Recruitment and Profiling Tool
(Including Personal Attributes)
For the Retail Industry

October 2008
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1. Requirements

The purpose of this report is to address the need for a Recruitment and Profile tool that can be customised specifically for the Retail Industry. The report is structured around the following two key areas;

1. The Key Attributes for overall Employability in the Retail Sector including the concept of a skills framework based on personal attributes, or what are sometimes described as “soft skills”, which can sit beneath the formal training system and become a feature of employers recruitment and selection processes.

2. The Feasibility of a Recruitment and Profile Tool taking the following into consideration;

   - The attributes of an effective and efficient tool to better target recruitment activities and improve employee retention;
   - How the outcomes of the report on the Recruitment and Profiling Tool for the 2007 NSSS Integrated National Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Skills Development Project (the Hospitality Industry Report) can be customised for the Retail Industry;
   - Analysis of the findings on currently available tools including the Chandler MacLeod ESP, the Harrison Innerview and ACER WPI Tool with a view to tailoring the current tools to the needs of the industry;
   - Processes needed to customise and adapt an agreed Recruitment tool;
   - Processes that will need to be considered by the industry for the comprehensive implementation of the Tool.
2. Key Attributes for Overall Employability in the Retail Sector

Identified Skill Gaps and Needs

The identification of skill gaps and needs in the Retail industry is complex with the industry growing rapidly and consumers becoming more informed and more discerning about where they will spend their money. They expect a level of service that goes beyond simply making a transaction - especially in the smaller specialised areas of retail.

External environmental factors have shaped the growth of the industry, which in turn influences what employers have come to need and expect from their staff. Economic challenges and globalization have increased the pressure to remain competitive and flexible in the services they provide. This needs to be supported by enhanced employee capability. Retail employers need their staff to possess relevant skills as well as a capacity to learn in order to address the challenges facing the industry. The retail sector has identified a range of skills that employees will require to either hold or obtain to pursue a career in the retail sector, now and in the future. Many of these skills are already filtering into the industry to varying degrees; however a more consistent approach is required. It has been emphasised that retail employee skills (or skill sets) in the future would require a focus on:

- the financial bottom line with an increasing expectation that all employees understand aspects of the enterprise’s financial situation;
- customer relationships and customer service with the expectation that employees would understand the nature and importance of long-term customer relationships and greater emphasis on solutions for customers;
- community requirements and expectations with regard to enterprise performance e.g. shareholder value, equal employment opportunity, occupational health and safety, environmental requirements;
- globalisation i.e. factors such as increased international competition or a move into, or expansion of, global market activity;
- increasingly complex operating environments as a result of regulatory, legislative and financial changes;
- innovation and process improvement either to drive cost effectiveness or create new products and services;
- flexible enterprise structures e.g. flatter, more autonomous structures and a workforce that is able to regroup as required; and
- time constraints – customer demands and market competition will require product and service provision in shorter timeframes.

Employees, especially those on the shop floor, need to be equipped with the right combination of skills, experience and knowledge to keep pace with the shift in customer expectations. Evidence drawn from job advertisements for the retail sector
indicates that in today’s retail market, customer service is becoming the most essential employee skill.  

The main skills and abilities required of employees in Retail Operations have identified as:

- Customer service skills;
- Basic literacy and numeracy;
- Selling skills and product knowledge;
- Computer literacy and IT skills;
- Taking responsibility and initiative;
- Personal characteristics: the right attitude, a desire to work with and serve the public

In order to adequately outline what employers are looking for, it is necessary to examine the current situation regarding skills needs in the industry. This is becoming a real challenge for an industry that is characterised by a workforce with a large proportion of young people who view retail as a short-term employment option while preparing for other career paths. The outcome is a growing demand for better and multi-skilled employees with an aptitude for customer service and sales. Table 1 provides an overview of the challenges and drivers of change facing the Industry and impacting on entry-level positions.

