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The use of **cognitive vs. aptitude tests** for efficient hiring



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Introduction



Using online assessments during early career hiring provides additional dimensions to the candidate evaluation process. These tests assess potential candidates on critical, interpersonal, non-technical and technical skills in a standardized manner. Recruiters specifically use cognitive and aptitude assessments to gauge the cognitive intelligence and reasoning capabilities of candidates. This allows an understanding of candidates' cultural fitment, ability to adapt to a dynamic environment, and situational judgment.

This e-book will discuss the differences in cognitive and aptitude tests and how these assessments enhance campus recruitment.

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What are aptitude tests?

An aptitude assessment identifies candidates' skills and ability to successfully complete given tasks. These tests assume that every candidate has inherent weaknesses and strengths, which increases their inclination towards failure or successful outcomes.

Therefore, when used during campus hiring, aptitude tests reveal candidates' ideas, interests, reasoning, situational judgment, and information-processing capabilities. These skills and strengths help candidates function well in critical environments and make valuable decisions in difficult situations.

Key skills assessed through an aptitude test

Fluid reasoning

Fluid reasoning questions, included in an aptitude test, assess candidates' ability to process and grasp new information, which could be used to solve critical problems independently. It assesses how well candidates can think beyond the obvious and utilize their fluid knowledge to understand patterns.

Situational judgment

Situational judgment questions test candidates' ability to handle specific situations without stress and challenges. Employees need to deal with many stressful and crucial situations throughout their tenure with the company. The ability and emotional intelligence to handle such instances is assessed through a series of questions.

Crystalized reasoning

Crystalized reasoning questions assess candidates' capability to use pre-acquired information and knowledge to complete tasks. These questions test how well participants use memorized vocabulary, text, data, and location. Crystalized reasoning of candidates increases with age; therefore, questions can be differently formed for candidate experiences.

Spatial reasoning

The spatial reasoning questions evaluate candidates' power to understand and comprehend two and three-dimensional figures and images. It assesses candidates' skills to extract patterns from a set of images to form sequences.

Numerical reasoning

These questions help organizations evaluate whether candidates can comprehend numerical information or not. It involves analyzing numbers reflected in daily business problems. How well and quickly candidates deal with this data depicts their numerical reasoning power.

Inductive reasoning

Inductive reasoning questions evaluate whether candidates can draw general conclusions using specific information and patterns. It involves observing details and patterns to offer statements.

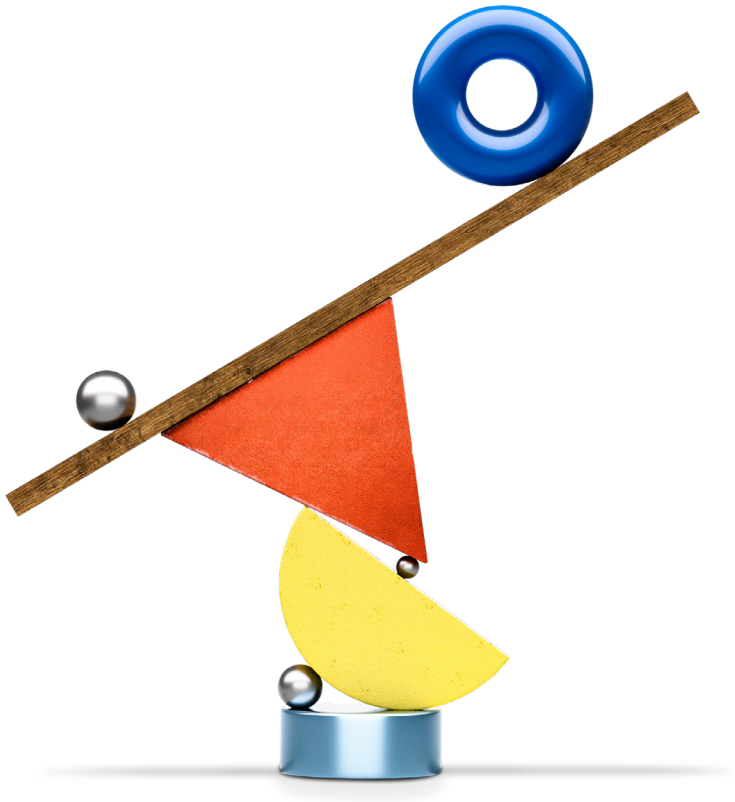
Logical reasoning

Logical test questions are fundamental to understanding candidates' problem-solving skills. It measures how well candidates logically link patterns and evaluate problems from all possible directions.

