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Comparison of Personality Traits, Past Work, and Technology Experience of Successful Disability Analyst Trainees

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COMPARISON OF PERSONALITY TRAITS, PAST WORK, AND TECHNOLOGY

EXPERIENCE OF SUCCESSFUL DISABILITY ANALYST TRAINEES

A Research Study

Presented to the Graduate Faculty

of the Department of STEM Education and Professional Studies

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Disability Determinations Services is a State Agency that is contracted by the Social Security Administration to adjudicate Disability Claims on behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. In today's economy, many employers are being forced to downsize and cut costs. However, for Disability Determination Services (DDS), the economic downturn, combined with an aging baby boomer generation, has resulted in the need to increase their staff quickly and efficiently.

The 2012 annual report recently released by the Social Security Administration noted that the agency has seen an average of 30% increase in disability claims each year since 2007. In 2011, the agency received 3.3 million new disability claims which resulted in an increase in over 30,000 claims from the previous year. This increase in claims has resulted in growing backlogs of claims and workloads for their employees.

The DDS is now faced with the dilemma of how to recruit the best employees who will be able to adapt to the growing needs of the agency and produce quality claims in the most efficient manner possible. Two questions have arisen from this search: how much of an effect does one's past work experience impact their ability to perform the job? Second, is there a particular personality or mindset that fits the role of adjudicator best? The purpose of this study was to compare the personalities and the past work experience of some of the newest employees, classified as analyst trainees, to their overall success within the agency.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The purpose of this study was to determine factors resulting from past work experience and personality types that effect the ability of an analyst trainee to be able to meet the agency's definition of success to maintain their employment. The DDS requires that an analyst trainee meet a minimum production goal while maintaining the agency quality and processing time standard by the end of twenty-four months of hire.

RESEARCH GOALS

To answer this problem, the researcher explored the following research objectives:

1. Does an employee's personality type, as noted on the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, indicate their ability to meet the goals outlined by the agency for success?
2. Does an employee's past work experience impact their success in their role as a disability analyst?
3. Does an employee's comfort level with technology and electronic resources impact their success rate as a disability analyst?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The role of the disability analyst is one that requires a strong attention to detail, the ability to adjust to change, and the aptitude to work with policy that is not always black or white. The disability analyst is required to review large volumes of information quickly and accurately and propose a determination based upon the available objective evidence received on a claim. The job is difficult, challenging, and generally appeals to individuals who enjoy solving problems.

In the past five years, the agency has converted from paper records to a fully electronic environment, meaning that all aspects of the job are completed with the use of the agency's electronic file management and claims processing system. Those staff members who are comfortable using computers and advanced software systems tend to be more proficient and accurate in adjudicating disability claims. Those staff members who have less experience using computers and advanced software systems have often struggled to meet agency job performance standards.

Over the last several years, there has been an influx of new disability analysts hired by the agency for varying reasons. The agency has found that it must use more advanced recruitment strategies that lead to higher levels of retention and reduced turnover of staff. In the last few years, the agency has changed its interview process to a behavioral based interview, but the agency continues to struggle with a thirty percent loss of new hires within the first twelve months.

As a result, the agency has considered what characteristics a successful analyst should have in order to meet the agency goals. One of these characteristics has been that of personality. Does one personality fit the role of analyst better than others? Does past work experience have a direct impact on the trainee's ability to learn the job? And how does the individual's skill level of technology usage affect their success rate?

Research has shown that there is a connection between personality types as predictors of job performance (Barrick & Mount, 2001). Research has also shown that an individual's history of work experience can both positively and negatively affect their job performance (Dokko, Wilk, & Rothbard, 2009)

This study investigated how these factors play a role in the success of the disability analyst trainee. The outcome will assist the agency leaders in recruiting and training of new staff with the hopes of increased retention beyond the first year of employment.

LIMITATIONS

The limitations of this study are as follows:

1. The study was limited by surveying current analyst trainees which have been hired within the time frame of July 1, 2008, and August 15, 2012, at Disability Determination Services.

2. This study was limited to the use of the Keirsey Temperament Sorter to determine personality types.

3. The study was limited by the information that was provided by the participants in regards to their past work experience.

4. The study was limited by the information that was provided by the participants in regard to their comfort level with the use of technology.

5. The study was limited because the researcher was unable to obtain data from employees who were no longer employed by the agency.

ASSUMPTIONS

In this study there were several factors which were assumed to be true and factual. The assumptions were as follows:

1. The Keirsey Temperament Sorter will accurately identify the participant's personality type.

2. The participants will answer the survey questions honestly in order to provide objective data to be utilized in comparison with their co-workers.

