



5. Facet Live - Commercially Centred

A large recently privatised science and technology company aims to recruit 10-12 future managers from the graduate population every year. Redfield were commissioned to design, and implement an assessment centre to select individuals for these management roles. The centre needed to fulfil the following criteria:

- Examine a range of competencies
- Single core theme
- Some element of job simulation.
- Appear valid to the candidates
- Tone reflects that of the larger organisation
- Be as enjoyable as possible because:
 1. For some it is the only interaction that they will have with the organisation and it is important that they leave with a positive attitude towards the company.
 2. Those that are successful and are offered jobs are more likely to accept if they had a positive experience.

IDENTIFYING COMPETENCIES

Key managers were interviewed using both repertory grids and critical incidents to define competencies for these management roles. Also included was a less structured approach concentrating on customer classification to clarify future trends and corporate strategy. Six core competencies were identified and defined:

Leadership	Communication
Interpersonal	Initiative and Effort
Decision Making	Planning and Organisation

DESIGN OF THE CENTRE

A scenario based assessment centre was created to present a consistent look and elements of job simulation to both candidates and observers as increased realism and face validity result in higher candidate acceptance.

Observers from the organisation were trained in observing skills by Redfield in order that they had the necessary technical knowledge and skill base to participate in the programme.

The Assessment Centre itself took the following form:

Duration of two days.	Group exercises
Single main task over duration.	Fact finding exercises
Role plays	Structured interviews
Psychometric tests	

Feedback from the candidates who go through the assessment centre has been extremely positive:

"Thanks very much- I had a great time and learnt a lot about myself"

"The centre was excellent. It was fun and novel"

"An initially daunting- but ultimately interesting and informative time. I learnt a lot about how I work"

"Excellent assessment...A really enjoyable experience, much more worthwhile than others I've been to. Thanks!"

"I found the atmosphere created was one in which it was easy to relax and concentrate on the exercises without feeling awkward about the assessment going on"

"A well run and enjoyable centre- a real learning experience"

"Excellent in all ways. By far the best centre I have attended"

"Very impressive, interesting, and enjoyable assessment centre which is a superb advertisement for (the organisation)"

The organisation is very happy with the centre and with the managers that have been recruited through it.

Has run for 3 years	No quota so quality maintained
4 Centres a year	29 candidates recruited
10-12 candidates per centre	23 as commercial managers
Over 120 candidates	



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assessed

THE ROLE OF FACET

Facet has an integral part to play in the assessment. The data is not used to make any form of selection decision, being introduced to the process only once the final decision has been made. Facet provides data beyond observed behaviours including motivation and longer term behavioural style of candidates.

CULTURAL SIMILARITIES

Organisations select in their own image, and this one is no exception as can be seen from the following graphs. As Facet is not used as a selection criteria, what these results show is that the organisation is clearly projecting an accurate picture of itself through its employment advertising and recruitment literature to attract these types of people. This is an area that many organisations tend not to get right, yet it is an important one for the reasons outlined below.

Figure 1 shows a Snapshot of a number of individuals within the organisation. It can be seen that it is a mainly high Affection Culture.

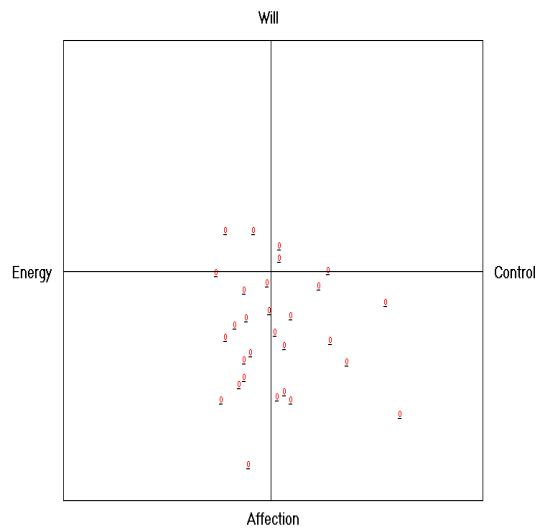
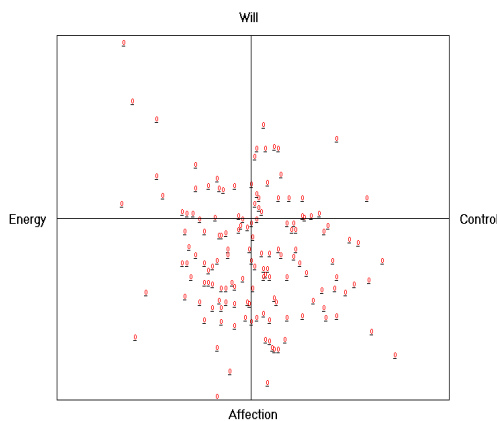