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1 ARE YOU BEING SERVED? SKILLS GAPS AND TRAINING NEEDS WITHIN THE RETAIL SECTOR: Research Paper 53: The University of Warwick, Coventry
### Table 1: Occupational Skills Map for Entry-Level Retail Operations  
*(ARE YOU BEING SERVED? SKILLS GAPS AND TRAINING NEEDS WITHIN THE RETAIL SECTOR)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Role</th>
<th>Drivers of Change</th>
<th>New Skills Required</th>
<th>Implications for Training and Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Only acknowledging the customer’s presence if they ask for help | Increasing competition  
Sophisticated customer requirements  
Focus on excellence in customer service | Actively trying to offer help and achieve a sale  
Increased product knowledge  
‘going the extra mile’ | Focus on selling skills  
Communication and interpersonal skills  
Specialist product training |
| Carrying out managers instructions | Organisational restructuring / delayering  
Increased accountability and regulation in the Industry | Increased responsibility for line managers  
Flexibility, multiskilling  
Staff should be proactive and use initiative  
Awareness of health and safety regulations  
Knowledge of legal requirements | Training and development to support widened roles (i.e. management skills, decision making, team building)  
Employers are trying to create ‘ownership’ of work amongst their staff. This requires an understanding of organisational goals  
Communication of up to date policy and any changes in policy |
| Cash handling  
Shelf stacking | Increasing use of IT  
Changing methods of stock control | General IT literacy (point of sale entry systems)  
Ability to read spreadsheets and computerised stock reports | Induction training on computerised systems  
On-line help packages  
Many stores are now using computer based training packages for a range of training and development areas (i.e. product knowledge) |
The Employability Skills Framework

The Retail Industry Working Group was established as part of the National Industry Skills Initiative. It concluded in its 2003 Retail Industry Report, that the industry required two streams of skills – Employability Skills and Specific Skills. Employability skills are defined as:

"skills required not only to gain employment, but also to progress within an enterprise so as to achieve one’s potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions”

The Specific Skills related to training in small business, management, product knowledge, IT and e-commerce and food handling.

The Key Skills of the Employability Skills Framework are:

- **communication skills** that contribute to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers;
- **team work skills** that contribute to productive working relationships and outcomes;
- **problem-solving skills** that contribute to productive outcomes;
- **initiative and enterprise skills** that contribute to innovative outcomes;
- **planning and organising skills** that contribute to long-term and short-term strategic planning;
- **self-management skills** that contribute to employee satisfaction and growth;
- **learning skills** that contribute to the ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes; and
- **technology skills** that contribute to effective execution of tasks.

The Employability Skills Framework also includes the personal attributes which describe a set of non skill-based behaviours and attitudes i.e.;

*loyalty, commitment, honesty and integrity, enthusiasm, reliability, personal presentation, common sense, positive self esteem, sense of humour, balanced attitude to work and home life, ability to deal with pressure, motivation and adaptability.*

Employers feel that the personal attributes are as important as the skills and other technical or job-specific skills. They have identified the importance of what have been termed ‘personal attributes that contribute to employability’ and have indicated that these are required as part of the set of employability skills. During the validation process of the Employability Skills Framework, enterprises of all sizes agreed with the complete set of personal attributes identified in the framework. Examples of the comments about personal attributes from some of the enterprises interviewed.

- Loyalty and commitment are work readiness skills essential to all.
- Honesty is important above everything else.
- Employees with good attributes enhance the culture of the business.
- Loyalty to the company and each other as employees is essential.
- Your attitude to life and your outlook on life come first, and then the basic skills.
- Enthusiasm and motivation are basic; all else is teachable – these aren’t.
- Employees need an outgoing personality with a sparkle in the eyes.
A review of job advertisements across a number of different Retail occupations was undertaken (as part of the development of this Report) in order to develop a picture of the desired personality traits and behaviours employers looked for in entry-level employees. This provided an insight to the skills and attributes necessary for success in the industry’s entry–level positions, as perceived by employers in their job descriptions. The analysis examined the skills and attributes stated as necessary/desired by employers, mapped against the Employability Skills Framework. They are described in the tables below and have been categorised as:

- *General Employability Skills* mapped against the employability requirements of a particular job and the relevant tasks;
- The *attitudes/aptitudes* necessary for success in the position;
- *Ideal qualities and characteristics* for employees to have.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Employability Skills</th>
<th>Attitudes &amp; Aptitude</th>
<th>General Qualities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>Self Accepting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diplomatic</td>
<td>Self Motivating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>Tolerance of Bluntness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empathetic</td>
<td>Enjoys Public Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warm</td>
<td>Organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outgoing</td>
<td>Tolerant of Pressure</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Works quickly</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoy a structured environment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Team Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Problem Solving</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enterprise and Initiative</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Self- Management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Employability Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Team Work</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Enterprise and Initiative</th>
<th>Self-Management</th>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Includes: Understanding verbal instructions and taking service orders Active listening Effective use of body language and other non verbal communication. Empathy ie capacity to put yourself in the other persons shoes and look for solutions rather than being judgemental Persuasiveness, capacity to identify the other persons needs Information Sharing Customer Focus – ensuring that customers needs are understood and either met or at least addressed</td>
<td>Includes: Identifying as a member of the team and acknowledging the roles and responsibilities that others have to play within the team. Considering the impact of actions upon the team and others dependent upon you. Working collaboratively and cooperatively with others. Respecting the opinions of others Accepting feedback, both positive and negative, from others Sharing ideas and opportunities Acknowledging the achievements of others.</td>
<td>Includes: Effectively communicating with others to ensure a common understanding of the problem to be solved. Communicating solutions and the rationale behind these with relevant stakeholders. Seeking and being prepared to accept feedback. Analysing data and presenting conclusions and solutions in a logical way. Using written information</td>
<td>Includes: Having the confidence to trust your judgement and knowing when to venture an opinion or solution. Ability to consult with and seek advice from others. Business acumen ie identifying costs and likely gains from a proposition and weighing these against alternative prospects. Looks for opportunities for further sales and repeat business. Creativity &amp; Innovation, ie prepared to think outside the box</td>
<td>Includes: Responsibility for ones own actions and awareness of responsibility and accountability to others Approach to work Self- Confidence Coping with Pressure Integrity</td>
<td>Includes: Knowing what you need to know to do your job properly and taking the responsibility to learn this. Admitting what you don’t know and seeking advice/assistance from those who do. Seeking and positively responding to feedback Take responsibility from your own self-development and assisting others with theirs. Commitment to learning and other goals. Flexibility</td>
<td>Includes: Cash register use and programming (ie new items etc) Computer Literacy Safety Compliance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although personal attributes appear to be a feature of employment in entry-level retail positions this is often an outcome of adhocracy on the part of employers. The analyses revealed that the Employability Skills Framework may be used in a range of ways by enterprises;

- the skills and elements can provide the basis of job descriptions and interview approaches in the recruitment and selection process;
- the flexibility of the elements section means employers can identify the relevance of these or other elements to particular jobs over time; and
- on the job training can be focused on a mix of relevant skills and elements

Analyses of Reports from The Australian Centre for Retail Studies (ACRS) - Shopfloor to Boardroom Final (2007) Report; Australian Retailing Trends (2007); Attracting and Retaining a Cross-Generational Workforce (2007) - also reveals that;

- Employers are seeking employees with personal attributes likely to make them interact spontaneously and perform effectively. Thus self-presentation, friendliness, drive, honest/integrity, conscientiousness and adaptability appear more important selection criteria than technical skills;

- the meaning of the term ‘skill’ has expanded considerably and that ‘Many employers...appear to be using the term “skill” to embrace personal attributes’ This broadening of the spectrum and mix of knowledge, capabilities, traits and personal attributes that are being grouped under the umbrella term of skills is raising the issue of what now constitutes ‘skill’, what is the range of skills and attributes needed by employees;

- The employability skill mix required is becoming more sophisticated and the demand for this mix more critical Thus, whilst debate continues about whether or not personal attributes constitute skills, and how and if they can be trained, there is increasing consensus about their importance to employers.

As was identified in the Retail Industry Report further work needs to be done on the personal attributes given their importance in determining someone’s employability. The development of a new skills framework based on personal attributes, within the Employability Skills Framework can be utilised to increase the recognition of the skills of the retail workforce in a way which can be appreciated and valued by staff. The recognition of these so-called ‘soft skills’ would not only refine recruitment and selection processes but will also foster a training culture which would encourage employees to continue training and improve their skills. Further work would be required to gain acceptance within the industry for this proposal and to clarify what attributes should be included, their measurement and how retailers can translate it into a recognition of skills attained for the employee which is transferable beyond their current employment position.
Key Attributes for Employability in Retail

*Retail Employers Skills Surveys* conducted by the NISI Retail Project: Views of Retailers, Retail Employees and Students and through the Australian Centre for Retail Studies (ACRS) - indicate that the sought-after skills for hard to fill vacancies are personal attributes, customer handling and communication skills. Recruiting and retaining staff is a major problem for many small to medium – sized enterprises in the retail sector. Various Reports suggest that these problems arise from skills gaps, concerning attitude, behaviour and personal characteristics. Employers are increasingly choosing staff that both look and speak the part and that self-presentation skills are assuming greater importance in some businesses than experience or technical skills.