3. The participants will have some knowledge of computer systems and software.

4. Data were collected from the agency's Human Resource records which showed completion dates of employee work expectations and milestones.

PROCEDURES

This study was conducted by administering the Keirsey Temperament Sorter to the participants in addition to having them complete a survey regarding their past work and computer experience. These data were compared with the statistical agency data that demonstrates the individual's job performance based upon quality, production, and timeliness. The Adjudicators' Keirsey Personality type and performance was evaluated to determine which if any personality type or trait was most successful at performing the job of disability claims analyst, as described by agency standards. The Adjudicators' past work and computer experience were evaluated to determine if their past work and computer experience were a factor in their success as a disability claims analyst as described by the agency standards.

<center>**DEFINITION OF TERMS**</center>

The following terms were defined to provide a thorough understanding of the information that was being provided.

Disability Analyst Trainee (trainee): An individual employed by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Disability Determination Services (DDS), referred to as the agency, charged

Mean Processing Time (MPT): with adjudicating Title II, Social Security Disability, and Title XVI, Supplemental Security Income disability claims for the Social Security Administration.

Employee Work Profile (EWP): An employee Work Profile (EWP) is a performance plan established by the agency that provides the disability analyst trainee with the goals and expectations that they must meet to maintain their position within the agency.

Keirsey Temperament Sorter: An abbreviated version of the Myers-Briggs Personality test that allows an individual to complete an assessment of their personality type.

Mean Processing Time (MPT): The average number of days it took an analyst to adjudicate a disability claim.

Myers-Briggs Personality Test: A psychological assessment tool designed to measure psychological preferences of how people perceive the world and make decisions.

Production: The number of cases an analyst was expected to adjudicate per fiscal year.

Social Security Administration (SSA): An independent Federal agency which is responsible for the Social Security system.

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

This study investigated the correlation of an individual's Keirsey personality type and the past work experience of the disability analyst trainees with their ability to meet the agency's guideline of success. The study was conducted through surveys and each participant completed the Keirsey Temperament Sorter. The survey obtained information regarding the participants past work history and their comfort level working in an electronic work environment. Chapter II provides a review of literature concerning personality types and their predictors of work performance as well as research regarding the impact of past work experience on performance predictors in a new position. Chapter III presented the methods and procedures utilized to obtain the data to support or refute the significance of these factors on predictors of success. Chapter IV provided a summary and analysis of the findings. Chapter V summarized the findings and conclusions of this study. This chapter also provided recommendations to the DDS on possible changes in recruitment and retention of new staff.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The job market is increasingly more competitive. Employers are seeking to find the best candidate for the job. Employers are utilizing many forms of recruitment and selection practices to make their choices. The following review of literature investigates three strategies for the selection of new hires. These strategies include the use of personality tests, review of past work experiences, and the use of technology as indicators for job performance.

PERSONALITY

Personality as defined by Merriam Webster (2012) is "a set of distinctive traits and characteristics" (para. 3b). The study of personalities and how they relate to the individual go back to the days of Aristotle. Gordon Allport noted that the individual personality was made up of traits. These traits or individual dispositions are defined by Merriam Webster (2012) as "a distinguishing characteristic" (para. 2a). There have been several research studies regarding personality and its traits and most of the research agrees that personality consists of five basic traits that define the individual personality. These five traits have different titles because each researcher came about these five traits through different research methods, they are named differently but generally have the same meaning. These five traits are extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness.

In 1923, Freyd noted that in order for an employer to make the best selection of personnel, the job must be analyzed to determine what attributes led to success or failure

on the job. The initial form of testing was the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). This test resulted in invalid findings, however since some of the relationships established through the Inventory were established as a result of chance (Gregory, 1993). In 1961, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was released. The work was based upon the Psycho theory of Karl Jung who was responsible for the terms Extrovert and Introvert. Myers-Briggs built upon this information in order to create the MBTI. This test consists of 100 questions, which inquire as to how someone would feel or respond to certain situations. The results of the test render classifications for the participant; these classifications are Extraverted/Introverted, Sensing/Intuitive, Thinking/Feeling, and Judging/Perceiving. These classifications are defined as extraverted (E), meaning an individual who is outgoing, and introverted (I), meaning an individual who is quiet or shy. Those who are classified as sensing (S) are described as practical and prefer a routine, whereas the intuitive (I), individual looks at the big picture. The thinking (T) classification is for those individuals who use reason or logic to handle problems, and those classified as feelers (F), rely on personal values and emotions to lead their decisions. Those classified as judging (J) prefer control and like their environment to be ordered and structured, where the perceiver (P) is flexible and prefers spontaneity. While this tool has been found to be helpful in creating self-awareness and career guidance, the results do not assist with job performance evaluation (Robins, 2007).

