

Psychometric Assessments for Job Applications

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Recruitment process

When applying for jobs you may come across some if not all of the following stages in the recruitment process:

- Completion of an online application form
- Submission of a CV and cover letter
- Tests (assessing skills appropriate for the job)*
- Interview (face to face, video or telephone)
- Assessment Centre (online/virtual or actual)

* Tests can occur at any stage of the recruitment process

Current innovations in recruitment

Some of the large organisations in the UK that recruit students and graduates to internships, placements or graduate schemes are using new methods of assessment during selection e.g.

- Online games & videos mirroring typical work scenarios & requiring decisions
- Video interviews recorded online by the applicants & reviewed by the recruiter

Common assessment tools

- Ability or Aptitude Test

Including numerical reasoning, verbal reasoning, non-verbal reasoning

- Personality Questionnaire

Less commonly used in recruitment

- Situational Judgement Test (SJT)

Usually designed specifically for the needs of the job

Companies that produce tests

Employers often buy tests produced by external organisations. Some of these organisations are:

Gartner
(SHL)

IBM Kenexa

Saville
Assessment

TalentQ

Cubiks

TalentLens

Ability Tests

- Measure a specific ability or abilities required for a job
- Often bought from specialist companies

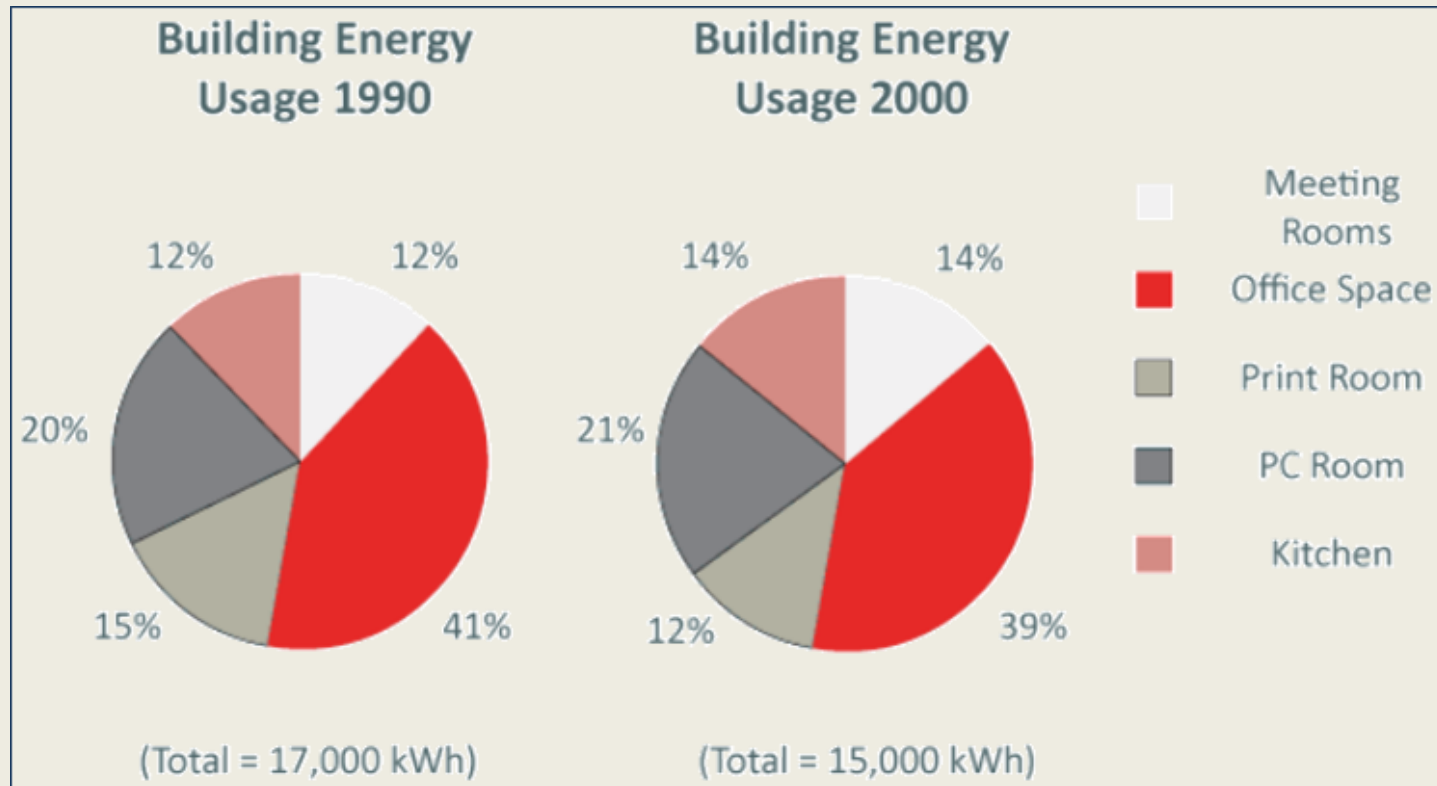
Examples:

- numerical reasoning
- verbal reasoning
- non-verbal reasoning (diagrammatical, inductive, logical)
- critical thinking

Examples of Ability Tests

- Numerical Reasoning
 - Tests are usually online and have a time limit.
 - Some tests do not have a time limit for the test as a whole, but each question is timed, e.g. <https://www.trytalentq.com/>
 - Maths skills tested may include calculation of percentages, fractions and ratios
 - Questions often require interpretation of data in tables or graphs

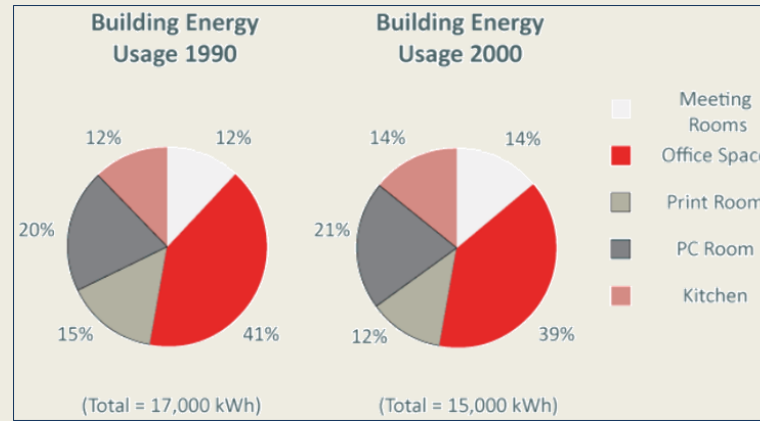
Between 1990 and 2000, what was the decrease in energy use for the PC Room, Meeting Rooms and Office Space combined?



- a) 1,310 kWh b) 1,400 kWh c) 1,450 kWh d) Cannot say

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Between 1990 and 2000, what was the decrease in energy use for the PC Room, Meeting Rooms and Office Space combined? - **ANSWER**



The graphs give percentages, with the total shown at the bottom. Don't waste time by working out the kWh value for each of the PC Room, the Meeting Rooms and the Office Space. Use the percentages and add up at the end:

In 1990:

$$(20\% + 12\% + 41\%) \text{ of } 17,000 \text{ kWh} = 0.73 \times 17,000 = 12,410 \text{ kWh}$$