It should be noted that the shortage of such skills is not retail sector specific but is a general concern within many sectors. However, within the retail sector it is particularly acute because the industry is highly dependent upon communication and customer service skills. While few organisations have difficulty recruiting for entry-level positions, attracting the right candidate is often difficult. A lack of people with the right “attitude” has been seen as a major barrier to success. It is difficult to specify with any exactness however, what this ‘attitude’ is. The personal attributes are considered a good blue print for identifying the basic aptitude/attitude that will be required by retail employees. The measurement of personal attributes is considered an important component of the personal dimensions of employability skills.

Retail Employers are placing a strong emphasis on the need for both entry-level and ongoing employees to exhibit a broad range of attributes with many employers;

- trying to identify the personal attributes of the applicants during selection and promotion processes;
- advising applicants of the attributes required by the enterprise at the time of application and through performance appraisal processes;
- suggesting that entry-level and ongoing employees needed to reflect attributes that were acceptable to the rest of their working peer group and the customer, and were in line with the company’s approach;
- viewing personal attributes at a more general level and not just relevant to the workplace but to life as a whole.

The development of a skills framework based on personal attributes will give people in the industry recognition for skills developed through an employee’s reference, demonstrating the transferability of the skills attained in retail to other positions, which will also support the industry’s new messaging as part of its image overhaul. Importantly, such a reference document would be considered of value to many of the broader group of people retail should be considering targeting. It will provide a link, particularly for those who are not keen to enter a formal learning process, such as a Certificate in Retail. Older workers for example are unlikely to want to have a certificate in retail, however a reference demonstrating they are a good employee may be of value to them if they then wanted to go to another position and want to show age is no barrier. The concept of focusing on the personal attributes will sit beneath the formal training system. This is not about setting up a new skills framework for the retail area – but about aiming to complement the system through recognition of the personal attributes and create a means by which people would then feed into more formal qualifications.
This raises a set of issues about how to monitor and report on such attributes. Employers are using a range of methods including observation, work placements and references. It is essential that we now take up the challenge of developing methodologies that can provide advice to employers on how personal attributes can become a feature of their recruitment, selection, training and promotion of employees.

Retail employers should be encouraged to recruit on the basis of the sound knowledge and skills which people with these attributes possess. Retailers, especially those in small businesses will also need criteria for identifying people who are more likely to engage in the industry for longer than the very short term. The plethora of skills programs in Retail are based around an agreed set of Employability Skills. But as was identified in the Retail Industry Report further work should be done on extending these skills to include personal attributes which are also an important factor in determining someone’s employability.

To clarify what attributes should be included their measurement and how retailers can translate it into recognition of skills attained, guidelines and support will need to be provided to employers including:

- Mechanisms for communicating the scope of personal attributes to employees and employers;
- Means of providing feedback to employees on their acquisition of employability skills;
- The capacity to provide a rich source of information about employee achievement, with supportive evidence;
- The capacity to provide a summary of the performance of possible recruits that is readily apparent to employers; and
- A cost-effective means of collecting performance information, individually and at aggregate level
Recruitment Processes in the Retail Industry

One of the subsequent effects of high attrition of employees in the retail sector is that employers are required to recruit for new staff regularly. Often, retailers will recruit for immediate or short term needs rather than looking at the medium and longer term. This situation is also problematic as the employer is constantly training new employees at the expense of offering further training to those people who would like to stay in the business and utilise the skills and knowledge they are learning in the longer term. The difficulties of recruitment are also leading to inappropriate recruitment practices. Employers need to learn how to recruit the right type of people while at the same time being realistic about the opportunities the industry offers.

Employers find themselves dealing with a range of issues during the recruitment process including:

- The unfulfilled need for the right attitude in job seekers;
- The increasing difficulty of recruiting trained staff;
- The decrease in apprenticeships and traineeships;
- Many job seekers do not have an interest in working long-term in the industry;
- Employers’ limited knowledge of vocational education and training;
- A training system that is not producing workers to the required standard

The fact that these issues persist to exist is an indication that the currently existing recruitment strategies available to employers are not sufficient.
The Rationale for a Recruitment and Profile Tool in Retail

A recruitment tool tailored to meet the specific needs of the Retail industry would greatly benefit in the matching up of employers to prospective employees. Based on the personal attributes that employers would like ideal job seekers to have, the proposed recruitment tool for the Retail industry should:

- Identify the correct people, i.e. those that are best suited for the industry and therefore most likely to stay long term.
- Help employers attract and retain staff and overcome the barrier of disincentives and skills needs and misconceptions that turn people away from choosing retail as a viable career option.
- Identify more than just technical skills as employers now seek staff that possesses a variety of general aptitudes.
- Identify trained staff, or staff who can be trained.