There have been many research studies completed to assess the validity of personality testing on evaluation of job performance with varied results. As a result of these studies, the Big Five Personality Indicator emerged as a valid form of predicting job performance. The five traits are openness, conscientiousness, extroversion,

agreeableness, and neuroticism. Openness is defined as the appreciation of art and

emotion, one who is open. Conscientious, also known as dependability, is described as

responsible, organized, and planful. Emotional stability describes their mental state such

as anxious, depressed, or angry. Agreeableness, also known as likability, is referred to

social conformist; those how are good natured, cooperative, and forgiving. Extroversion

is associated with common traits of sociable, assertive, and talkative (Barrick, 1991).

Research showed there have been many studies regarding the validity of using

personality testing as a form of hiring selection. One study conducted by Barrick and

Mount (1991), noted that while the validity of personality scores was not conclusive, they

were able to say that certain pieces of one's personality could be used as a predictor for

job success. These traits were conscientiousness and emotional stability. Their meta-

analysis showed that these forms were valid predictors of job performance, whether it is

pulling out the positive or negative traits of the individual. While there has been some

ongoing debate as to the validity, records show that personality testing has been utilized

by several professions including police officers, fire fighters, and flight attendants, as a

form of candidate screening (Gregory, 1993).

PRIOR WORK EXPERIENCE

Another factor that must be considered during the hiring phase is the evaluation of

the individual's prior work experience. Most jobs have a base of knowledge, skills, and

abilities (KSA's) that are required to perform the job. When selecting a prospective

employee, the employer has to determine how does their prior work apply to the tasks

they are being asked to perform? The job market is very competitive and there are an

increasing number of college graduates who are experiencing more difficulty finding a

job in the selected career path than their parents and older siblings experienced in the past. The applicant must come to work with skills that are applicable to all job functions in order to be competitive.

There have been many research studies conducted that investigated the relationship between prior work experience and job performance. One study noted that while it was not the actual prior work experience, but how the applicant was perceived to be trainable. The study revolved around a textile plant and the data that was collected was based upon recent hires. The trainees were hired based upon their past history of safety, attendance, and the manager's judgment that they could learn the tasks required of the new job. The study noted that there was a higher correlation between those who had worked in a similar situation prior to being brought into the training program (McCullough, Cofer, & Gordon 1986).

Another form of research investigated job performance and experience where they compared the performance of younger and older workers; the results noted that the older worker was just as productive as the younger worker and this was due to their past experiences, which gave them insight that helped them overcome their slowing down physically and mentally (Rowe, 1988). Other researchers feel that while having work experience is helpful, it can also get in the way of performance in a new situation. It was noted that while having task relevant knowledge helps with understanding, it can also be negative on performance. Research notes that past work experience is more useful the longer that someone is with the organization than when they just begin their career (Rothbard, 2009).

One factor that was prevalent in the research was the individual's ability to be trained. The individual's performance varied by how much training they required. If someone came to a situation with similar work experience, they would not require concept training but rather training on how the individual employer's system worked. It took less time to train someone with experience than someone who had never been in a similar environment, therefore the experienced person was working and being productive faster (Ash, 1985).

With the aging workforce and an influx of fresh college graduates, employers are being presented with candidates with varied life experiences that should be taken into consideration during the hiring and selection of their new employees. Many college students are working their way through college or have activities that can be applied to the basic KSA's required for a job. The job of the applicant is to be able to convey to the prospective employer how those skills they obtained apply to the job requirements being sought (Barling, & Kelloway 1999). Research has shown that regardless of the variables, there is a positive correlation between past work experience and the individual's job performance (Teachout, Ford, & Quiones, 1999). Research has found that prior work experience gives the newcomer the ability to apply their past work experiences in a way that helps them adjust to the new surroundings, where someone who has not worked would not have the same advantage. These traits are personal identities, professional know how, and adjustment strategies. The newcomer with experience is able to adjust to the new environment because of their diverse work experiences. As with all research, there are still questions that are not answered, but there was valid data to support that past work experience is a good predictor of job performance.

TECHNOLOGY

In today's society technology is all around. Everywhere you go there is some form of technology being used, whether it is in a grocery store, schools, or laboratories. The need for being technology savvy is key to being successful. The role of the adjudicator is no different. The adjudicator spends their day at a desk utilizing the computer to read and evaluate data, research, and converse with other professionals. Lack of computer experience is detrimental to the adjudicators work performance.

