

## HARRISON ASSESSMENTS® DEBRIEF GUIDE

### 1. OVERVIEW OF HARRISON ASSESSMENT

- Have you put aside an hour and do you have a hard copy of your report?
- Get a quick take on their initial reactions to their report.
- **Measures behavioral tendencies; not a personality inventory:**
  - *“The Harrison Assessment™ measures the strength of your behavioral tendencies—your preference level for specific behavior traits. Unlike many personal assessments—it isn’t a personality inventory—it measures your preferences, interests, and tendencies for specific behaviors” (This is really all you have to say about what the Harrison Assessment™ is.)*
  - What you should know and be ready to answer if the issue arises:
    - Personality is something that generally doesn’t change—behavior choices are just that—choices. If a person desires he or she can choose differently and adapt their behavior.
    - This assessment gives us probabilities, possibilities—**the behavioral solutions for any person lie within themselves.**
    - Data provide insights and suggestions, **but only through dialogue.**
    - These are **behavioral tendencies** that could reflect situations where we are successful or have challenges, and what we can do to capitalize on 1) Personal Development 2) Plot a Successful Career.
    - While not saying whether a person is good or bad at something or whether he or she has a strength or weakness—the data can indicate probabilities where the person is having difficulties, lack of success, and/or is ineffective—professionally or personally.
- Are you looking at a color hard copy or are you looking at the computer screen? At a minimum they need to have a printed copy of the Paradox Graph Summary and the Main Graph so they can make notes.

### 2. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- **Ask about their roles/responsibilities/challenges**
  - Tell me a little bit about your work activities and responsibilities.
  - What do you really enjoy most about your job?
  - What things do you least enjoy—those things you would prefer to hand off or not to do?
  - Are there any particular people or management challenges you are currently experiencing?

If the person is in a management or supervisory position—ask specifically, “Are you currently dealing with any difficulties managing the performance of others?”

## CONSISTENCY SCORE

- Transition: “The Harrison Assessment has several sub-report sections we will examine today.”
- Turn to page \_\_\_\_: Traits and Definitions.
- Look at upper paragraph
- *Look at the area at the top of the page. “Note your consistency score of \_\_\_\_\_. This tells us that you answered the items in a consistent manner so we can have confidence in your data. We can use it to support an effective discussion.*

## 3. TRAITS AND DEFINITIONS

- **Meaning of “Scores”**
  - *“You will notice that the beginning of your Traits and Definitions page that the scores begin with a listing of the specific behavior traits that are measured—beginning with the traits you have indicated you most prefer—to the traits you have indicated you least prefer.”*
  - What you should know and be ready to answer if the issue arises:
    - When there are inconsistencies they will be noted with one or two asterisks and are most often found in the middle scores.
- **Scale:**
  - *“The Harrison uses a 10 point scale, but this scale is unique—it is not a linear scale. The scale begins at a “neutral point” of 6 and moves out in both directions with the two extremes having significantly more impact on behavior—one way indicating more preference for a behavior trait and the other direction indicating a lower preference for a behavior trait.” “A score of 6 indicates neutrality—the trait isn’t preferred nor not preferred—it is not a driver of your behavior choices—nor is the trait consciously avoided. Generally, the lowest score reported is a 2.”*
  - *“To conceptually illustrate the nature of the scale—imagine standing in a parking lot being represented by a 6. A score of 5 or 7 would be 5 steps away (more or less of a tendency than a 6). A score of 8 would be another 5 feet. A score of 9 however would be another 55 feet, and the 10 would be 125 feet away. This is why scores of 9 and 10 are important—these reveal your main behavior preferences and tendencies—these traits are strong behavior needs and provide the most satisfaction—you will probably find ways to do them regardless of the circumstances. The same would be true of lower scores. As the scores decrease from 6—they*



traits that highly successful people in this indicate a high preference for that low performers do not.