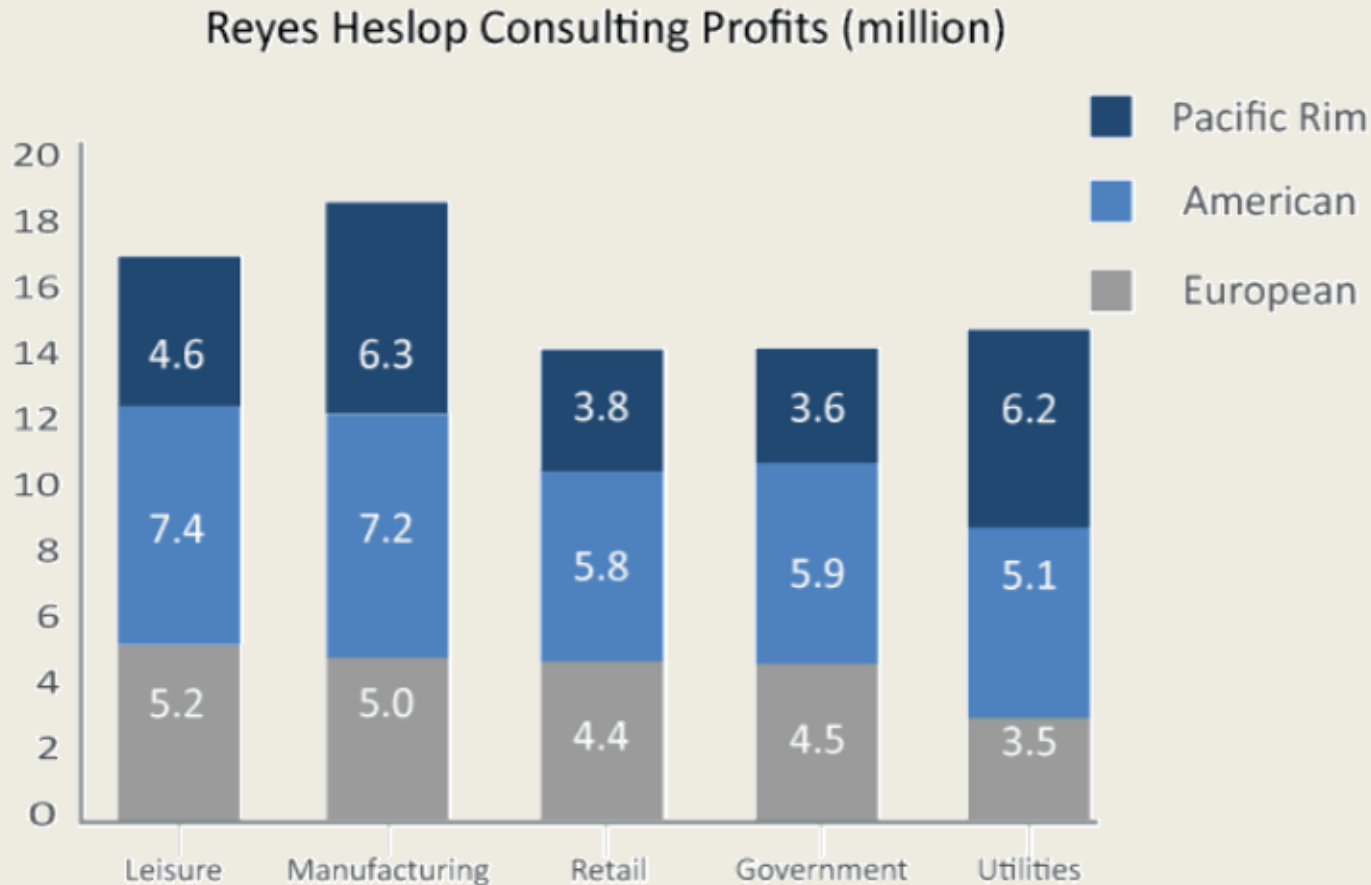
In 2000:

$$(21\% + 14\% + 39\%) \text{ of } 15,000 \text{ kWh} = 0.74 \times 15,000 = 11,100 \text{ kWh}$$

Which is a decrease of **1,310 kWh**.

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

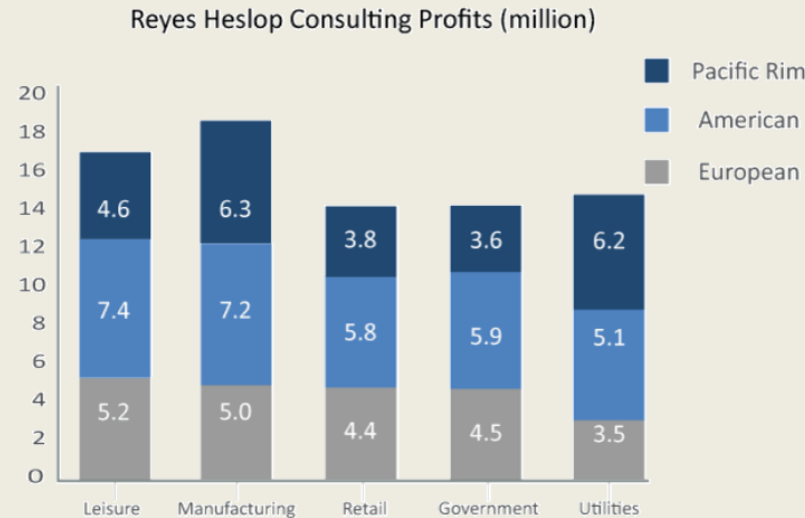
Which sector represents approximately 19% of the profits from the five sectors shown?



a) Leisure b) Manufacturing c) Retail d) Government e) Utilities

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Which sector represents approximately 19% of the profits from the five sectors shown? - **ANSWER**



