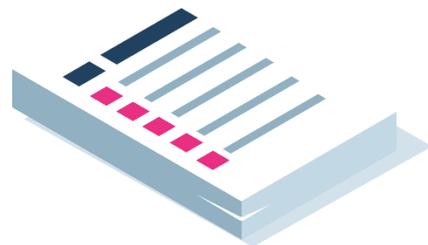


The full value of online assessments



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Introduction: why invest in online assessments

Decisions matter. Too often critical business decisions, particularly those relating to people, are ill-informed. If they are based on bad information or made by those who are not qualified to do so, they are less likely to lead to the desired result.

Good decision making must be based on accurate and relevant information. So, decisions relating to people should be based on valid, fair and defensible assessments of those people.

As more and more businesses become ever more data-driven, it is critical that people decisions are based on sound data. Gut instinct only goes so far.

Especially when budgets are under pressure, robust online assessments deliver a real return on investment.

They provide leaders with the crucial information around knowledge and skills gaps in the workforce. They can reveal the extent of knowledge around product, process and regulations. They can ensure that the right people are in the right roles and are well placed to make informed decisions.

Some assessment options, such as pen and paper, learning management systems (LMS) or basic software tools might seem like they can provide the right backup. But they create short- and long-term issues. They are more time-consuming and may not be testing the skills to the scale needed to do the job properly. They do not deliver the value of an enterprise-grade assessment solution.

It follows that employers that are serious about getting the best out of their people and processes need to be serious about assessment. That way employers and employees can learn, adapt, and improve the decisions that matter most.



The ten ways assessments deliver value

Online assessments help businesses and organizations to make more informed decisions and unlock their potential.

They can make a real and lasting difference to an organization's performance.

Here are ten ways that online assessments provide real value and deliver a return on investment.

1. **Make informed decisions:** with valid, fair and defensible assessments, leaders can make informed decisions based on accurate and reliable information. Robust online assessments provide the reliable data that leaders can use to make decisions about their people.

They can be sure that the big decisions they take as a result of assessment data will withstand scrutiny. Without such reliable information, businesses cannot make informed decisions. The impact could be catastrophic.

2. **Improve productivity and employee competence:** assessments help ensure employees know their products, rules, procedures and follow best practice. Checking employees' skills and knowledge is especially important with so many people working remotely and from home.

Competent employees help drive efficiency and productivity. Studies show that after introducing assessments, 58% of companies see an increase in employee retention, 58% in productivity and 60% in customer satisfaction.¹ All of these help drive value throughout the business.

3. **Recruit the best people:** three-quarters of job candidates lie on their CV. Eight out of ten recruiters admit to making a hiring mistake. This makes it hard to identify and recruit the best people and maximize performance. Failed hires can cost organizations up to 30% of an employee's first years earning.²

Pre-hire screening can be critical in identifying recruits with the right skills and make the recruitment process more robust. Post-hire assessments can be instrumental in helping new employees maximize their effectiveness. After implementing

¹ Brandon Hall Group, Assessing Assessments: Value and Impact

² <https://www.hrexchangenetwork.com/hr-talent-acquisition/articles/poor-hiring-costs-by-the-numbers#:~:text=The%20U.S.%20Department%20of%20Labor,to%20hiring%2C%20pay%20and%20retention>

assessments, 76% of corporates have seen an increase in the quality of hire.³

4. **Reduce compliance risk:** regulators worldwide continue to sharpen their teeth with considerable fines levied on financial services (\$300bn since 2009), US utilities (£20bn since 2000) and US pharma businesses (\$38bn since 2000).

Robust online assessments help businesses demonstrate to regulators that they are taking sensible measures to ensure they meet their compliance requirements, helping reduce the risk of fines. Assessments can also improve standards, reduce errors and give senior leaders confidence that their people understand the rules.

5. **Save time and money:** good decision-making saves time and money through better performance and higher productivity. Robust online assessments also reduce the time and cost of risk-management and compliance complications.

What's more, online assessments help reduce administration time needed with a pen and paper or basic software option. Online assessments offer a faster turnaround and analysis of assessment results, meaning businesses can make swifter decisions.