- The blue bars on the listing of traits indicate which traits are ‘**desirable**’ **traits** for the specific job that was used for your data and reflects those traits that add value to potential success, but are not essential.
- The third category are ‘**traits to be avoided**’ for the specific job that was used for your data and reflects those traits that could be inhibitors to success. The ‘traits to be avoided’ are also listed in the last category in the Traits and Definitions listing. These are also considered as potential *derailers* that relate to having a negative trait. The magnitude of impact is marked with yellow (slight-moderate) or red (significant).

#### 4. ENJOYMENT PERFORMANCE THEORY

- One of the two theories that support the Harrison Assessment is **Enjoyment Performance Theory**. This theory suggests that when we enjoy a behavior—we do it more often. When we do some behavior over and over, we tend to get better at doing it—and so we receive positive recognition from others and ourselves for our success—and positive external feedback or internal self-satisfaction increases our enjoyment of the behavior. The cycle keeps repeating itself—increasing the strength of enjoyment and preference for the behavior.
- This cycle also plays out for the behaviors we don’t enjoy—we avoid or procrastinate on those behaviors we don’t enjoy—so we don’t do them enough to get better or improve—thus, the feedback (from self or others) isn’t as flattering—which decreases the enjoyment or preference for those behaviors. Over time those behaviors become a very low preference or tendency.
- When you look at your top scores on the Traits and Definitions list—those that are 9’s and 10’s that indicates a high level of enjoyment or preference for those behaviors—does that resonate with you? Also, those scores on that list that are 4 and below are indicative of behaviors you least like and most probably avoid when possible—does that resonate with you?
- Transition: “If you have no further questions here, let’s move to an area that describes the second theory.”

#### PARADOX THEORY

(Find a paradox where there is extended balance: One that is easy for them to learn from—Communications, Opinions, Delegation, or Innovation are all good choices.)

- **Paradox Theory**
  - *“The second theory that the Harrison Assessment is based on is Paradox Theory. Paradox Theory identifies those traits that on the surface can seem oppositional (one OR the other) but for effectiveness should actually be seen as complimentary. If only one of the traits of a paradox pair is strong, even the strong trait can become a weakness rather than a strength. “*
  - *“Harrison has identified twelve sets of paradox behaviors. Within each paradox the degree of balance or out-of-balance can be very predictive and revealing about our behavior.”*
- **Gentle and Dynamic**
  - *“There is a dynamic trait (shown on the vertical axis of the paradox graph) and a gentle trait (shown on the horizontal axis of the paradox graph) for each of the 12 paradox sets.”*
- **Example of Balance in a Paradox**
  - Go to the chosen paradox where there is balance (7 or above for each trait). Describe the definition of the paradox and define both traits.
  - By illustrating the two paradox traits on an x/y axis we can show the relationship between the two traits. When people have a preference for both the traits within a paradox they have a tendency for both traits and are said to have **balanced versatility** within the context of the paradox—having two choices of behaviors to use. (more behavioral tools in our toolbox)
  - *“Now imagine if you will, a person who has your same high score on \_\_\_\_\_ but only a 2 on the other trait of \_\_\_\_\_. They would be operating with only one behavior choice—wouldn't they? What could that person come across as? This can easily make a person disadvantaged when behaving in the context of this paradox.”*
    - Explore the implications of having each type of imbalance in the paradox you are using.
    - Having fewer behavioral choices in any given situation can easily limit or inhibit our behavioral adaptability and flexibility, turning what would have been a positive trait into a potential derailer. Ask, *“Can you see how an out of balance score in a paradox can lead to difficulties?”*
  - **Transition:** *“Everyone has paradox scores that are out of balance—normally 5 to 9—Let's look at one of yours.”*
- **Example of Out of Balance in a Paradox**

*(Find an example of an imbalance)*

  - Ask the individual to go to the paradox you have chosen to discuss out of balance. Describe the definition of the paradox and then define both traits.