In today's economy, employers are looking to find the best candidate. The employers are not always basing assumption on the experience of the individual, but what they may bring to the table. Fortune 500 companies are starting to put more emphasis on their entry level positions. The leaders feel that they can hire newcomers and shape them to the company image. It was noted that in 2007 entry level hiring would increase to 7.7%. Many of these leaders were looking at the possibility of information and learning flowing up and down the organization. The leaders could teach the newcomers about the company, and the newcomers could bring skills such as the use of technology to share with the tenured staff (Krouse, 2007). A study, conducted in 2000, evaluated age differences in technology making decisions. The study looked at user reactions to a new software system over a period of five months. The study found that when decisions were based on technology, the younger generations won the battle (Venkatesh, 2000).

Research shows that technology is changing daily and employees and employers must be able to roll with the change. Employers will be looking to have those who can adapt to change and can move forward with the organization. Employees who are not technology savvy will be at a disadvantage despite their past work experience.

SUMMARY

There was an abundance of research based upon what factors an employer should utilize when making a hiring decision. There are pros and cons to each form of screening. Research has shown that while using a personality test is not a definitive form of screening, there are pieces of the personality that can be utilized that are valid predictors of an individual's ability to perform. The evidence showed that the evaluation of past work experience is also a valid predictor of past work. But the employer must also look at other skills and activities outside of work that the individual is bringing to the table. Technology is ever changing. Research has shown that technology has touched every aspect of our lives, from entertainment, work and health. An individual who is comfortable with the changing times of technology has a better chance of getting the job than those individuals who are not computer savvy. The research provided a basis to support the investigation as to what personality, technology, and past work experience play as a factor in the success rate of disability analyst trainees. The information which was gained from this research was used as a basis to conduct this investigation. Chapter III will discuss the methods and procedures that were utilized to gather data for this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODS OF PROCEDURES

The objective of this study was to determine whether an individual's personality, past work experience, and computer experience impact their ability to meet the goals outlined by the agency for success. This chapter provides information defining the population studied, the instrument designs that were utilized, methods used for gathering data, and the procedures which were utilized for data analysis.

POPULATION

The population of this study consisted of 215 Virginia Disability Determination Analysts from the Commonwealth of Virginia who were hired during the time span of 7/1/2008, through 8/15/2012. Participants in this study consisted of the 115 disability analyst trainees who remained employed with the agency at the time of data collection. The participants volunteered to participate by completing a survey that was sent to them by email.

INSTRUMENT DESIGN

An inventory and survey were used to collect data for this study. The inventory was the Keirsey Temperament Sorter and a brief survey, which was designed by the researcher to gather data on past work experience and the use of computer technology. The Keirsey Sorter is an inventory that consists of 70 questions and requires the individual to choose one of two responses that best fit the way they feel about a situation. Upon completion of the inventory, it is graded and the individual is assigned a Temperament based upon their responses. The four Temperaments are Guardian, Artisan,

Idealist, and Rationalist. Keirsey (2012) defined each of these temperaments as follows:

The Guardians are those individuals who are dependable, helpful, and hard-working.

They tend to be cautious, humble, and trust authority figures. They excel at managing

goods and services, and their roles vary from supervision to maintenance and supply.

The Artisans are described as fun loving, living for the here and now, and realistic. They

trust their impulses and seek stimulation. The Rationalists are the problem solvers. They

tend to be pragmatic and skeptical. They trust logic and strive for achievement. The

Idealists are concerned with personal growth and development. They trust their intuition,

seek their true self, and tend to be inspirational leaders. Table 1 illustrates the four

temperaments and their character types.

Table 1

Keirsey-Four Temperaments and Character Types

Guardian	Artisan	Idealist	Rationalist
ESTJ	ESTP	ENFJ	ENTJ
ISTJ	ISTP	INFJ	INTJ
ESFJ	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
ISFJ	ISFP	INFP	INTP

Note. Each Temperament consists of a combination of four dominant personality types.
The types are: E=Extroversion, I=Introversion; S=Sensing, F=Feeling; T=Thinking,
J=Judging; P=Perceiver and I=Intuitive.