Verbal ability

Verbal reasoning questions in an aptitude test evaluate candidates' language skills, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Reading comprehension questions are often a mix of verbal and logical reasoning to assess candidates for multiple traits.

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Benefits of aptitude tests during campus hiring

Using aptitude tests during university hiring programs helps organizations understand candidates' interpersonal, transferable, and aptitude intelligence. These skills allow employees to adjust to the company's culture, adapt to changing landscape, and function without glitches.

- Aptitude tests measure candidates' intelligence, competence, and ability to use multiple skills together. Therefore, these tests provide a medium to evaluate core non-technical competencies.
- While traditional methods involve interviews and verbal questions, aptitude tests are objective. This means aptitude tests help objectively assess candidates and create a standardized shortlisting mechanism eliminating bias.
- These evaluations understand candidates' logical reasoning and decision-making skills that can't be assessed through the resume. Candidates may overstate their abilities in applications or resumes, but aptitude tests paint a clear picture.
- In the initial rounds of campus drive, aptitude tests become a medium to shortlist eligible candidates, reducing the hiring manager's limitations..
- These assessments also offer insights into the L&D needs of candidates. When candidates are suitable for a tech role but lack aptitude intelligence, recruiters can understand limitations and create a customized training plan according to the skills gap.



What are cognitive ability tests?

The cognitive ability tests focus on candidates' ability to gather information and use it to solve critical problems in the workplace. Therefore, these evaluations contain crucial thinking and abstract reasoning questions to gauge how well candidates acquire new concepts and use them to solve fundamental problems.

Key skills assessed through a cognitive ability test

Abstract reasoning

Abstract reasoning questions in cognitive tests blend inductive and diagrammatic reasoning questions. They measure candidates' fluid and lateral intelligence that helps quickly and accurately identify patterns and relationships between shapes.

Analytical ability

Analytical ability questions are information-intensive and offer different perspectives in a situation. Candidates are expected to break down these series of events or information, create simple components, and order information logically to create a relationship between patterns.

Verbal ability

Verbal ability questions assess candidates' communication and language skills. These include dense passages from which candidates need to read and extract information for the questions that follow. Ideally, no prior experience or subject matter expertise is required in these questions, just the ability to read and understand given information.