A customised recruitment tool would address the discrepancies between what employers require during the recruitment process and what candidates have to offer. It would also support the Industry in the following areas:

*The increasing professionalism of the industry*
In order to keep pace with the changes, the industry needs a vision for its future, and one commitment to this vision is in the form of an innovative recruitment tool. This will help take the industry to higher levels, setting standards of excellence. Reducing the mismatch between the expectations of the employer and the capabilities of the job seeker would greatly assist in the commitment to the increasing professionalism of the retail industry.

*Looking beyond the usual recruits to identify job seekers who have an interest in working in the hospitality industry long-term*
There is no agreed selection process in place to assess the interest/aptitude/motivation of job-seekers entering the industry. The Recruitment Tool should enable potential job-seekers to go through a process that assesses whether they have the aptitude and motivation to work in the Retail sector. This should include identifying aptitude to the industry, attitude to work, recognition of prior learning and experience relevant to the industry and skills gap analysis relevant to each participant’s industry entry point.

*Quality control*
Currently, challenges the industry is facing include enormous diversity, discontinuities in professionalism and differences in knowledge, skills and ability. These discrepancies within the industry will therefore have an impact on quality control and standards. A tool that is able to cater for these highly focused needs would be most effective. Employers would benefit in that it would help them to articulate and communicate their needs better.
The development of a recruitment tool to cater specifically for the Retail industry would also greatly aid in the challenge of preparing young people to participate in the increasingly complex and changing world of work. It will also support a broader entry point for potential employees, enabling them to more quickly obtain a benefit from their employment. It will assist them in their career development, ensure consistency across the industry, and demonstrate the commitment from the industry to re-focus on developing a professional approach to employment in retail.

The recruitment tool should underpin a pre-employment screening process that can help employers hire an applicant best suited to the requirements of the job, and weed out applicants who exhibit negative characteristics. A customised screening process relevant to the industry’s entry-level positions is essential to ensure the right job seekers are selected. This will require careful screening with a focus on identifying the often intangible, but increasingly important, ‘attitudes/aptitudes’ associated with successful performance. It will also address and analyse how well a job-seeker fits a specific role, provides management advice and explains training and development opportunities for the individual.

There are a range of other benefits that can be achieved for individuals and the business sector through the application of a recruitment and profiling tool. For example, it will become easier to:
- develop job descriptions that will date less quickly;
- focus on interpersonal relationships as they pertain to job performance;
- focus on the people who will do the work, not just the work they will do;
- enable candidates to quickly recognise and transfer their knowledge and skills developed in one situation to the position advertised; and
- make a link between personal and organisational objectives; and values, so applicants can clearly see how they could contribute to the organisation’s culture.

A recruitment tool that can be applied in the context of the Retail industry should also ensure:
- The job related requirements can be described to potential candidates in a simple and concise way that encourages them to apply;
- There is less time needed for the selection process due to the reduced scope of detail to be reviewed to shortlist and select applicants;
- The selection process can be more effective if the focus is placed on indicative behaviours;
- There is a higher level of consistency for the recruitment, selection and appointment process.

The key features to be incorporated in a customised Recruitment Tool are outlined in the table below.
Table 5: Outlines the key features of how Recruitment and Profiling Tool would support pre-employment screening process in the Retail Industry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of the Screening Process</th>
<th>Features of the process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What needs to be measured</td>
<td>The process will need to;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- assess job-seekers against specific position requirements, and core values as described in vacancy descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- evaluate the personal attributes related to work performance, indicating how individuals work with others, approach their tasks, solve problems, manage change, and deal with stress</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- identify the job-seekers job-related strengths and areas of weaknesses in relation to vacancy descriptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- predict job performance by measuring the fit between any vacancy and any candidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- undertake an analysis of individual’s skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How it will be measured</td>
<td>Allow Employers to easily compare a jobseeker’s profile and personal attributes with those identified as necessary for successful job performance by mixing and matching from the individual approaches outlined below to meet for unique hiring situation i.e.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By testing skills as they will be applied in the workplace and expose areas for pre-employment training and support</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use simulations and scenarios to test the behaviours and attitudes that will be required in the workplace.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying examples of how applicants have used skills or behaviours in the past.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using Data obtained from psychological tests and questionnaires and then measured against job descriptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What needs to be reported</td>
<td>The process should include Vacancy Match Reports outlining how closely a job-seeker meets the position requirements including;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- job suitability reports, based on specific job requirements including essential and desirable traits and traits that could hinder performance for the position</td>
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<td>- Assessment of Personal Attributes in relation to:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Values</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Task Preferences</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Personal Honesty</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>- Work Environment Preference</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Personality/ Motivation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Job Fit and Development Reports: analysing how well a person fits a specific role, provides management advice and explains training and development opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review of existing recruitment tools