The remaining survey consisted of two questions which asked the individual to

provide data regarding their past work experience and their experience utilizing

technology. See Appendix A for a copy of the inventory and survey questions.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The individuals chosen for this study were hired by the agency during the time period of 7/1/208, through 8/15/2012. The individuals were identified by the Human Resource Department in two separate groups. The first group identified were those who were hired during the specified time period; the second group was identified based upon those who remained employed by the agency in this capacity. Once the group of participants was identified, the Agency's Director sent an email requesting that each of the employees complete the survey and return it to a blind email box. A reminder email was sent requesting their participation two weeks later. The agency's Human Resource Department was unable to provide the participants past work history and computer experience due to database limitations, once data were received, a member of the Administrative office reviewed each survey in order to remove personally identifying information of the participant before this information was provided to the researcher. The researcher was unable to contact those employees who had been terminated; this limited the researcher's ability to obtain data regarding their personality types, previous work or computer use. See Appendix B and C for copies of the cover letter and follow-up emails.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The Chi-Square analysis was used to analyze the data to compare the frequency of relationship between personality types and success, work history and success, and technology use and success.

SUMMARY

Chapter III discussed the methods and procedures which were used to gather and analyze the data for this research. The population of this study consisted of Disability Determination Analysts from the Commonwealth of Virginia who were hired during the time of July 1, 2008, and August 15, 2012. The participants completed the Keirsey Temperament Sorter and a questionnaire that provided their work history and technology experience that was distributed by the Agency Director to those identified in the population sample. The Chi-Square analysis was utilized to analyze the frequency of an individual's personality, past work experience, and technology experience with their success in performing the role of Disability Analyst. Chapter IV reported the findings from the data collected. Chapter IV reported the findings from the data collected.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine whether an individual's personality, past work experience, and familiarity with computer technology impacted their ability to be successful in the role of adjudicator. This chapter presents the statistical data collected for this study.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The sample of this study consisted of 49 adjudicators from the Commonwealth of Virginia's Agency of Disability Determination Services. The participants were identified based upon their hire date of July 1, 2008, through August 15, 2012. During this time, 215 analyst trainees were hired, however, as of October 1, 2012, only 115 employees remained. Of these 115 employees, 49 individuals agreed to participate in this study, which resulted in a response rate of 42%. The study contained three separate data sets.

PERSONALITY TYPES

A population of 49 individuals was utilized to compare the personality types of individuals with their success rate based upon the individual's response to the Keirsey Temperament Sorter. Sixteen of the participants were disqualified from the study due to their responses, when completing the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, because their temperaments were inconclusive on determining a particular personality. This left a sample of 33. A Chi-Square test was used to analyze the data. Of the 33 successful analyst, 23 (69.9%) were guardians, one (3%) was an Artisan, four (12.2%) were

Idealists, and five (15.1%) were Rationalist. The Chi-Square test resulted was X^2 value of 36.21 with a degree of freedom of 3. The p> 0.05 level of significance was 7.82. Table 2 illustrates the personality types of successful analyst.

Table 2

Personality Types of Successful Analyst

PERSONALITY	OBSERVED N	RESPONSE %
Guardian	23	69.9%
Artisans	1	3%
Idealists	4	12%
Rationalist	5	15.1%
Total	33	100%

PAST WORK EXPERIENCE

A population of 49 individuals was used for comparison of success rates of those with work experience to those who did not have previous work experience. Two of the participants did not respond to the questionnaire regarding their past work experience. Of the remaining successful analysts, 30 (69.76%) reported prior work experience and 13 (30.24%) reported they did not have prior work experience. A Chi-Square analysis was applied and resulted in an X^2 value of 6.72 with a degree of freedom of 1. The p> 0.05 level of significance was 3.84. Table 3 illustrates the work experience of successful analyst.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCE

A population of 49 individuals was used for comparison of the success rates of those with computer experience with those who did not have previous experience utilizing a computer. Two of the participants did not respond to the survey in regards to their computer experience. Four of the participants had prior experience utilizing computer technology; however, they were not successful in the role of disability analyst trainee. Of the 43 successful analyst, 40 (93%) reported prior experience utilizing a computer, and the remaining three (7%) reported they were not required to utilize a computer. The Chi-Square test produced an X^2 value of 31.82 with a degree of freedom of 1. The $p > 0.05$ level of significance was 3.84. Table 4 illustrates Computer Experience of successful analyst.

SUMMARY

In Chapter IV, the researcher presented the statistical analysis that evaluated a trainee's success rate based upon their personality type, their past work experience, and their experience utilizing a computer. Data were collected from 49 participants from the Commonwealth of Virginia Disability Determinations Services. Chi-Square analysis was used to analyze the data comparing the success rate of trainees based upon personality traits, work experience, and computer experience. Chapter V will discuss the summary of the research, draw conclusions, respond to the research goals, and make recommendations for future studies.

