



Overhauling Recruitment

Selection Toolkit – Alternative Approaches

About this toolkit



The overhauling recruitment programme is seeking to change the way that the NHS seeks to attract, select and onboard people into the service.

Attracting talent into our organisations and facilitating seamless mobility is done on a day-to-day basis by all our organisations, and embedding a strategic approach to this is a fundamental tenet.

This pack is designed to support NHS providers and systems outline effective supplementary selection approaches that complement interview best practice guidance. The pack:

- Sets out additional evaluation methods to complement interview best practice.
- Improves the ways in which people ensure equality and inclusivity in selection processes
- Explores practices which third sector and private sector organisations utilise to increase our future success.



This pack is one of a number of tools as part of the overhauling recruitment series. Model documents, case studies and other helpful resources can be found on [FutureNHS](#).



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Why your organisation should use supplementary selection processes

While interviews are a common and valuable tool in selection processes, they have limitations. Including additional methods such as assessments and role simulations, can provide a more comprehensive view of candidates' abilities and knowledge, widening the applicant pool for the role. This can help reduce bias, increase objectivity, and improve the likelihood of recruiting successfully. Using different methods can reveal different aspects of a candidate's capabilities and qualities, providing a more complete picture to enhance decision-making.

To add supplementary approaches to interviews in a selection process, consider the following steps:

1	Identify the job requirements and competencies required
2	Choose additional assessment methods that align e.g. if the role requires strong communication skills a written or oral assessment may be appropriate
3	Develop the assessment materials specific to requirements
4	Determine timing and logistics: i.e. are they required before or after interview
5	Train recruiting managers and assessors on how to conduct and assess
6	Integrate results of assessment and interviews to make informed decisions

Before identifying which alternative approaches are best to implement, it is crucial to ensure that the organisation has a robust and equitable recruitment policy and approach to selection.

Remember legal and ethical considerations when using additional assessment methods in a selection process, such as ensuring they are job-related and non-discriminatory.



Selection – Best Practice toolkit can be found on [FutureNHS](#)

Values Based Questionnaires

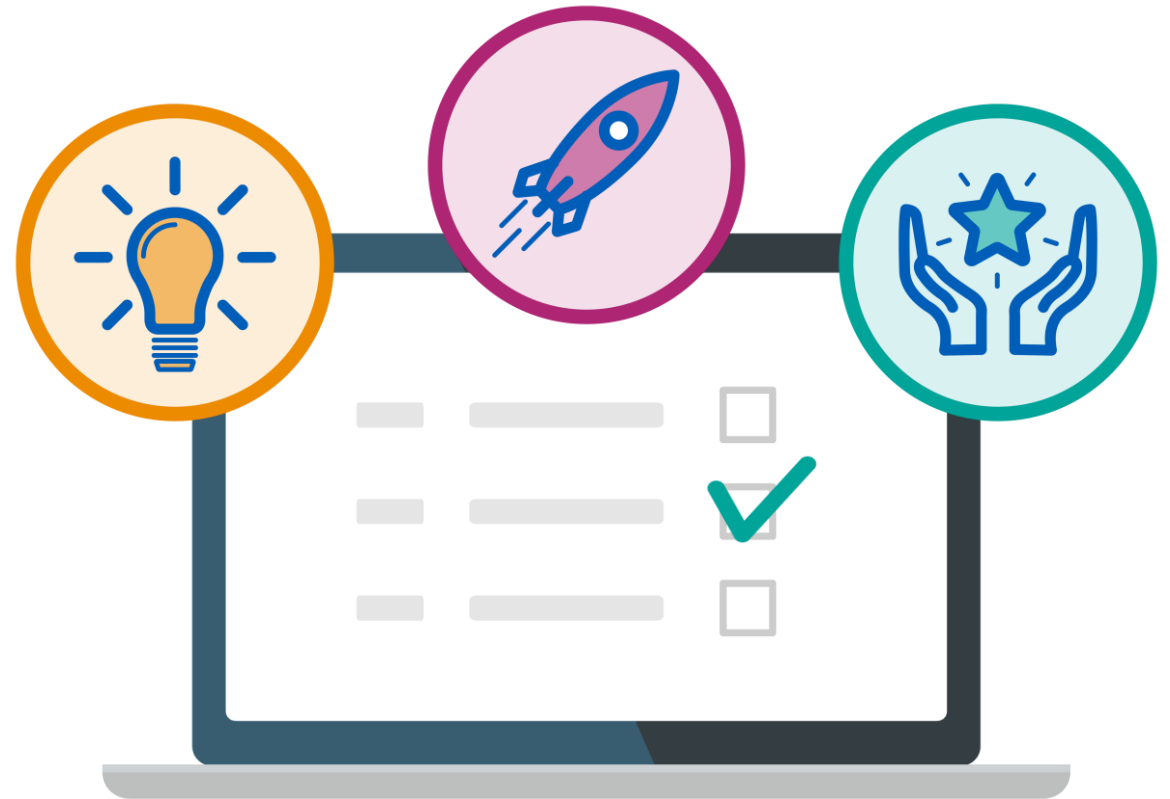
Values based questionnaires can be effective in interviews but can be all the more beneficial in the application process.