- Calculate profit for each sector:
Leisure $5.2 + 7.4 + 4.6 = 17.2$
Retail $4.4 + 5.8 + 3.8 = 14$
Utilities $3.5 + 5.1 + 6.2 = 14.8$
Manufacturing $5 + 7.2 + 6.3 = 18.5$
Government $4.5 + 5.9 + 3.6 = 14$
- Total profit from the five sectors is $17.2 + 18.5 + 14 + 14 + 14.8 = 78.5$.
- **19% of 78.5** $= 0.19 \times 78.5 = 14.915$.
- The sector with the profit closest to 14.915 is **Utilities**. Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Examples of Ability Tests

- Verbal Reasoning
 - Written passage followed by a question with possible True, False or Cannot Say responses
 - Measure your powers of comprehension, reasoning, and logic

Read the text below and say whether the statement '**An adults' style can sometimes be similar to that of a child's.**' is True, False, or you Cannot Say?

If society seems obsessed with youth, it is at least partly because companies are. Like it or not, the young increasingly pick the styles and brands that trickle up to the rest of the population. Nike, Abercrombie & Fitch and Timberland first found success with the young, and when that clientele tired of them the companies felt the loss deeply. Now that adults are no longer necessarily expected to act and look grown-up, parents and children can be found listening to exactly the same music, playing the same computer games, watching the same TV programmes, and wearing the same brands of clothes and shoes.

a) True b) False c) Cannot say

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Read the text below and say whether the statement '*An adults' style can sometimes be similar to that of a child's.*' is True, False, or you Cannot Say? - ANSWER

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Answer:

True - The sentence that proves this is '*parent and children can be found listening to exactly the same music, playing the same videogames... and wearing the same brands of clothes and shoes [as the young]*'.

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Read the text below and say whether the statement ***'Adults wear the same shoes as children because they want to look younger.'*** is True, False, or you Cannot Say?

If society seems obsessed with youth, it is at least partly because companies are. Like it or not, the young increasingly pick the styles and brands that trickle up to the rest of the population. Nike, Abercrombie & Fitch and Timberland first found success with the young, and when that clientele tired of them the companies felt the loss deeply. Now that adults are no longer necessarily expected to act and look grown-up, parents and children can be found listening to exactly the same music, playing the same computer games, watching the same TV programmes, and wearing the same brands of clothes and shoes.

a) True b) False c) Cannot say

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

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Answer:

Cannot say – the passage does not say why adults and children sometimes end up with the same styles. The passage implies that by listening to the same music and wearing the same clothes as young people, adults are not considered grown-up. But the passage does not say why some adults adopt this style (e.g. it could be price, comfort, or any number of reasons other than wanting to look younger, but we are not told).

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Read the text below and say whether the statement
'The profits of Timberland are not affected by young customers.' is True, False, or you Cannot Say?

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a) True b) False c) Cannot say

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

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Answer:

False - The passage says that when '*when that clientele [the young] tired of them the companies felt the loss deeply*'. Meaning that Timberland's profits are in fact closely affected by the purchasing habits of the young.

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Examples of Ability Tests

- **Non-Verbal Reasoning**
 - Are often used to assess ability to problem solve & to think analytically
 - The task is often to identify a missing shape in the sequence or decide which configuration should come next
 - Examples include: diagrammatic reasoning, logical reasoning, inductive reasoning

Which set does the Figure belong to?

Set A



Set B



Figure



a) Set A

b) Set B

c) Neither set A nor set B

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Which set does the Figure belong to? - **ANSWER**

Set A



Set A: Each box contains an even number of stars.

Set B



Set B: Each box contains an odd number of stars.

Figure

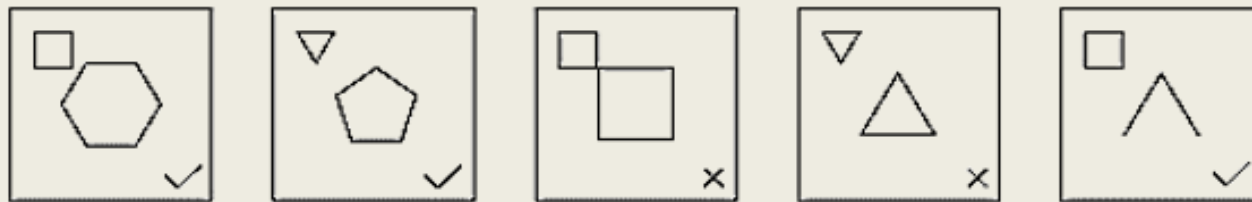


The Figure contains an even number of stars.