6. **Reduce health and safety risk:** human failure contributes to almost all accidents and exposures to substances hazardous to health. Many major incidents are caused by human error.⁴ The cost of such accidents is high, and can very often be avoided with effective training.

Online assessments help ensure employees know and follow health and safety guidance. They also help employers demonstrate robust health and safety practices to regulators and their other stakeholders.

7. **Protect reputation:** mistakes in the production or delivery of goods or services, whether in regulatory compliance, process and procedures, or health and safety can hurt an organization's reputation. Marketing and sales channels often present a larger threat, with people more dispersed and so harder to manage.

Online assessments enable businesses to test the knowledge, skills and experience of employees and distributors. Assessments can also check that correct procedures

³ Brandon Hall Group, Assessing Assessments: Value and Impact

⁴ <https://www.hse.gov.uk/humanfactors/topics/humanfail.htm>

are understood and followed throughout the sales channel.

8. **Improve the effectiveness of training:** without the regular discipline of recalling information, the human brain's ability to retain learning is significantly reduced.

Studies show that assessments provide that retrieval practice that helps long-term remembering and reduce forgetting. Assessments are critical for organizations that want to maximize the value and effectiveness of their learning and development investments.

9. **Create a certification virtuous circle:** rigorous certification programs that assess and award employees based on skills and knowledge ensures that the right people complete the right task. These programs enable employees to demonstrate capability and potentially improve their career or salary.

Certification programs are also useful to assess and reward channel partners to check their people understand the product they are selling and therefore see more success with it. They are also useful to verify the technical skills of maintenance engineers and support personnel at third party distributors and dealers. These programs help build trust and confidence with customers which leads to increased revenues.

10. **Improve the efficiency of training:** organizations can save time and resource by testing employees before they undergo training to see if they already know the material. If employees pass the test, they can skip the training.

This provides two business benefits. First, the organization saves time and money by forgoing needless training. Second, by 'testing out' of training, they can ensure their training is more valid and respected. It is more likely to impact behavior by focusing only on those who need it.

The issue with 'good enough' assessments

Some organizations choose an assessment solution they believe is 'good enough', such as pen and paper, a learning management system (LMS) or another basic software tool.

These approaches do not maximize the potential impact of assessments. In the short-term they can be time-consuming, difficult to operate and create inefficiencies. They may also fail to prevent or deter cheating.

In the long-term, employers may not be testing the knowledge or skills to the scale needed to do the job properly. Results are hard to compile and analyze. It is difficult to take relevant action as a result of the assessment.

Businesses, education institutions or public sector organizations that fail to use robust online assessments could face disputes. In areas of regulated activity, they may even face compliance fines.



Conclusion

Assessments provide the information that businesses, academic institutions and the public sector needs to make good decisions. Robust online assessments drive staff and test-taker engagement, improve efficiency, and increase productivity.

As employers increasingly need to use data to drive their decisions, Questionmark's platform, professional services and ready-made assessment content provide real value across the organization. That may be through pre-hire screening to get the right people, or post-hire assessments to help them deliver their best.

Many LMSs and basic assessment solutions fail to offer the flexibility, cost-effectiveness and analytical ability that ensure assessments unlock potential and improve decision making.

Questionmark overcomes these issues. It is a secure, enterprise-grade online assessment platform that helps employers improve their performance and safely meet their compliance requirements.

Questionmark enables organizations to unlock their potential by delivering online assessments that are reliable, fair and defensible.



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About Questionmark:

Questionmark provides a secure enterprise-grade assessment platform and professional services to leading organizations around the world, delivered with care and unequalled expertise. Its full-service online assessment tool and professional services help customers to improve their performance and meet their compliance requirements. Questionmark enables organizations to unlock their potential by delivering assessments which are valid, reliable, fair and defensible. Questionmark offers secure powerful integration with other LMS, LRS and proctoring services making it easy to bring everything together in one place. Questionmark's cloud-based assessment management platform offers rapid deployment, scalability for high-volume test delivery, 24/7 support, and the peace-of-mind of secure, audited U.S., Australian and European-based data centers.

Complete details are available at <https://www.questionmark.com>

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