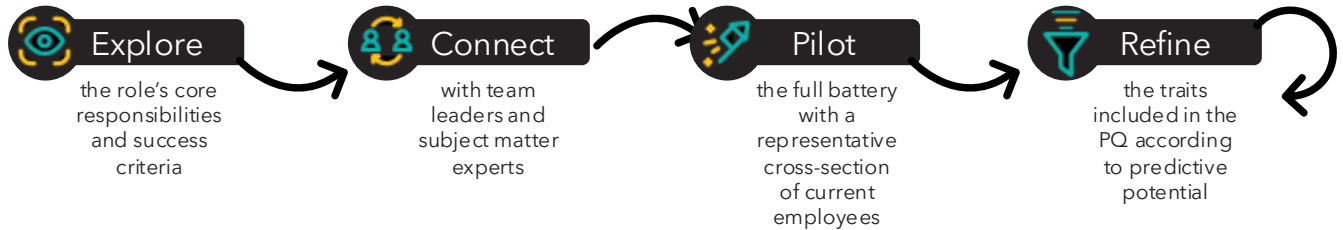
Their goal? To introduce and then validate that the addition of assessments could improve the identification of potential, enable much more rapid data-drive decision making, and focus the talent acquisition team's resources, while building a seamless and considerate candidate experience.

Together, we didn't stop at just validating the introduction of the assessments into their process – we partnered together to evolve their process and see what happens when you combine curiosity, data, and just the right amount of technology.

The key questions we set out to answer: Could a customised battery, designed specifically for this context, strengthen predictive power? Could it simplify decision-making without compromising on depth or rigour?
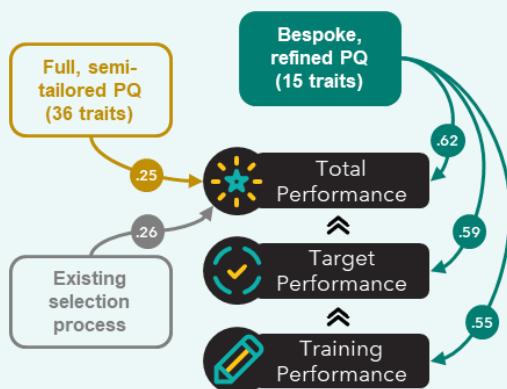
Rethinking What Good Looks Like - Together

Working in partnership with the client, we developed an initial assessment battery using Clevry's personality and ability tools. This not only reflected the role, but the culture and context in which it existed. This process was grounded in best practice and informed by several key inputs:

Explore the role's core responsibilities and success criteria

Connect with team leaders and subject matter experts

Pilot the full battery with a representative cross-section of current employees

Refine the traits included in the PQ according to predictive potential

The result? A 36-trait personality questionnaire (PQ) and cognitive ability assessment, integrated into their existing selection process. Candidates who passed initial screenings (n = 61) completed the battery. Of these, 43 met the minimum ability criteria and proceeded to the organisation's structured training programme, where we could link assessment data to real-world performance outcomes.

What the Data Revealed

Our analysis provided a clear signals and insights → Refining focus doesn't mean losing rigour. In fact, the opposite can be true. This challenged traditional practices and highlighted the benefits of specificity in assessment design. Here's what we uncovered:

Full, semi-tailored PQ (36 traits) — .25 → Total Performance

Bespoke, refined PQ (15 traits) — .62, .59, .55

Existing selection process — .26

Total Performance, Target Performance, Training Performance

o Their existing process was already good at identifying high-potential candidates.
o The original full-length battery's correlation demonstrated predictive potential, but it be sharper.
o A bespoke 9-trait PQ delivered a .49 correlation, while a 15-trait version reached .62 → more than doubling the predictive power of the original

When combining the selection score, abilities assessments, and the tailored 15-trait PQ into a composite score, the overall correlation with training performance rose to .60. This critically shows that when we layered a focused assessment onto an already strong foundation, we didn't just reinforce what worked – we amplified it.

These results underscored the benefit of removing less relevant traits that can dilute clarity and decision-making confidence. Importantly, this level of impact was observed even within a restricted sample, since we assessed only the candidates who had already passed earlier selection stages, suggesting the full potential could be even greater across a broader candidate pool.

The Real-World Payoff

The redesigned PQ wasn't just statistically better. It delivered measurable benefits and tangible benefits that mattered for both the organisation and candidates:

Candidate Experience

A seamless journey with 60% less candidate time spent on assessments, making the experience more efficient and engaging with no loss of insight and

Assessment Clarity

Focused and simplified results enabled clear, more transparent communication across stakeholders—from recruiters to line managers.

Operational Efficiency

A faster process meant reduced pressure on interview scheduling, a more focused interview approach, and a better ability to handle high applicant volumes at pace.

Culture Fit & Role Specificity

The final battery aligned not just with the role, but with the unique culture and operational context – boosting both performance outcomes and retention potential.

Why it Worked

This case study illustrates how an agile mindset, combined with rigorous data analysis and appropriate technology, can transform selection strategies. A data-informed, technology-enabled, focused assessment strategy doesn't just improve hiring outcomes – it redefines what's possible in modern recruitment. We believe there were three reasons this approach delivered such powerful results:

It Was Short and Sharp

We didn't try to measure everything. We zeroed in on the traits that consistently predicted success. That reduced noise, clarified insight, and enhanced the experience—for both candidates and decision-makers.

It Was Context-Aware

We didn't rely on generic benchmarks or cookie-cutter templates. We asked what "good" looks like here, in this company, in this role—and designed accordingly. That specificity made all the difference.

It Was Enabled by Technology & Data, but Human-Led

Technology gave us flexibility, speed, and reach, and the data gave us depth, and rigour. But the power came from how we used it – guided by people, insights, and the courage to question our assumptions - to achieve quicker iteration and data-driven refinement to move from insights to action.

What We Have Taken Forward

This project affirms what research and practice are increasingly showing and reminded us that the best assessment strategies are both agile and grounded. They use multiple data points, involve intentional collaboration, respect the candidate journey, and evolve alongside the business. They're not about doing more – but doing what **matters most**.

In the world of contact centre hiring, where talent moves fast and expectations are high, flexible, technology-enabled assessments allow organisations to match the pace and complexity of modern hiring, while improving candidate experience and ROI.

In short, the right assessments, in the right combination, designed for the right context, offer more than efficiency. They offer clarity, agility, and a path to strategic, human-centred talent decisions.

This is the kind of work we believe in: where data meets design, where insight drives action, and where thoughtful, creative collaboration delivers outcomes that matter.

Let's Turn Insight Into Action

The world of work is changing - and assessment strategies should evolve with it. We partner with forward-thinking organisations to design agile, context-aware assessment solutions that deliver measurable impact.

Whether you're looking to sharpen your selection process, enhance predictive power, or create a more human-centred candidate experience, we'd love to explore how a focused, insight-led approach can work for you.

Let's design what's next, together.

Click here to book a call with our consultants.