User-Experience Design: Considerations for Multi-Method Web-Based Assessment Centers

Technology is continuously evolving at a rapid pace. Innovations in assessment software are becoming more prevalent in the market. These broadening assessment capabilities and the technical options available to combine multiple types of assessment instruments allow for enhanced insights into the capabilities and potential of those being assessed. Practitioners and buyers are often wooed by the wide range of possibilities. However, focusing too much on pizzazz, or the “Wow” factor, may yield unintended consequences regarding the effectiveness of the assessment. During this session we will provide an overview of basic user experience design considerations and best practices as they relate to the incorporation of multiple assessment instruments into a single assessment experience. Examples of design considerations to be overviewed are:

- **Usability** - a quality attribute that assesses how easy user interfaces are to use. It is defined by several components: learnability, efficiency, memorability, errors, satisfaction, and utility (Nielsen, 2012).
- **Page/Item Layout** – includes components of proximity, alignment, and repetition.
- **Presentation of assessment stimuli** – covers the interpretation, readability and consumption of information that enables participants to comprehend stimuli.

Attention to design principles like those mentioned above can have implications for participant receptivity to the assessment including realism/face validity, perceptions of fairness/bias, unnecessary fatigue – all which can impact accuracy and receptivity of the results of the assessment. Unfortunately, improper design can result in unintended outcomes as to the usability of the instruments, ultimately limiting ability to assess intended knowledge, skills, abilities, or other traits/behaviors accurately and reliably, which leads to an overall lack of predictive value.

These same design considerations should also be applied to the administrative software interface of the assessment instruments in order to gain efficiencies in management and scoring of participant data. Leveraging technology to automatically combine data from multiple assessment instruments (assessment centers, 360s, personality/cognitive tests, bio data, etc.) can yield great efficiencies in scoring (e.g., algorithmically scoring close-ended items and combining with assessor ratings) and jumpstart the report generation process.

Ultimately, this session will focus on the value that well-designed technology can bring to enhancing our ability to combine data/insights from multiple assessment methodologies in order to more discretely identify participant strengths and development needs while preserving the fundamental tenants of assessment methodologies. Good design ensures that inclusion of multiple assessment instruments adds incremental value to the ability to derive quality decisions/outcomes.
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Emily is a senior consultant in DDI’s Assessment Technology Group. An industrial-organizational psychologist with special expertise in the convergence of assessment methodologies and cutting-edge technology, Emily has provided thought leadership on designing, implementing, launching, and refining new product applications and solutions to effectively meet clients’ business needs.

Emily has extensive experience across a broad range of capabilities, including consulting on assessment projects solutions powered by leading-edge software and technology, R&D, process improvement, and change management. In addition to her work developing and implementing new products, Emily facilitates feedback and development planning sessions with clients from a variety of industries; financial, pharmaceutical, medical, and technology. She also has presented thought leadership at multiple industry conferences.

Before joining DDI, Emily worked on developing assessment centers for selection in law enforcement, data analyses for union negotiations, and research in organizational culture. She received her Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Central Michigan University.

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Tami is the Director of Customer Experience within DDI’s Global Technology Group, overseeing functions that include technical support, technical project management and delivery activities. In Tami’s sixteen years with DDI, she has led and/or participated in every facet of the technical product development life cycle. Current initiatives include broadening product support coverage across the globe and establishing availability, stability and performance metrics for DDI’s talent platform. Tami’s background includes a B.S. in Computer Science with a Math minor, a M.S. in Information Systems, and a Project Management Professional (PMP) certification.