Table 3

Work Experience of Successful Analyst

ANALYST	OBSERVED N	% of ANALYTS
Work Experience	30	69.76%
No Experience	13	30.24%
Total	33	100%

Table 4

Computer Experience of Successful Analyst

ANALYST	OBSERVED N	% of ANALYST
Experience	40	93%
No Experience	3	7%
Total	43	100%

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The intent of this chapter was to provide a summary of the research study. The conclusions and recommendations were provided in this chapter. These were based upon the data collected and analyzed by the researcher.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine if factors resulting from past work experience and personality types affect the ability of an analyst trainee to be able to meet the agency's definition of success to maintain their employment. The following research goals were developed by the researcher to address this study.

1. Does an employee's personality type, as noted on the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, indicate their ability to meet the goals outlined by the agency for success?

2. Does an employee's past work experience impact their success in their role as a disability analyst?

3. Does an employee's comfort level with technology and electronic resources impact their success rate as a disability analyst?

The limitations of this study were as follows:

1. The study was limited by surveying current analyst trainees which have been hired within the time frame of July 1, 2008, and August 15, 2012, at Disability Determination Services.

2. This study was limited to the use of the Keirsey Temperament Sorter to determine personality types.

3. The study was limited by the information that was provided by the participants in regards to their past work experience.

4. The study was limited by the information that was provided by the participants in regard to their comfort level with the use of technology.

5. The study is limited because the researcher was unable to obtain data from employees who are no longer employed by the agency.

The population of this study consisted of 215 Virginia Disability Determination Analysts from the Commonwealth of Virginia who were hired during the time span of 7/1/2008, through 8/15/2012. Participants in this study consisted of the 115 disability analyst trainees who remained employed with the agency, at the time of data collection. The participants volunteered to participate by completing a survey that was sent to them by email. Of these 115 employees, 49 individuals agreed to participate in this study, which resulted in a response rate of 42%. The study contained three separate data sets. This study was conducted by administering the Keirsey Temperament Sorter to the participants in addition to having them complete a survey regarding their past work experiences and computer technology experience.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were drawn based upon the data collected from the inventory and the survey instrument. The data were utilized to respond to the research objectives of this study.

RO$_1$: Does an employee's personality type, as noted on the Keirsey

Temperament Sorter, indicate their ability to meet the goals outlined by the

agency for success?

The first data set addressed the success rate of trainees based upon their

personality type. The analysis of personality types of successful disability analyst was 23

(69.76%) individuals were ranked as a Guardian, one (3%) as an Artisan, four (12%) as

an Idealist, and five (15.1%) as a Rationalist. These data resulted in an X^2 value of 36.21

with a degree of freedom of 3. The p> 0.05 level of significance was 7.82. The

researcher concludes that the X^2 value of 36.21 was greater than the p> 0.05 significance

level of X^2 of 7.82, would support the agency recruiting individuals based upon

personality type. The researcher concludes that those individuals who have the

personality traits of a Guardian are more successful in the role of a disability analyst

trainee than those who are Rationalist, Artisan or Idealist.

RO$_2$: Does an employee's past work experience impact their success in their

role as a disability analyst?

The second data set addressed the success rate of trainees based upon their past

work experience. Of the 49 participants, two failed to respond on the survey regarding

their personal experience. Four of the participants were not successful in the role as

disability analyst trainee. The remaining data set noted 30 (69.76%) participants with

past work experience and 13 (30.4%) without direct work experience. The researcher

applied a Chi-Square analysis which resulted in an X^2 value of 6.72 with a degree of

freedom of 1. The p> 0.05 level of significance was 3.84. The researcher concludes that

the X^2 value of 6.72 was greater than the p> 0.05 significance level of 3.841 and therefore supports the agency recruiting individuals with prior work experience. The researcher concludes that individuals who have prior work experience are more successful in the role of disability analyst trainee than those who do not have prior work experience.

RO$_3$: Does an employee's comfort level with technology and electronic resources impact their success rate as a disability analyst?

The final data set addressed the success rate of trainees based upon their experience working with computers. Of the 49 participants, two failed to respond on the survey in regards to their personal experience with computers. Four of the participants were rated as unsuccessful in their role as disability analyst trainees. Of the 43 successful analyst, 40 (93%) reported prior experience utilizing a computer and the remaining three (7%) reported that they were not required to utilize a computer. The Chi-Square test produced an X^2 value of 31.82 with a degree of freedom of 1. The p> 0.05 level of significance was 3.84. The researcher concludes that the X^2 value 31.82 with a degree of freedom of 1 was greater than the p> 0.05 significance level of 3.84 and therefore supports the agency recruiting individuals with computer experience. The researcher concludes that individuals who have prior experience utilizing computer technology are more successful in the role of disability analyst than those who do not have prior computer experience.