Values-based scenarios can be an effective tool in assessing a candidate's alignment with the values and culture of an organisation. These scenarios typically involve presenting candidates with situations or circumstances that are relevant to the organisation's values and asking them to respond with what they would do in that situation.

The scenarios should be tailored to the company's specific values and should be relevant to the job that the candidate is applying for.

They should also be designed in a way that allows the candidate to demonstrate how they would apply the company's values in a practical situation. This may involve providing a brief explanation of the organization's values and how they relate to the scenario or perhaps a multiple choice selection option. Although assessing skills is important, skills can be taught. Experience is valuable, but not necessarily if it has been accrued without empathy or an affinity to care.

Whether using the questions to include or disqualify candidates from the process it is important to ensure that the scenarios are well-designed, and that the evaluation process is fair and objective. This may involve a structured scoring system or if using multiple choice, a bot or AI might score the candidates.



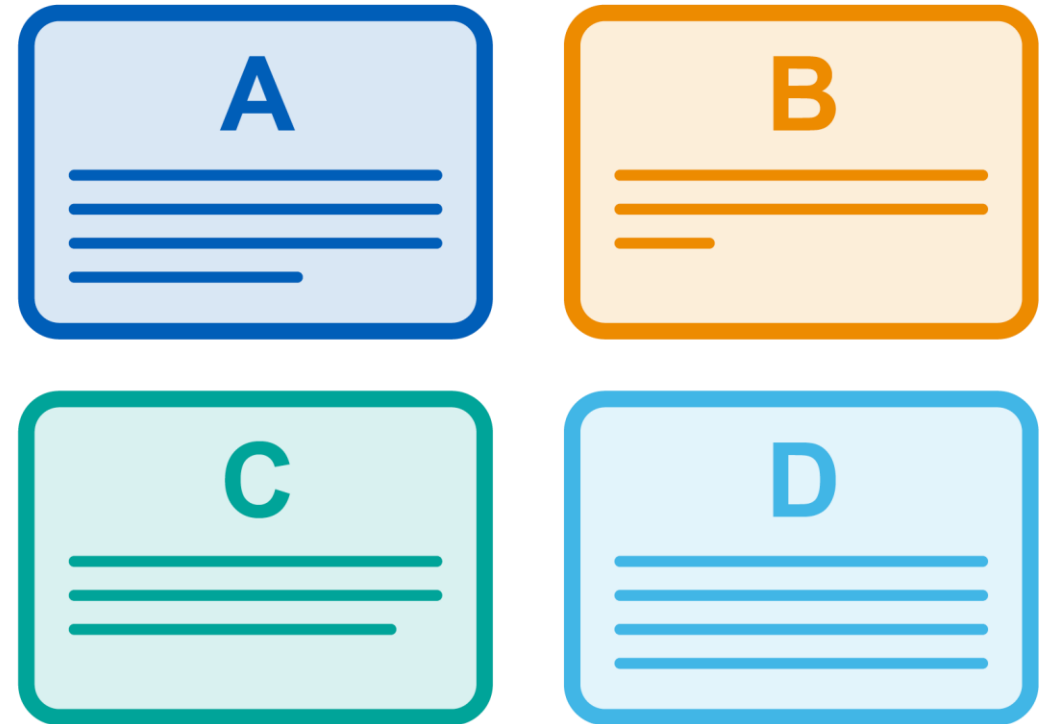
Self selection

Self selection through scenarios can be an effective selection tool in certain circumstances. It involves presenting candidates with scenarios or situational questions that are relevant to a job and asking them to select responses that best reflect their preferred behaviours or approach.