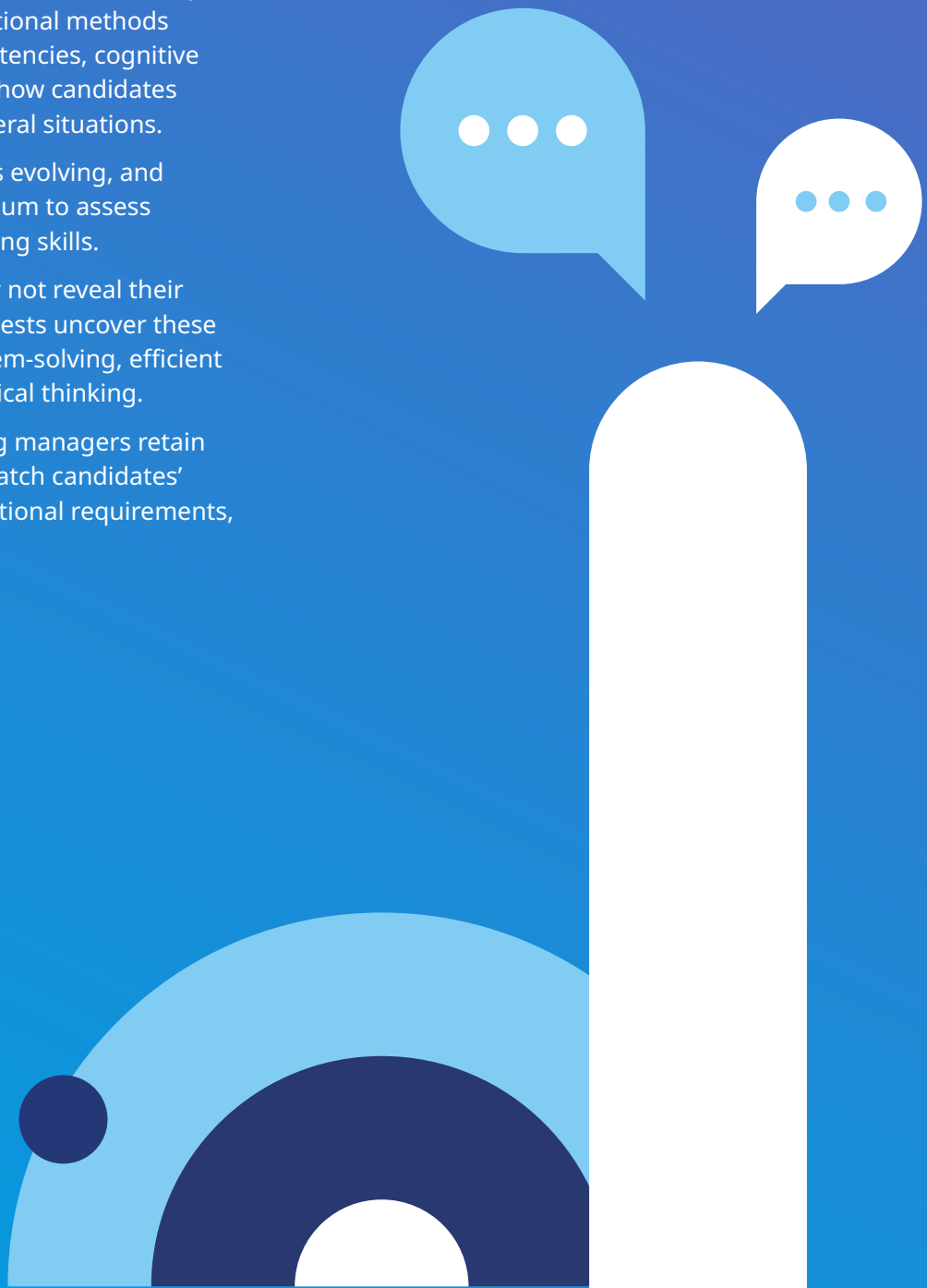
Attention to detail

Every cognitive test question assesses candidates' ability to pay attention. These questions contain hidden details and information that help solve problems and deal with situations without challenges. Therefore, throughout the test, candidates' attention to detail is evaluated.

Benefits of cognitive tests during campus hiring

Cognitive ability tests help uncover the hidden potential in candidates. These assessments predict efficiency and candidates' ability to handle unknown situations without causing problems.

- Cognitive tests predict candidates' on-the-job performance. While traditional methods focus on technical competencies, cognitive tests give an overview of how candidates might behave during several situations.
- The business landscape is evolving, and cognitive tests are a medium to assess candidates' problem-solving skills.
- Candidates' resumes may not reveal their potential fully. Cognitive tests uncover these valuable traits, like problem-solving, efficient decision-making, and critical thinking.
- Cognitive tests help hiring managers retain hired staff. These tests match candidates' capabilities with organizational requirements, ensuring suitable hiring.



Conclusion

Aptitude and cognitive ability tests are both crucial to assess candidates for a specific set of skills. These assessments help gauge on-the-job performance, forward-thinking, and candidates' change capability. Therefore, businesses should consider both assessments at different stages of candidate evaluation during campus hiring.

Mercer | Mettl offers a wide range of ready-to-use online assessments. Its aptitude assessments suite is designed to meet the requirements of different job profiles. It provides general aptitude tests, logical reasoning tests, sales potential tests, and many more job-specific assessments. Mercer | Mettl's Cognitive Ability Test predicts job performance and learning aptitude of candidates.

Utilize Mercer | Mettl's extensive library of questions to evaluate candidates during campus hiring and recruit top talent to meet organizational needs.

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At Mercer | Mettl, our mission is to enable organizations to make better people decisions across two key areas: acquisition and development. Since our inception in 2010, we have partnered with more than 4,000 corporates, 31 sector skills councils/government departments and 500+ educational institutions across more than 90 countries.

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