The data of this research combined with the previous research that was discussed in the review of literature suggested that Disability Determination Services should

consider adopting recruiting strategies that include screening applicants based upon their personality type, past work experiences and computer experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the findings and conclusions of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The researcher suggests that the agency should collect personality data on all new hires within the first few weeks of hire or as part of the initial hiring process.

2. The researcher suggests that the agency conduct similar research on all existing disability analyst regardless of time with agency to compare the similarities of tenured staff with new hires.

3. The researcher proposes that the agency conduct a more in depth study regarding the specific job duties of the individual's prior work to determine if there is a particular skill set that is more successful in the role of disability analyst.

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Keirsey Temperament Sorter

Employee ID #:_____.

Instructions

It is important that you answer all the questions from the perspective of what feels real for you and not try to give answers that you think would sound like how you should behave in any particular situation. The objective is to understand yourself as you really are – not the way, for example, you must react in your job, or others expect you to behave. Effectiveness as an individual or leader is not based on any particular personality style. It is really about how well you know yourself and others.

There are two choices for each question. If both seem to apply, choose the one that feels most comfortable to you. There are no right or wrong answers – about half the population agrees with whatever choice you make.

1. At a party do you
   (a) interact with many, including strangers
   (b) interact with a few, known to you.

2. Are you more
   (a) realistic than speculative
   (b) speculative than realistic

3. Is it worse to
   (a) have your "head in the clouds"
   (b) be "in a rut"

4. Are you more impressed by
   (a) principles   (b) emotions

5. Are you more drawn toward the
   (a) convincing   (b) touching

6. Do you prefer to work
   (a) to deadlines   (b) just "whenever"

7. Do you tend to choose
   (a) rather carefully   (b) somewhat impulsively

8. At parties do you
    (a) stay late, with increasing energy
    (b) leave early, with decreased energy

9. Are you more attracted to
    (a) sensible people   (b) imaginative people

10. Are you more interested in
    (a) what is actual   (b) what is possible

11. In judging others are you more swayed by
    (a) laws than circumstances
    (b) circumstances than laws

12. In approaching others is your inclination to be somewhat
    (a) objective   (b) subjective

13. Are you more
    (a) punctual   (b) leisurely

14. Does it bother you more having things
    (a) incomplete   (b) completed

15. In your social groups do you
    (a) keep abreast of other's happenings
    (b) get behind on the news

16. In doing ordinary things, are you more likely to
    (a) do it the usual way
    (b) do it your own way

17. Writers should
    (a) "say what they mean and mean what they say"
    (b) express things more by use of analogy

18. Which appeals to you more
    (a) consistency of thought
    (b) harmonious human relationships

19. Are you more comfortable in making
    (a) logical judgments   (b) value judgments

20. Do you want things
    (a) settled and decided
    (b) unsettled and undecided

21. Would you say you are more
    (a) serious and determined   (b) easy-going

22. In phoning do you
    (a) rarely question that it will all be said
    (b). rehearse what you'll say

23. Facts
    (a) speak for themselves   (b) illustrate principles

24. Are visionaries
    (a) somewhat annoying   (b) rather fascinating

25. Are you more often
    (a) a cool headed person
    (b) a warm hearted person

26. Is it worse to be
    (a) unjust   (b) merciless

27. Should one usually let events occur
    (a). by careful selection and choice
    (b) randomly and by chance

28. Do you feel better about
    (a) having purchased
    (b) having the option to buy

29. In company do you
    (a) initiate conversation   (b) wait to be approached

30. Common Sense is
    (a) rarely questionable
    (b) frequently questionable

31. Children often do not
    (a) make themselves useful enough
    (b) exercise their fantasy enough

32. In making decisions do you feel more comfortable with
    (a) standards   (b) feelings

33. Are you more
    (a) firm than gentle   (b) gentle than firm

34. Which is more admirable
    (a) the ability to organize and be methodical
    (b) the ability to adapt and make do

35. Do you put more value on the
    (a) definite   (b) open-minded

36. Does new and non-routine interactions with others
    (a) stimulate and energizes
    (b).tax your reserves

37. Are you more frequently
    (a) a practical sort of person
    (b) a fanciful sort of person

38. Are you more likely to
    (a) see how others are useful
    (b) see how others see

39. Which is more satisfying
    (a)a. to discuss an issue thoroughly
    (b) to arrive at agreement on an issue

40. Which rules you more:
    (a) your head   (b) your heart

41. Are you more comfortable with work that is
    (a) contracted   (b) done on a casual basis

42. Do you tend to look for