Self-selection through scenarios can be particularly useful for jobs that require specific skills, such as problem-solving or decision-making. It can be effective for assessing how candidates react to different situations and their ability to think on their feet. It also gives candidates - including people that have never worked in care before – a ‘look in and see’ to what a role in care is like and what qualities they need to be successful. It can also improve the performance and motivation of newly hired team members.

In organisations looking to widen access and opportunity to roles you can also use these assessments to try and help accommodate diverse needs within a role.

The design of self selection needs to ensure there is not too much focus on cultural fit and a balanced approach to selection is used.




Large organisations with highly developed recruitment strategies, such as British Airways and Marks & Spencer have made use of self-selection. Their research has found significant reductions in resignation rates especially among recent recruits.

Examples of self selection tools

Issue: Competing demands


You're on your way to meet Poppy (a 15 year old girl on your case load) to take her to an open day at a new college. She suffers from anxiety and therefore cannot go without you. Whilst on your way you receive a phone call from a school advising that John (9 year old boy on your case load) has 'kicked off' and the police have been called. John's parents have been notified and state that this is the 'last straw', that he is not allowed to return home and demand that the local authority accommodate him.




Questions

Do you:

1. Feel **energised** by the challenges and excited about the day ahead as you are sure you can manage it.
2. You feel **overwhelmed**. You are going to need to prioritise your work load and discuss with your manager.
3. You feel **overwhelmed** and **angry/annoyed** that you have to sort everything out at once and you don't feel that you have the time to deal with it.
4. You feel so **overwhelmed** you'd probably freeze and experience panic as to what to do.

 Feeling overwhelmed is very normal, the more effective social worker will be able to work through that and remain positive, productive and keep in communication with their line manager.



[Self selection questions 1 | Frontline \(thefrontline.org.uk\)](https://thefrontline.org.uk)

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WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR / APPLICATION PROCESS / **IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?** / GET SUPPORT / PRIVACY NOTICE

Charityworks is a fantastic opportunity to launch your career in the non-profit sector. Before applying, please give some thought as to whether this is the right option for you at this point in your life and career. Here are some questions to help you think it through:

Charityworks self-selection tool

- The non-profit sector is currently going through a period of great change, with big challenges and big opportunities. Most organisations are having to deliver more with less resource, and finding it difficult to do so. **Are you resilient enough to deliver excellent work in challenging environments?**
- Charityworks gives you a launching pad to rapidly accelerate your career following the programme. We are yet to confirm the salary for the 2023 programme, but as a guide, the salary for the 2022 programme year is £21,255 (UK-wide) and £23,302.50 (London). **Are you prepared to proceed on this basis?**
- Charityworks is designed to find the future leaders of the non-profit sector. We are passionate about working to make a social impact, and want to work with people who feel the same way. Everyone who applies to Charityworks wants to make a difference, we need people who can go even further. **Can you convince us that the non-profit sector is right for you?**
- The Charityworks programme requires you to balance a demanding full-time job with additional learning commitments across the rest of the programme, such as training sessions, impact research assignments and mentoring sessions. **Does this kind of challenge appeal to you?**
- Building strong inter-personal relationships is key to every part of Charityworks. Participants have to be able to work well with their peers, their colleagues, and with Charityworks itself. **Are you confident that you will be considered a team player?**
- Charityworks will place you into a role within one of our partner organisations. You will have the opportunity to state your preferences and any restrictions you have around geography, role type and charitable cause, and these will be taken into account during the matching process. Ultimately we will work to match you to a placement that is a good fit for you out of those that are available, but you may be offered a role that you would have not previously considered. **You are advised to be open-minded during the placement matching process. Are you happy to proceed on these terms?**

[Apply Now - Charityworks \(charity-works.co.uk\)](https://charity-works.co.uk)

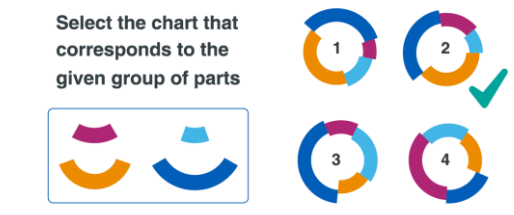
What is the difference?

