Is Personality Related to Assessment Centre Performance? It is dependent on age?

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Assessment Centres (ACs) are a commonly utilized tool for organizations in the selection and development of leadership talent. There is evidence demonstrating the utility of ACs as a work sample measure of work performance with favourable evidence in predicting the future work performance of the participants who have been assessed.

There is also evidence that personality is linked to the various areas that are commonly assessed by ACs. Of particular interest are the personality dimensions of Exhibition, Dominance and Achievement as these have been shown to predict leadership effectiveness.

Research conducted has shown that age can act as a moderating influence on personality and AC performance (Krajewski, Goffin, Rothstein & Johnston, 2007). Simply put, age influences the relationship between personality and AC performance. It is demonstrated that for Exhibition and Dominance, older managers seem to display these characteristics in a fashion that is more mature and effective at the workplace. The caveat to this is that age per se may not be the correct "term" but of greater importance is that years of relevant experience may be the better indicator regarding this relationship between personality and AC performance. Even so, ACs have nevertheless also demonstrated utility in assessing and predicting performance of individuals across age differences.

Krajewski, H.T., Goffin R.D., Rothstein M.G. & Johnston N.G. (2007). Is Personality Related to Assessment Centre Performance? That Depends on How Old You Are. Journal of Business Psychology, 22, 21-33.