

Kimberly-Clark experiences *major cost savings* through assessment

The background

Kimberly-Clark (KC) and its well-known brands are an indispensable part of life for people in more than 150 countries. Every day 1.3 billion – nearly a quarter of the world’s population – trust KC brands to enhance their health, hygiene and well-being through brands such as Kleenex, Scottex, Andrex, Pull Ups, Huggies and Kotex.

Its global team comprises of more than 62,000 people, organised into three global segments – Consumer Tissue, Personal Care and Business to Business, all binded by a passion for finding new ways to improve people’s lives through the creation of legendary brands.

The challenge

A company that creates legendary brands needs legendary people, this helps create products that are best sellers, either number one or number two in more than 80 countries. Rick Woodward, learning & development director states: “We simply have to get the best people to remain competitive.”

Rick says that when recruiting the company seeks people who share its values of excellence, teamwork and original thinking. It is therefore no surprise that the competition for places is high.

A key element in securing the best talent is the use of psychometric assessment. “The use of assessment and ability tests is crucial in achieving our aim of recruiting the best people,” explains Rick.

Psychometric assessment has been an integral part of the company’s recruitment strategy for over 16 years. Throughout this time, KC has worked with SHL, the world leader in online recruitment and candidate assessment.

So successful has the use of psychometrics been that the company is extending its use right across Europe, in particular SHL’s market-leading online Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ32) has become a key part of the company’s European UK graduate programme.

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The OPQ builds a picture of a candidate's style of work and behaviour, linked to the potential job requirements and the particular work environment. Rick says: "The OPQ gives us a window into people's personalities, it means we are able to learn things about candidates that we wouldn't be able to identify from a CV or in an interview situation."

Rick knows the importance of getting things right at the recruitment stage and has seen the results of assessment pay dividends time and time again. In fact, he puts the cost of recruiting the wrong graduate at £37,000 – a cost the company can ill afford to make.

Furthermore, the assessments are positively received by many of the candidates because of the personal insights they give, while KC's management team reports great confidence in the process – having used assessments to back up many of their decisions over the years. "Graduates often say to us that they really appreciate that we want to get to know them," Rick says.

The solution

The graduate scheme at KC is very popular and usually attracts a large number of applicants from across Europe, so since 2001 Kimberly-Clark has used different language versions of the product to help prevent inconsistent results.

KC now also administers the assessment in five different languages – allowing Italian, French, German, Dutch and English speakers to take the assessments in their native tongue.

In another value driven initiative the OPQ was placed online for KC, and it has now overtaken the paper and pen version of the assessment as the preferred method of completing from and has resulted in considerable cost savings.

For ability testing KC uses SHL's bureau service to manage its online assessment process. This involves the company sending an e-mail to SHL with the names and e-mail addresses of those candidates that it wants to be assessed. SHL then mails each individual a link to a secure website where they can complete the assessment, together with a unique username and password. When candidates have completed the assessment, their results are e-mailed to KC – usually to the person who initially requested that the assessment be sent out.

Key Points

Psychometric assessment has been an integral part of the company's recruitment strategy for over 16 years.

KC administers assessments in five different languages for its graduate recruitment programme.

SHL helps us recruit and retain the best and will help us remain leaders in our field.



Assessments
in more than
30 languages

Organisations that understand and maximize their people's potential achieve outstanding results. SHL gives you the insights to make better decisions about your people.

**We call this People Intelligence,
Business Results.**

The results

With SHL seeing the use of online assessments growing by 30 per cent year on year, it is no surprise that Kimberly-Clark continues to use this channel. Rick explains: "As well as the obvious cost savings, online gives greater flexibility to us as a company, and also means the candidates have greater control over when they take the test," says Rick.

The OPQ, which this year celebrates its 21st birthday, is also used by Kimberly-Clark for all of its executive recruitment.

The use of assessment throughout KC is widespread and the company is particularly keen to foster an environment where assessment is valued, and more importantly used correctly. All managers are fully trained on its use and implementation, which in addition to the OPQ includes SHL's online numerical assessment, part of SHL Ability Screening Online. These are also used in all KC's graduate and executive recruitment.

At KC's centralised European administrative service centre in Brighton, managers also undergo SHL's clerical checking assessment.

Rick is confident about the widespread use of psychometrics and his relationship with SHL, stating: "By using SHL we have the assurance of a world-renowned brand. The fact that they have also led the way in pioneering international versions of their assessments is also crucial to us as a global company.

"At the end of the day good people make the difference and anything that helps us recruit and retain the best will help us remain leaders in our field."



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