



**6 essential steps**

**to conduct a successful  
skills assessment.**

# introduction.

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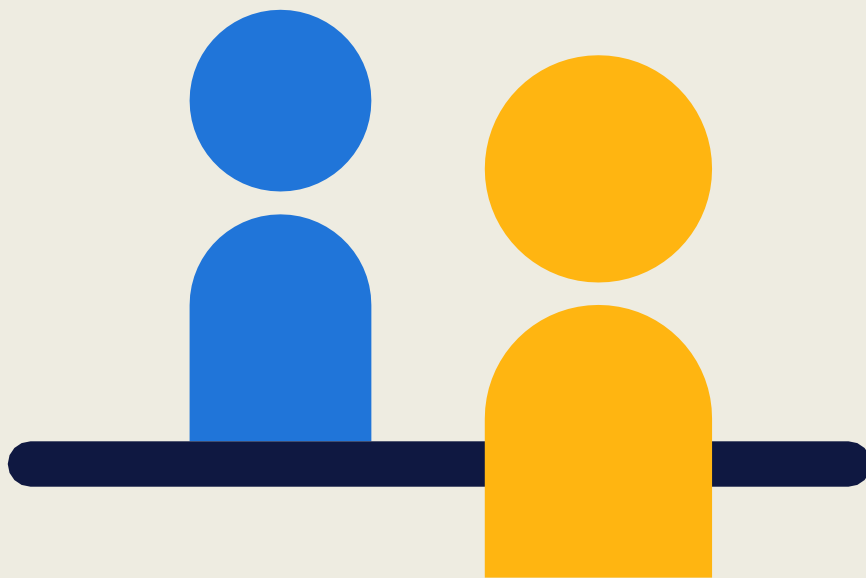
Hiring the wrong person is something every HR manager wants to avoid. It can have a wide range of negative consequences for your business, including:

- the financial implications of having to restart the recruitment process to find a replacement
- disruption and uncertainty for your existing workforce
- a heavier or more unpredictable workload for employees who have to pick up the slack while you hire a new employee
- decreased productivity
- potential damage to your company's reputation and performance

Fortunately, there are many things you can do to optimise your recruitment process and reduce the risk of making a bad hire. One specific approach is to revisit your approach to skills assessment to ensure it really works for your company.

Let's take a look at some of the key steps you can take to get the best results from your skills assessments.

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# 1. set clear goals.

Clear goals are an essential element of any business project or investment. They will help to guide the various decisions and judgments you have to make as part of your skills assessment process, and also serve as the foundation for the metrics you'll use to measure results.

To create a detailed picture of what you want to achieve, consider these questions:

- will your skills assessments focus entirely on job applicants, or will you use them for your existing workforce as well?
- do you need specific skill sets, or is it more important to find people who are willing and able to learn?
- are you looking to evolve and improve your existing workforce, or fill gaps created by departures?
- what skills do you require to be fully 'market fit' and able to operate at the optimal level?

The answers to these and other questions relevant to your business will show where your priorities lie, which will make it easier to plan and structure your skills assessments.

# 2. be specific about hard and soft skills.

Work skills come in many forms, so you need to be specific about the knowledge and competencies that are most important to your organisation.

In industries like logistics and manufacturing, technical skills - such as the ability to operate particular machinery or proprietary software - are crucial. But many businesses in these and other sectors also attach a lot of importance to **soft skills**, which are more difficult to measure but no less significant than hard skills.

Since these two groups of competencies are very different, you have to be clear about the qualities you need and value the most. It's often important to start out by focusing on technical skills that are essential to your business, which could be anything from fluency in a particular coding language to knowing the process of generating a report for internal stakeholders.

You can then start to think about soft skills and how you can effectively assess them.

# 3. find your optimum approach to testing.

The constant evolution of the [HR technology](#) space means there are many skills assessment tests to choose from, each offering unique benefits.

Decisions you have already made about your goals and priorities will help you decide on the right option.

If you're a manufacturing company looking for an employee who is familiar with certain equipment, for example, you'll want to focus on technical skills assessments that test their knowledge in this area. It can also be useful to put job applicants in hypothetical scenarios and ask them how they would use their technical knowledge to solve a problem.

There are various ways to go about measuring soft skills as well. [Pymetrics](#), a company supported by the [Randstad Innovation Fund](#), uses gamification, behavioural science and artificial intelligence to measure attributes such as:

- attention
- effort
- fairness
- emotional intelligence
- generosity
- learning
- risk taking



# 4. search the market for solutions.

Given the wide range of skills assessment platforms available, it's wise to do your research and take some time to compare the various options on offer.

You can narrow down the field by identifying features and benefits that are particularly important to you. Do you want a solution that gives you control over setting questions and tasks, for instance, or one that takes these jobs off your hands?

It's also important to ask if you need a tool that generates a clear score so you can compare talent, or if you would prefer to interpret the assessment results yourself.

# 5. measure results.

Just like any other business investment, your skills evaluations should be judged on the returns they deliver.

Have people that you hired on the basis of skills assessment tests become successful, productive members of your workforce? Did the insights you gained from testing provide an accurate forecast of how certain individuals would perform?

The answers to these questions will help you gauge the effectiveness of your testing methods and, crucially, identify how they can be improved.



# 6. innovate and evolve.

Constant change is one of the few certainties in the business world. Industries, competitor trends and customer expectations are always evolving, so you must be willing to innovate and adapt if you want to keep up.

There are many stories of once industry-leading companies that either fell behind the competition, or failed entirely, because they were too slow to change or recognise transformative trends in their sector. **Kodak**, **Nokia** and **Blockbuster** are some of the most frequently cited examples of brands that were eclipsed by forward-thinking rivals.

When it comes to skills assessment, you could have a lot to gain from applying the sort of innovative thinking that is so vital in business strategy as a whole. Regularly revisiting and reimagining this aspect of your recruitment will ensure it stays up-to-date and effective.

This, in turn, will help you find the talent you need to be on the forefront of change in your industry.



If you're keen to optimise your recruitment and workforce management by reimagining your approach to skills assessment, [start a conversation](#) with Randstad today.