

PSYCHOMETRIC SUCCESS

HOW TO SCORE HIGHLY IN TESTS OF YOUR ABILITIES.



Recruiters commonly use psychometric tests as a way to find out more about your abilities to decide whether they want to invite you to interview. They involve answering a series of questions online within a certain time limit and are generally used by larger employers who receive large numbers of applications. If you are applying for internships and graduate schemes you can almost guarantee that you will be given some form of psychometric test.

As with all aspects of interviews and assessment centres, preparation is the key to increasing your chance of performing well. Practising questions and sample tests will help to improve the speed and accuracy of your answers. Focus upon the types of questions that you find difficult.

There are many different tests used by employers but they generally fall into the following main types:

- **Numerical reasoning** – requires you to find the answer using information given in graphs, charts and tables. This is not a maths test, rather it is about using logic to find the answer; but make sure you are familiar with percentages, ratios and fractions.
- **Verbal reasoning** – you use written information in a logical way to answer a question. Your answer must be based on the information provided and not on any prior knowledge.
- **Critical thinking** – whereas in verbal reasoning the answers are within the text, these tests require critical and logical thinking skills to decide whether statements relating to the text are logical and compatible with the text or not.
- **Situational judgement test** – you are presented with a series of work-related scenarios and have to choose which solution or action you would take.
- **Diagrammatic, logical or inductive reasoning tests** – assess visual problem-solving and processing skills and can require you to identify the next stage in a sequence.

Some recruiters are now using **video games** as an alternative way to test candidates, with the aim of making the test taking experience more enjoyable and putting candidates at ease. But a test is still a test! Recruiters are still looking to assess your skills, decision making, response to challenges and level of risk taking for example. As with all tests, it is important to read the instructions carefully and complete it in a quiet place where you won't be distracted. **L**

Visit your Careers Department for practice resources and sample tests

Do these

Verbal tests

- Read a variety of business-related articles, news and blogs, so you become familiar with a range of business topics, writing styles and the vocabulary used.
- Practise reading a piece of text and then summarise what you've read.
- Scanning for keywords or reading confusing sentences backwards can be helpful.

Numerical tests

- Revise calculations such as division, multiplication as well as fractions, percentages and ratios. Practise

converting data into different formats eg numbers to percentages and metres to kilometres. The maths you will be asked to complete is not complicated, but you will have to conduct a number of these calculations in order to get to the correct answer, which is where errors can be made.

- Study graphs, charts and tables in the business pages of newspapers and do some basic calculations to familiarise yourself with this type of data. Look for trends and try to interpret the data yourself.

- Make up some of your own questions. For example, if a company spends 20% of their money on salaries, and they increase their staff by 3% each year over 5 years, how much of their £2 million budget will they spend on salaries in 2021?
- Puzzles such as Sudoku and maths revision websites such as BBC Skillswise can help develop numeracy skills.

Tests of logic

- Familiarise yourself with flow charts and business process diagrams. Look for patterns, sequences and rules (ie if x then y).