    (a) the orderly   (b) principles

43. Do you prefer
    (a) many friends with brief contact
    (b) few friends with more lengthy contact

44. Do you go more by
    (a) facts   (b) principles

45. Are you more interested in
    (a) production and distribution
    (b) design and research

46. Which is more of compliment
    (a) "There is a logical person"
    (b) There is a very sentimental person"

47. Do you value in yourself more that you are
    (a) unwavering   (b) devoted

48. Do you more often prefer the
    (a) final and unalterable statement
    (b) tentative and preliminary statement

49. Are you more comfortable
    (a) after a decision   (b) before a decision

50. Do you
    (a) speak easily and at length with strangers
    (b) find little to say to strangers

51. Are you more likely to trust your
    (a) experience   (b) hunch

52. Do you feel
    (a) more practical than ingenious
    (b) more ingenious than practical

53. Which person is more complimented" one of
    (a) clear reason   (b) strong feeling

54. Are you inclined more to be
    (a). fair-minded   (b) sympathetic

55. Is it preferable mostly to
    (a) make sure things are arranged
    (b) just let things happen

56. In relationships should most things be
    (a) renegotiable   (b) random and circumstantial

57. When the phone rings do you
    (a) hasten to get to it first
    (b) hope someone else will answer

58. Do you prize more in yourself
    (a) a strong sense of reality   (b) a vivid imagination

59. Are you drawn more to
    (a) fundamentals   (b) overtones

60. Which seems the greater error
    (a) to be too passionate   (b) to be too objective

61. Do you see yourself basically
    (a). hard-headed   (b) soft hearted

62. Which situation appeals to you more
    (a) the structured and scheduled
    (b) the unstructured and unscheduled

63. Are you a person that is more
    (a) routinized than whimsical
    (b) whimsical and unscheduled

64. Are you more inclined to be
    (a) easy to approach   (b) somewhat reserved

65. In writings do you prefer
    (a) the more literal   (b) the more figurative

66. Is it harder for you to
    (a) identify with others   (b) utilize others

67. Which do you wish more for yourself
    (a). clarity of reason
    (b). strength of compassion

68. Which is the greater fault
    (a). being indiscriminate   (b). being critical

69. Do you prefer the
    (a). planned event   (b). unplanned event

70. Do you tend to be more
    (a). deliberate than spontaneous
    (b). spontaneous than deliberate

In the space provided below please answer the following two questions regarding your work experience prior to DDS.

1. Prior to DDS, what was your previous work? For instance, clerical, retail, social work, nursing, sales, student.

2. In your previous work, did you utilize a computer to complete your tasks? For instance, did you have a Legacy system such as Iron Data that you input your data, or did you use programs such as Microsoft Office to document and plan?

APPENDIX B

Cover Letter

_____

From: Scales, Leon DDS Admin Office Richmond
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 11:59 AM
Subject: Mini Retention Study

The agency has long been faced with the dilemma of how best to recruit, select, train, and retain the most viable candidates for Disability Determination Examiner Positions. We strive to identify those who will be able to adapt to the growing needs of the agency and the DDS environment, manage challenging production expectations, and produce quality claims in the most efficient manner possible.

The purpose of this correspondence is to encourage your full participation in a "mini recruit and retention study". The study is an effort to explore, and if possible, identify a profile most suited for success in the role of Disability Determination Examiner.   Your responses to the survey will be held confidential, information presented to researchers will only contain your responses and no identifying information will be shared, not even with local management staff. Any data representation will only be reported in aggregate.

In the current SSA/DDS environment our workload is at an all-time high level while resources are very limited. Personnel is our largest and most important resource, warranting additional efforts to enable us to recruit and retain the most viable Disability Examiner candidates. The potential benefits of this research are many and extend beyond the DDS; the resources committed to recruit, hire, train, and retain staff are great and have a significant impact at the state and federal levels.

Please complete the attached survey, highlight your answers by changing the font color to green, save it, attach it in an email, and submit it to this |S88Survey mailbox (you can copy paste the mailbox name into the "to" line in the email or just type it in as written).

Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks in advance for your participation!

Leon Scales

Virginia DDS Director **Social Security AdministrationVirginia Department For Aging And Rehabilitative Services**

APPENDIX C

Follow-Up Email Request

From: Scales, Leon DDS Admin Office Richmond
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2012 4:27 PM
Subject: RE: Mini Retention Study

Don't forget to respond to this survey…it would be ideal if we could get responses by COB 10/26/2012 (this Friday).

Thanks in advance,

Leon Scales

Virginia DDS Director

Social Security Administration

Virginia Department For Aging And Rehabilitative Services