

## **GUIDELINES FOR EXPLORING A HIGH UNCERTAINTY COEFFICIENT (UC) SCORE**

This brief outline will highlight the items associated with the UC score, the major reasons for a high UC score and a set of guidelines for exploring the UC score with a specific candidate. It is recommended that if a recruiter or manager has specific questions, they are encouraged to set up a consultation with a consultant from the Self Management Group.

### **THE UC ITEMS**

The UC items come from the attitude page of the ProfessionalPro. They include:

- #7 I have never told a lie.*
- #23 All my habits are good and desirable ones.*
- #27 I never envy another person's good luck.*
- #39 I have never been late for work or for an appointment.*
- #47 I have never boasted or bragged.*
- #59 I have never said anything unkind about anyone else.*
- #71 No one is ever rude to me.*
- #79 I always admit my own mistakes.*

As evident from the items, they include statements that typically require an absolute or yes/no response. They are very extreme types of questions. For example, "I have never told a lie" can realistically only be answered 1 or 5. Most people mark 1 or 2 for the item.

A high UC score becomes a caution when it is greater than 45. To create a score of 45 or greater, a candidate would have to answer the majority of the items as either 4 or 5. Therefore, it is quite unlikely that a candidate reading the questions and answering honestly will have a high UC score. However, it can and does happen. The following section outlines the major reasons for a high UC score.

## MAJOR REASONS FOR A HIGH UC SCORE

- 1) **SOCIAL DESIRABILITY:** this is by far the most common reason for a high UC score. The candidate in an effort to impress the recruiter attempts to present an inflated positive self-image. As a result, they mark the UC items higher. When exploring a high UC score for this reason, it is important to determine whether or not the candidate inflated just the UC items or all the items. This is usually very easy to determine by asking interview questions to justify the other elements of the report. The sample questions in the report are excellent for this purpose.
- 2) **LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES** If the candidate is struggling with the language, they do NOT understand the subtleties of the words 'never' or 'always' and as a result trigger the high UC score.
- 3) **RANDOM RESPONDING** On rare occasions, a candidate will not be reading the questions and simply respond in a random manner. For example, mark all 5's or alternate between 1 and 5. This type of responding will generally be reflected by the UC score.
- 4) **SPECIFIC RELIGIOUS GROUPS** This is the least common reason for a high UC score. Our research has found that some very religious groups tend to trigger a high UC score. For example, they are being honest when they circle 5 (definitely agree) on the item "I have never told a lie". Again, this is very easy to determine in a subsequent discussion of the report.

## POSSIBLE STEPS FOR EXPLORING A HIGH UC SCORE

To explore the reasons for a high UC score and determine whether or not the report is reliable, the following steps are recommended.

**STEP #1:** Investigate the UC items with the candidate. Go to the items on page 3 (attitude items) and ask the candidate to explain their responses to the UC items that they marked 4 or 5. An honest candidate will explain their response quite comfortably. For example, I don't usually tell lies so I marked a 4. A candidate who was distorting or inflating their self image, will become quite defensive or be unable to explain their response. A lack of explanation will also be evident with Language Difficulties or Random Responding.

**STEP #2:** Look at the Self Directed (SD), Stress Coping (SC) and Call Reluctance (CR) scores. If any of these scores are greater than 60, it indicates that the candidate was also potentially inflating all the attitude scores.

**STEP #3:** Investigate the power scores (Enterprising, Achievement and Independent) and the neutralizing scores (Acquiescent, Relaxed and Team Oriented) on the summary page of the

report. If any of the power scores are greater than 140 or neutralizing scores less than 40, they are very unusual scores and indicate that the ProfessionalPro might be inflated.

**STEP #4:** Candidate Feedback. Give the candidate the candidate feedback from the report and ask if the pages describe him or her accurately. If the answer is YES ask for examples from the persons background that would justify the ProfessionalPro. If the answer is NO ask for examples from the persons background that would justify their challenges to the information.

**STEP #5:** Interviewing Questions. The interview questions included in the report are designed to help the recruiter validate the ProfessionalPro from the experiences of the candidate. The ProfessionalPro is assessing potential and the answers to the interview questions should substantiate or challenge the ProfessionalPro predictions.

## SUMMARY

In summary, the most effective strategy for minimizing high UC scores is to be proactive by selecting the appropriate language for each candidate and following the simple administration instructions. This will eliminate all the major reasons for high UC scores.

A high UC score does NOT automatically indicate that the ProfessionalPro results are invalid but rather indicates that a recruiter or manager should be cautious about accepting the results as reliable. Reliability indicates consistency, validity is a measure of the accuracy of the results. Validity requires reliability. Therefore, by following the recommended steps to explore a high UC score will determine whether or not the ProfessionalPro results are reliable and valid.