A review of existing recruitment tools has been conducted to uncover any significant gaps that a customised and innovative recruitment tool for the retail industry could address. This review has included analyses of the Chandler MacLeod ESP, the Harrison Innerview and ACER WPI Tool with a view to tailoring the current tools to the needs of the industry.

Table 2: An overview of Existing Recruitment Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What they measure</th>
<th>Harrison Innerview</th>
<th>ACER - WPI</th>
<th>ESP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees/candidates are assessed against specific position requirements, behavioural competencies or core values.</td>
<td>A personality evaluation of 17 personality traits related to work performance. These traits indicate how individuals work with others, approach their tasks, solve problems, manage change, and deal with stress. It outlines the person’s job-related strengths and identifying areas of weaknesses.</td>
<td>Predicts job performance by measuring the fit between any role and any candidate It is also an analysis of individual’s skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The technology uses cross-references groups of items that have been ranked in order of preference.</td>
<td>Compares a candidate’s behavioral traits with those your organisation has identified as necessary for successful job performance Indicates how similar the candidate’s profile is to the requirements of the position</td>
<td>Data is obtained from psychological tests and questionnaires and then measured against any number of job profiles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: A review of existing recruitment tools has been conducted to uncover any significant gaps that a customised and innovative recruitment tool for the retail industry could address. This review has included analyses of the Chandler MacLeod ESP, the Harrison Innerview and ACER WPI Tool with a view to tailoring the current tools to the needs of the industry.

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<td>Employees/candidates are assessed against specific position requirements, behavioural competencies or core values.</td>
<td>A personality evaluation of 17 personality traits related to work performance. These traits indicate how individuals work with others, approach their tasks, solve problems, manage change, and deal with stress. It outlines the person’s job-related strengths and identifying areas of weaknesses.</td>
<td>Predicts job performance by measuring the fit between any role and any candidate It is also an analysis of individual’s skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The technology uses cross-references groups of items that have been ranked in order of preference.</td>
<td>Compares a candidate’s behavioral traits with those your organisation has identified as necessary for successful job performance Indicates how similar the candidate’s profile is to the requirements of the position</td>
<td>Data is obtained from psychological tests and questionnaires and then measured against any number of job profiles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison InnerView</td>
<td>ACER - WPI</td>
<td>ESP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The result</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A job suitability graph in graphical and narrative form, based on specific job requirements including essential and desirable traits and traits that could hinder performance for the position. The behavioural assessment includes: - Values - Task Preferences - Personal Honesty - Work Environment Preference - Personality/ Motivation</td>
<td>For each candidate, the organization receives a Job Match Report outlining how closely the candidate meets the requirements. A customized job profile is created to guide future personnel selection.</td>
<td>ESP produces 3 reports: 1) Job Options Report: identifies any person’s fit for any role in the organisation and for 1000+ pre-developed profiles 2) Job Fit and Development Report: analyses how well a person fits a specific role, provides mgt advice and explains training and development opportunities 3) Employability Skills Profile: a report that show employability strengths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>User friendly?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online access</td>
<td>Online access</td>
<td>Online access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readability: All the behavioural requirements are integrated into one assessment. A worldwide network of senior consultants can help customize the system. A free trial of customization methodology can be arranged.</td>
<td>Readability: Candidate’s result indicated by a black square, the shaded areas are levels indicated as necessary for being successful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time needed</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 hours</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Up to 2 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 separate validation studies showing an average of 85-90% predictive accuracy.</td>
<td>A feedback study of 4732 people rated the accuracy of their test results. 96.5% rated the results as quite accurate to very accurate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths</td>
<td>Harrison InnerView</td>
<td>ACER - WPI</td>
<td>ESP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Used to better understand work preferences</td>
<td>It is useful for training and development, personnel selection and team building.</td>
<td>Decrease turnover and recruitment costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The reports are tailored to specific performance requirements.</td>
<td>It can be customized for a specific occupation.</td>
<td>Increase productivity and performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The HI technology is completely customizable.</td>
<td>It requires job raters to be experts in their field to ensure an accurate and reliable job profile.</td>
<td>Identify training needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It provides a measurement of more than 130 different traits spanning a range of behavioural assessment types including personality traits, values, interests, task preferences, and work environment preferences</td>
<td>The WPI examines only those traits that research has shown are related to successful work performance.</td>
<td>Allow integrated attraction, retention, training and development, talent management, promotion, resource planning, performance management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
<td>Completion time is long compared to the ACER program</td>
<td>May be used effectively with people from different cultures with minimum adverse impact.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>$38.00</td>
<td>$36.00-$40.00</td>
<td>$100.00-$150.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review of the Hospitality Recruitment Tool