Cognitive or psychometric testing and work-based testing are not the same, but they can both be used to evaluate a person's ability to perform specific tasks or duties within a job, or work environment.

Psychometric tests are standardised tests that measure a person's cognitive abilities, personality traits, and other characteristics. They are designed to assess a person's potential for success in a particular job or role, but they do not directly measure a person's ability to perform specific job-related tasks.

In contrast, **work-based testing** is a type of assessment that evaluates a person's ability to perform specific job-related tasks, such as assembling a product or troubleshooting a computer. Work-based testing can include various types of assessments, such as performance testing, skills-based testing, simulation testing, and behavioural testing.

Examples of psychometric tests	
1	Aptitude tests: measuring numerical reasoning, verbal reasoning, abstract reasoning, and spatial reasoning
2	Intelligence tests: measuring general cognitive ability and are often used in academic and employment settings
3	Personality tests: personality traits, such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness
4	Situational judgement tests: present hypothetical scenarios and ask the person to select the most appropriate response based on a set of given options
5	Integrity tests: These tests measure a person's honesty, trustworthiness, and ethical behaviour.
6	Interest inventories: These tests measure a person's interests and preferences in different areas, such as hobbies, career paths, and work environments.



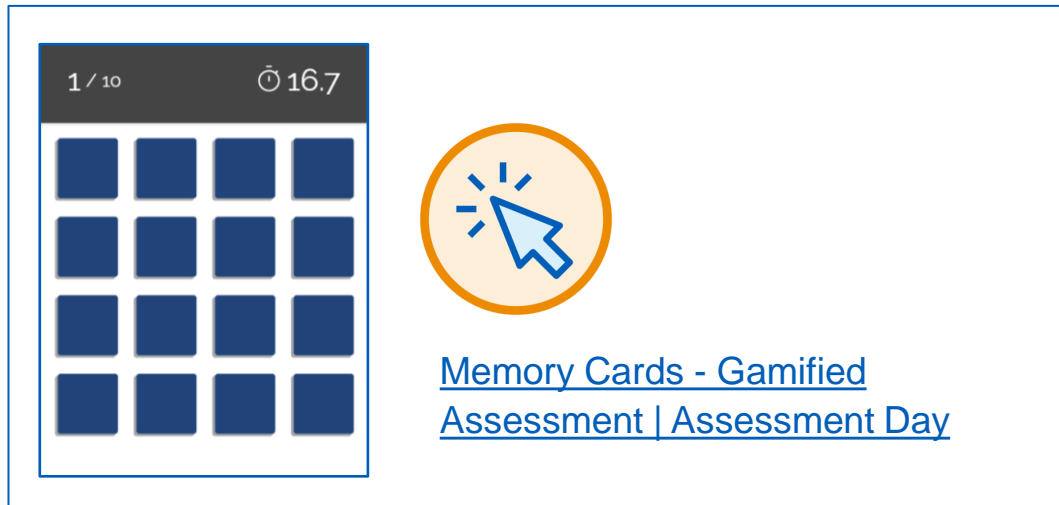
- Psychometric tests and work-based can both be useful tools in the hiring and evaluation process.
- Psychometric tests can provide valuable insights into a person's cognitive abilities and personality traits.
- Work-based testing can provide a more direct measure of a person's ability to perform specific job-related tasks.

Assessment tools

Assessments tools or methods used to evaluate an individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or personality traits can include:

- Tests
- Interviews
- Questionnaires

More recently **game-based assessments** are becoming a tool of choice.



Game-based assessments incorporate game elements into psychometric tests and can be used alongside, or as an alternative to, traditional psychometric test solutions.

Moving onto gamified platforms can offer a **more engaging and realistic** experience for job seekers and provides employers with thousands of **behavioural data points** that can be used for a more focused selection of candidates.

They offer:

- A **better candidate experience** – particularly for Gen Z employees entering the job market
- **Tracked behavioural data:** It is much harder to manipulate results
- **Reflect dynamic situations:** candidates stay more immersed in the task at hand
- Viewed as **less stressful** than conventional psychometric testing

Assessment centres

Conventional assessment centres are typically, a day-long or multi-day process that involves a series of exercises and activities designed to simulate job-related situations.

