

How to effectively administer remote, unproctored pre-employment assessments

Pre-employment assessments have become a trusted part of the talent acquisition process for most employers and is established as a reliable method of systematically assessing the personal characteristics, knowledge, skills and abilities of candidates. These assessments have migrated to internet-based test administration systems. . Survey results suggest that 83% of organizations implement assessments in an unproctored setting. Virtual testing rapidly provides recruiters and hiring managers with candidate test results, dramatically speeding the hiring process. This means more candidates, assessed in less time, giving managers greater choice in making a hiring decision.

The COVID-19 pandemic recently increased the need for virtually conducted business operations, including candidate testing. As companies adjust to this environment, they are increasing their reliance on remotely conducted assessments. For some, this raises questions about potential security risks of unproctored testing. Unproctored testing research suggests that cognitive ability assessments are most susceptible to cheating; however, non-cognitive assessments (e.g., personality, biodata) are much less susceptible since they focus on candidates' behavioral tendencies rather than logical reasoning assessments with "right" responses. Skills and cognitive tests are timed and the amount of time spent on the test, as well as, each question is reported. Red flags can be detected when an unusual amount of time has been spent on a question or a test. Furthermore, implementing the following practices helps minimize cheating on unproctored assessments:

- Cheating warning
- Legal agreements
- Two-stage testing

Cheating Warning

A simple, effective means of avoiding cheating behavior is to warn candidates that cheating is detectable and will have consequences (e.g., invalidation of test scores, elimination from the hiring process, or termination (if detected after employment)². Easily communicate this message via the candidates' assessment notification email.

Legal Agreements

To deter cheating and protect your organization, create language in your application agreement that includes assessments. Upon signing, candidates agree that their application and the assessments completed as a part of the selection process are



completed by them and an accurate representation of their qualifications. Implementing this step adds another layer of protection for organizations.

Two-Stage Testing

Two-stage testing consists of an initial, unproctored assessment followed by a proctored assessment, administered at the employer's place of business. Both tests can be implemented online but the confirmation assessment is supervised by the prospective employer. Confirmation testing is most often administered as part of an in-person interview. Organizations should use the first assessment to screen out unqualified candidates and the second assessment to check score consistency. Two stage testing should be communicated to candidates as part of the warning messages previously described. This in itself becomes an effective deterrent to cheating since candidates will know that inconsistent test results will be detected.

Conclusion

The need to be even more virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic is mounting. Leveraging unproctored testing is a timely solution that eases the burden of hiring remotely. It enables quick hiring and provides cost savings. Do the following to enhance validity of your unproctored assessments:

- Communicate a cheating warning to all candidates
- Include accuracy and honest completion of the assessment language in your legal agreements
- Re-test candidates onsite to verify scores