- Go over briefly—the implications of being out of balance in the chosen paradox.
  - Being out of balance limits our natural choices in any given situation—as the trait with the high preference score often trumps the trait with the low preference—even when the least preferred trait would be a more appropriate choice.
  - **Flip Factor:** *“Psychologists have known for years that under situational stress, people with imbalances can experience a “flip” to the opposite behavior. This is a time when our emotions can dictate our behavior—that is our behavior manages us rather than us managing our behavior.”* After a flip we often want a ‘do over’.
  - Some words in the paradox graph quadrants are unflattering. These words don’t describe who we are; they are not labels that we carry. **These words describe our behavior and possibly the way others may perceive us in certain situations.** They are not who we are. Understanding paradox allows us to gain some insight as to how others may see us when we use traits in situations where another trait would have been more appropriate.
  
- **Size/Color/Frequency of Flip**
  - The size of the flip is influenced by the numerical difference between the 2 traits. The larger the ‘hurricane’ circle the more intense the flip will be when it occurs.
  - Gray “flips” are those in the lower right quadrant of any paradox—these are usually subconscious passive tendencies. Red ones are in the upper left quadrant of any paradox—these are usually aggressive tendencies that can occur under stress.
  - Frequency of Flips—that is ‘how often’ a person will flip is related to our **Manages Stress Well** score. The higher the score (the better someone is at Managing Stress Well) the less often that person will exhibit the flip behavior. The lower the score the more often a person will flip.
  
- **5 – 9 Flip Opportunities**
  - Go back to the **Paradox Graph** page. There are 12 sets of paradoxes; encourage the person to go over this page when they have the chance. This can tell the person where specifically they are inclined to ‘flip’. Let them know that getting control of ‘flip’ behavior will increase effectiveness in any situation—professionally and personally.
  
- **Paradox Summary Page**
  - Notice the 3 columns - Interpersonal, Achievement & Leadership.

- Take note of where your potential flips might take place in each of these categories and the implications on the impact of each.
- Transition: “Now let’s take a look at the most complex report that ties it all together with 9 dimensions of our behavior.”

## MAIN GRAPH

- The Main Graph contains all 12 sets of **paradox traits** plus specific **supplemental traits** within the 9 Dimensions that give us more understanding and depth regarding the Harrison profile. The Main Graph can tell us more about the person in the context of their position.
- You must know where each of the traits are on this graph and you must know the definitions for all the traits on the Main Graph. Use the flip cards for learning.
- You must know which traits are paradox traits (12 sets) and which are supplemental traits.
- You must know where to locate the traits on the Main Graph that are combination traits (those traits made up of more than one trait).
- Use the Outlook graph (upper left). Point out the paradox—defining the context of ‘Outlook’. Define the four traits in this graph (Certain and Open/Reflective, Optimistic and Outgoing), Briefly discuss how this can provide a better understanding on how one develops their own outlook on life and things in general.
- Looking around the page, it would be helpful to explore your strong preferences. *Have them **circle or highlight all 9,10s**. “These are compelling traits that have more than likely served you well. If your position calls on you to use these traits, then you likely enjoy your position, and probably are effective at it. These are important traits to keep in mind when you are looking at other positions because if the new job does not allow you to use these traits you will probably be unfulfilled.”*
- Point out the **red “hatch marks”** and invite dialogue as to their meaning in job-related situations.
  - The red “hatch marks” indicate where there are probable difficulties in the job defined by the Job Success Analysis. (Example: lacking essential traits or having traits to be avoided)
- **Optional choices to invite dialogue and avoid defensive postures:** *(some options for phrasing issues that you would like to discuss with the person):*
  - “In your mind, how do you fulfill your preference for \_\_\_\_\_?”  
(or) “In your current role, are you getting that fulfilled?”
  - “Are you finding that...?”