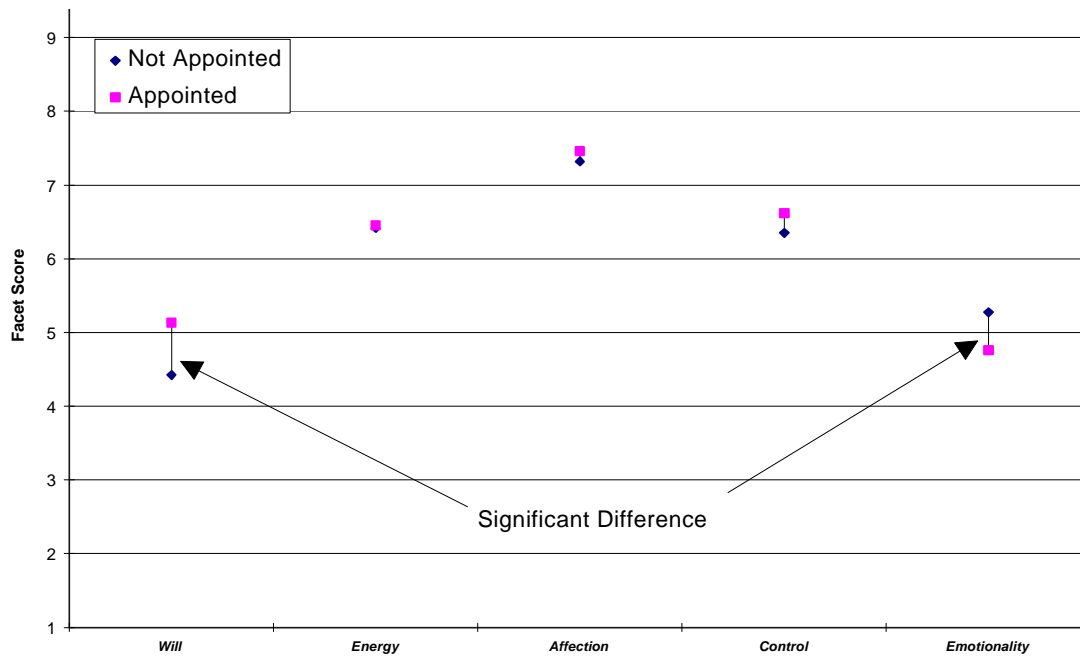
Figure 2 shows the successful graduates. It can be seen that they fit the existing culture.

ASA theory states that people are attracted to an organisation by their perception of its culture as they feel they will be able to assimilate easily, having shared beliefs and values (Attraction). They are selected through a process which is designed to identify those whose style is likely to “fit” (Selection). Those who are appointed but who aren’t able to adapt will leave (Attrition). Finding people who already fit the culture is obviously an important factor of selection (provided that you are happy with your existing culture) as you are saving money by not selecting the people that are likely to leave. Culture fit is also one of the best predictors of long term performance.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Although the graduate group is very similar to the existing organisation in general, those who are appointed are significantly higher in Will and lower in Emotionality. This suggests they are more forceful, goal orientated and confident than the unsuccessful group. These results can be seen on the graph below which shows the high and low scores on each of the factors for both the successful and unsuccessful candidates.

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This suggests that in the new, more competitive working environment which this centre is designed to reflect, those people who are more confident, persuasive and outspoken will outperform their more reflective and considerate colleagues. For an organisation which is transferring from the public to private sector, and having to be more commercially aware and competitive in the marketplace, these are exactly the attributes that are required. In effect Facet has provided evidence to show that the assessment is meeting its designed objectives.

Facet can help look at selection issues in any number of ways, from advertising, through to matching to the prevailing culture, changing culture and examining the requirements of the job.