Previous work on skills shortages undertaken by Restaurant and Catering Australia (RCA) has led to the development of a *Tourism and Hospitality Employability Skills Recruitment and Staff Screening Tool* to address the high attrition rates of students and others who enter the industry and to assist in the promotion of skills development for new and existing staff. The Personal attributes were seen as a base to help employers get a better understanding of what makes a successful employee. It was not enough to only find out about their skill sets and knowledge of the job requirements but also about the ‘soft skills’ and ‘character traits’ potential recruits can bring to the business and how employers can discover those before they make that crucial hiring decision.

Restaurant & Catering Australia put forward the ACER WPI model forward as the recommended recruitment tool for the hospitality industry with the measurement of personal attributes an important component of the tool. It undertook to tailor the ACER WPI tool for specific use in the hospitality industry. This included the validation of existing hospitality aptitudes and attitudes against the WPI tool. Through the consultation process they were able to confirm the desired personality traits and behaviours of people applying for positions in the hospitality industry. The *Workplace Personality Profile*, developed through the work of RCA, is based on a small number of personality traits related to work performance, tailored to the Hospitality/Tourism industry. These are outlined below and potential employees can be measured against these attributes with employers receiving a WPI Job Match Profile report that will give them a fit of the potential employee to particular jobs.

**Table 3: Desired personality traits and behaviours of people applying for positions in the hospitality industry**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WPI FACTORS</th>
<th>Achievement/Orientation</th>
<th>Conscientiousness</th>
<th>Social Orientation</th>
<th>Practical Intelligence</th>
<th>Adjustment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Self-Control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>Attention to Detail</td>
<td>Concern for Others</td>
<td>Analytical Thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Rule-Following</td>
<td>Outgoing Democratic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stress Tolerance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Customising the Recruitment and Selection Profiles for Retail

Many companies and recruiters are now using specially developed psychological assessment tools to gain further insight into an applicant's character and personality traits such as ethics, honesty, integrity, kindness, negativity and loyalty. The challenge is to further develop the personal attributes to help employer's better judge an applicant's soft-skills before they invest the time and money into hiring and training.

Retail employers should be encouraged to utilise a similar profile as used in the *Tourism and Hospitality Employability Skills Recruitment and Staff Screening Tool*. The Personal Attributes should be used to measure distinct personality characteristics to help employers determine which applicants are right for the positions in the Retail Sector. The Profiles developed for the Hospitality tool can be used as a starting point because it has a fairly large number of personality traits that can be associated with the cultural dimensions used to describe positions in Retail. The Hospitality tool estimates an individual's personality on five broad domains as outlined earlier.

An examination of human resource professionals responsible for hiring entry-level employees revealed that some traits are deemed more relevant for defining a match with the cultural dimensions of Retail Businesses. These included:

- Drive to Achieve
- Assertiveness
- Self-Confidence
- Service Orientation
- Introversion / Extroversion
- Flexibility
- Reliability.

Further work is required with employers in order to develop a picture of the desired attributes and behaviours they look for in employees and to establish the indicative behaviours of people applying for positions in the industry. Giving employers the tools to match the right personality to the right position, easily and effectively can mean the difference between an employee who succeeds and one who doesn't.

The personal attributes will support an integrated, relation approach that links the attributes of individuals to the demands of tasks; takes account of the attitudes/aptitudes of individuals; focuses on process rather than content; and assists employers to support those job-seekers who want to develop their own skills and increase their ability to enhance career mobility.
Matching the right personality to the right position through Recruitment Profiles will require a mix and match of approaches across the four key areas, outlined below, to meet for unique hiring situation of individual employers.