- “What, if any, impact does having a lower preference for \_\_\_\_\_ have on your job?”
- “For a person **in this position**, this may cause some challenges.”
- “People could be perceived as... Sometimes what happens... Under stress, what might happen... Do you recognize any time when that might have happened?”
- “What **implications** does that have for you?”

## CLOSURE

- **The Harrison Assessment is designed to provide people with the insight to specific actionable behaviors that can further your personal development.**
- What are 2 of your “**take-aways**” from this? *Suggest that the employee identify a trusted coworker, peer or mentor to share goals and progress in order to obtain ongoing feedback.*
- Look at **Traits for Development**, where Harrison highlights opportunities for growth and development that may have the most significant impact, depending on the specific job. *Note that these are only suggested based on the survey data. You should use your conclusions from the debrief dialog as the foundation for developmental priorities.*

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## The Job Success Analysis

**JOB SUCCESS ANALYSIS – JOB SPECIFIC CONTEXT** – looks at your preferences through the lens of what a specific job requires.

- There are 3 elements of the Job Success Analysis--Essential, Desirable, and Traits to Avoid.
- **3 Groups/Categories:** Within the 3 groups, the traits are **Stack Ranked** in order of importance.
  - **Essential:** Traits that high performers (in the research base) showed a preference for, that the solid and low performers did not show a preference for. Traits that are common to only high performers.
  - **Desirable:** The Low performers (people who were “struggling” or even “failing” in the job) tended to lack the preference whereas the high and solid performers lacked the preference significantly less often.
  - **Traits to Avoid:** Low performers, tended to have these traits, whereas the high and solid performers had them to a significantly less extent. .
- **Essential Traits**
  - The **Green Bars** represent your preference score. The far right end of that bar indicates that the person has achieved the ideal score according to the research. Gap (or “Delta”) may be opportunity for growth and development, depending on job requirements. (*Note: delay gaps to another conversation, e.g. “You may later find that it could be constructive to develop additional skills; these gaps are areas you may enjoy some leverage from.”*)
- **Desirable Traits**
  - Unlike Essential Traits, where the more you have, the better off you are; Desirable Traits are **threshold traits**. It means that successful people in that job usually have at least a moderate amount of that trait. Having less than that desirable threshold amount of the trait will likely have a negative impact on the job. However, having more than the threshold amount of the trait will not likely have any further positive impact.

## Traits to Avoid

- Remember that Traits to Avoid were the traits that the people who were struggling or even failing in the position showed a preference for. Therefore, having enough of this trait to show up as a red bar is something that can hinder performance. Having a preference for these traits indicates that the person could have a significant problem in the performance of their job.
- The absence of a Desirable Trait preference or the presence of Trait to Avoid could have a negative impact on the particular job function to different degrees. If the bar is yellow, it will have a moderate negative impact and if the bar is red, it will have a stronger negative impact but not necessarily eliminating good performance due to just the one trait.
- **Optional things to say if someone is concerned about a red area or a “Trait to Avoid”**
  - The purpose here is to look for development opportunities. We all have those.” **It is not uncommon to see some yellow or red traits.**
  - Are they relevant to the job requirements AND – are we aware of these? Red may represent a “trigger point.”
  - These graphs can offer us insight into how we **might** behave 1) in an interpersonal context, 2) making decisions and 3) how others might see us.
  - Usually, we’re the only people who don’t have the opportunity to see ourselves as other people see us.
  - Remember, no individual trait spells success or failure; it’s the combination of traits that indicates how a person “shows up” in the workplace, or even in personal situations.
- **Compensating Strategies**
  - It is not necessarily to point out things we need to **fix**. The goal is to maximize areas of strength, and to find “**work-arounds**” or **compensating strategies** for the other areas.
- **Green, Blue, and Red Shading**
  - Notice the green and blue shading used elsewhere on the document. Green represents the Essential Traits. Blue represents Desirable traits. Red represents Traits to Avoid.