These exercises are generally inclusive of:



Group discussions



Presentations



Role plays and problem-solving tasks

Examples of innovative assessment centre approaches

1	Group gamified assessments: Used for quick decision making and teamwork approaches
2	Virtual reality assessment : Using immersive technology to walk you through a ward or procedure for example
3	Digital Assessment centres : To analyse real time data and in some instances evaluate emotional intelligence through the use of AI.*
4	Group dynamic assessment centres: To evaluate team and group working ability

Organisations should select the approach that aligns with their selection criteria, organisational culture, equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging priorities and role requirements.

Open day and lived experience assessment

Open day or volume recruitment assessment centres

Large scale open days or volume recruitment events may have simulated environments and provide the opportunity for a '**one stop shop**' style recruitment event that is likened to a "**speed dating approach**."

Potential applicants can turn up at an event without an appointment, speak to staff working in the sector be interviewed, have their recruitment compliance checks completed and participate in a simulated working environment assessment.

As an example; for HCSW recruitment seeking to attract applicants new to care, ward or clinical area simulation with patients, scenarios and experience for the day-to-day tasks within the role will be a good indicator to the potential team member if the role is something that they would enjoy, and whether it aligns to their values and beliefs.



Top tips for volume recruitment assessment centres	
1	Use standardised assessments: You can even share these with candidates in advance
2	Group candidates by criteria to enable group assessment and to keep the experience levels similar to allow for quicker assessment.
3	Have multiple assessors
4	Carefully plan logistics: i.e. suitable venue, area for testing, format of assessments
5	Communicate clearly and provide feedback as this will help candidates

Open day and lived experience assessment

Lived experience in assessment

Lived experience panel members are more common in social services and mental health services recruitment processes as a part of their conventional interview processes. This type of service user or peer panel can provide valuable insights into services and processes from a unique perspective. This would be hugely beneficial for many healthcare services.

Service user and peer panel members could, with training and support, offer their valuable experience to assessments centres as well as to interview panels. This could apply particularly to ward or home-based scenario settings and in describing the day-to-day tasks and skills required for the role. This may also assist in helping to widen access to those applying with diverse needs who may not have thought to apply for these roles.

The goal is to use the personal experiences of individuals to inform the recruitment process and ensure that candidates have a deep understanding of the issues facing the people they will be working with and caring for.



Conclusion

In summary, assessments are a broad category of evaluation methods, while assessment centres are a specific type of evaluation process used for selection, or development purposes that involve a range of exercises and activities designed to simulate job-related situations.

Both methods can be a helpful addition to interviewing as an alternate approach to selection. However they are a valuable supplement to enhance traditional methods and you must remember to consider legal and ethical implications of activity to remove bias, create a fair process and ensure equality of opportunity.



Selection – Best Practice toolkit can be found on [FutureNHS](#)

Trial shifts

Trial shifts are a common recruitment tool that employers predominantly use in the private sector to evaluate potential candidates for a job.

Typically, trial shifts involve having the candidate attend the workplace for a short period of time to work alongside the existing team, performing tasks related to the job they are applying for.

The aim is to give both the employer and the candidate an opportunity to assess whether they are a good fit for each other. This is often carried out prior to the completion of the recruitment process to ensure most effective use of resources but may also be used as an aid to support retention and avoid potential staff attrition in particular areas.

Recommendations for trial shifts	
1	They should take place as quickly after interview as possible: This is to ensure it is a seamless part of the interview process and places in relevant context for the candidate.
2	Paid for their time: Successful or not, these candidates should be paid for this time. They are not free labour and it is a powerful means for brand affinity.
3	Employers need to provide clear communication: and ensure that candidates know what the expectations of them are on trial shifts
4	Well supported environment: i.e. learning and development oversight and assistance for them if something doesn't go to plan.