- Personality Analysis
- Career Analysis
- "Can-Do" Attitude
- Reliability

These are described in Table: 4
## RECRUITMENT FOCUS/ANALYSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Personal Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Personality** | To identify the degree to which a job fits an applicant's personality. | The right placement can mean the difference between an employee who succeeds, and one who is frustrated. A Comprehensive Personality Analysis should measure traits such as helpfulness, dependability, assertiveness, creativity, competitiveness and leadership, among others, to give employers the clearest possible picture of the applicant so they can determine suitability to the job. | Personal attributes could be used to measure:  
- Service orientation  
- Conscientiousness  
- Adjustment  
- Openness  
- Intellect  
- Extroversion  
- Ambition |
| **Career** | To determine an applicant's suitability to particular jobs or occupations.  
To assist in determining potential career paths. | Career Analysis should match applicants with possible work environments. By matching an applicant to an occupational environment will improve the chances that he or she will be a successful, productive employee.  
By assessing an applicant's long-term suitability employers can curtail turnover and its many related costs -- and benefit from the experience that long-term employees can bring. | Personal attributes could be used to measure:  
- Personality  
- Individual interests  
- Ability |
| **"Can-Do" Attitude** | Identify jobseekers/employees who will go the extra mile at work.  
Identify confident, optimistic approaches that will be reflected in the quality of work. | The attitude of employees is as critical to the success of business as the quality of products. Positive employee morale promotes a better working environment, increases customer loyalty and is repeatedly ranked as the most desirable trait by employers nationwide. | Personal attributes could be used to measure:  
- Attitude  
- Flexibility  
- Willingness to listen  
- Service orientation  
- Ability to work within a team |
| **Reliability** | Identify applicants who are prepared to take responsibility for themselves and the quality of their work. | Ideal for entry-level positions with structured work schedules and/or measurable quality. | Personal attributes could be used to measure:  
- Reliability  
- Quality of work  
- Attendance/Punctuality  
- Organizational ability  
- Overall job performance |

Table: 4 The Key Elements of a Recruitment Tool customized for the Retail Industry
4. Next Steps

1. **Further consultation with Retail Employers to validate Personal Attributes**
   To develop a picture of the desired attitudes/aptitudes and personal characteristics employers look for in employees further research needs to be carried out to establish the personal attributes necessary for success in the industry. This will also give an insight into areas where a recruitment tool can be applied, the skills and attributes necessary for success in the industry’s entry-level positions and clear definitions of what the industry and business enterprises mean by ‘personal attributes’ and the consistency or otherwise between the various terms similarly used.

2. **Guidelines for Employers**
   The development of guidelines, exemplars and materials suitable that will support employers in giving people in the industry recognition for skills developed through employee’s reference. This will include the use of a common language to describe ‘personal attributes’, their application in recruitment and selection and their reporting in a way which can be appreciated and valued by staff.

3. **Undertake further work to effectively customise the Recruitment and Profile Tool to meet the recruitment and retention needs of the industry**
   Formal approaches will need to be made to Cmypeople (Chandler MacLeod ESP) and ACER (ACER WPI Tool) to explore the feasibility of tailoring their tools for specific use in the Retail industry. This will include clarifying approaches for;
   - validation of existing retail attributes against the profiles for the tools;
   - tailoring and trialling of the tool with employees in a range of small, medium and large businesses,
   - consultation with a range of employment, education and training providers
   - a monitoring and review process for the initial job seekers and employers using the tool involved in the trials.

4. **Based on the decision to proceed with a Recruitment Tool, a strategic plan including time frame and costs should be developed**
   The following strategies will need to be worked on to overcome some of the concerns of using a recruitment tool;
   - Analysis conducted using both costs of recruitment and employee turnover measured against the cost of using a recruitment tool;
   - Given that NRA launched its on-line platform in September examine the feasibility of this platform hosting the recruitment tool;
   - Work with associated companies who may be prepared to sponsor the use of a recruitment tool, showing them the benefits of being involved at this level with the Retail industry;
- Develop case studies showing success stories of employers using the recruitment tool;
- Discuss with stakeholders how the tool may be made more cost effective for use for members; and
- Develop strategies to promote to employers how to use the tool cost effectively, including only putting their preferred candidate through such a tool.
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