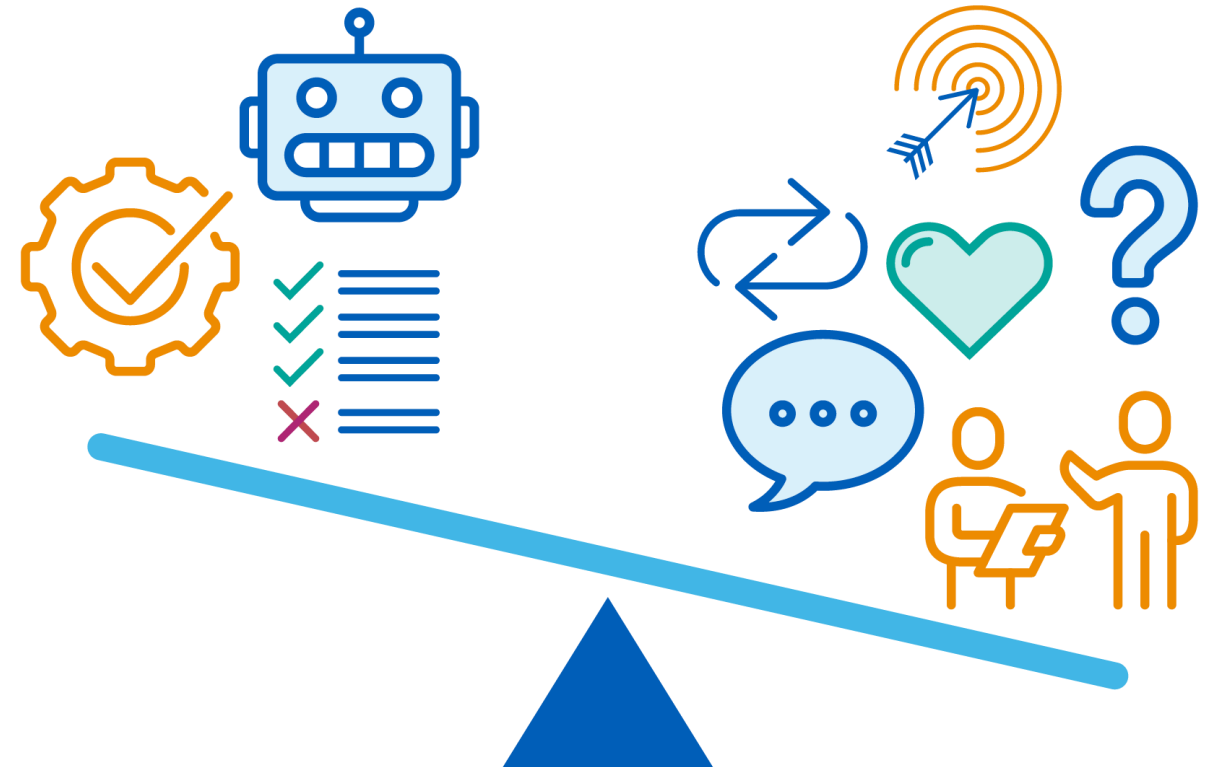
Do alternative approaches include Artificial Intelligence?

While AI can be a useful tool in recruitment and selection processes, it cannot replace the value of an interview. For example, a candidate's interpersonal skills, problem-solving, and critical thinking abilities, are difficult to measure through AI but can be established during an interview.

Additionally, interviews allow candidates to learn about the organisation and the job, ask questions, and gain insights into the organisation's culture, which can impact their decision to accept a job offer.

AI tools, such as machine learning algorithms, may introduce or amplify biases that exist in the data, which can lead to unfair and discriminatory selection decisions. These algorithms may also overlook candidates who possess valuable soft skills or lived experience that are not explicitly stated in their resumes or job applications, but which could be evident during an interview.

Until further advances remove the possibility of bias, AI should be used to supplement and enhance traditional methods rather than replace them entirely.



Supplementary approaches to interviews, such as behavioural assessments and situational judgment tests, can potentially help prevent high turnover rates by providing a more comprehensive assessment of a candidate's suitability for the role.

Candidates who are well-matched to their role and the organisation are more likely to stay engaged and motivated in their work, leading to a lower staff turnover.

However, it's important to note that no assessment tool is perfect, and that there are limits to what they can predict. It's important for organisations to have strong onboarding programs, clear job expectations, and support structures to help prevent high turnover. These factors can contribute to employee engagement and job satisfaction, which are key factors in retaining employees over the long term.



Overall, supplementary approaches to interviews can be a helpful tool in identifying candidates who are well-suited to a role and the organisation's culture, but should be used in conjunction with other recruitment, selection and retention strategies to create a positive work environment, and to ensure retention of employees in the long term.



Thank you for taking the time to view this pack.

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