Answer: The Figure belongs to **set A**.

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Inductive Reasoning Example Question



A

B

C

D

E

Which of the five A-E figures is next in the sequence?

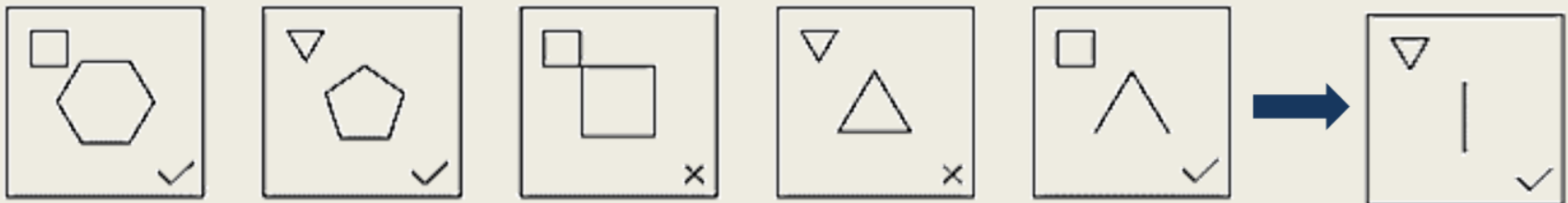
Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Inductive Reasoning - ANSWER

1st Rule: The shape in the centre comprises 1 fewer straight line every time.

2nd Rule: The shape in the top left alternates between being a triangle and being a square.

3rd Rule: There is a cross when both shapes have the same number of sides, and a tick when they have different numbers of sides.



Answer: B

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Personality Questionnaires

- Designed to help you to clarify your personality type or personality traits
- Used by some employers as part of selection, but not as frequently as ability tests

Examples:

- Myers-Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI)
- Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ)

Personality Questionnaires

Examples:

- <https://www.assessmentday.co.uk/personality-questionnaire.htm>
- <https://www.cebglobal.com/shldirect/en/practice-tests>

Situational Judgement Tests

- Designed to assess your ability to make decisions when faced with situations or problems at work.
- Usually designed specifically for an employer, so practice versions are limited.
- Usually designed for specific types of work.
- SJTs are relatively new forms of assessment in selection but are becoming popular.

Review the following situation and four possible responses. Indicate which one you believe to be the response to the situation you would be most likely to make.

Situation:

You are a Retail Assistant working in the Saldringham branch of More Than Pens plc, a national stationer's chain.

You are doing a stint on the till on a busy Saturday afternoon. You are working on the main bank of tills at the exit to the shop where customers from all parts of the shop can go to purchase their items. Suddenly the credit card transaction system stops working and one of the team leaders tells you that it will be 15 minutes until the system provider can fix the problem. There is a long queue of customers waiting.

Responses:

- a) Talk to the team leader and suggest that someone goes down the line of customers informing them of the problem and how long it will take to resolve. This will save customers queuing up in case they have no cash on them.
- b) Continue serving customers and apologise about the lack of availability of credit card payment.
- c) Ask the team leader what to do.
- d) Take the opportunity to take your afternoon tea break as it appears that most customers will have to come back later when the system is working again.

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Review the following situation and four possible responses. Indicate which one you believe to be the response to the situation you would be most likely to make. - ANSWER

a) Talk to the team leader and suggest that someone goes down the line of customers informing them of the problem and how long it will take to resolve. This will save customers queuing up in case they have no cash on them.

This is the most effective response as there is nothing you can do to solve the IT problem yourself but you can give customers as much information as possible so that they can decide whether to continue queuing up or whether to come back later. Checking with the team leader is also appropriate as he or she may have a different plan and you don't want to clash.

Source: www.assessmentday.co.uk

Preparing for tests

- Research the type of test you have to take
 - Try an appropriate practice test
 - Identify any weaknesses & address them
 - Take a practice test again
 - Have you improved?

Preparing for tests – ability tests

Q: *Not answering many questions but getting most or all answers correct?*

A: Take more practice tests and focus on increasing your speed.

Q: *Answering most or all of the questions but getting a low score?*

A: Work on your accuracy e.g. check your answers

Q: *Lacking knowledge/skills?*

A: Refresh your skills e.g. revise basic maths (ratios, percentages and fractions are commonly used), learn scanning techniques to extract key information from text.

Identifying weaknesses

– Situational Judgement Tests

Q: *Low score?*

A:

- Use only the information provided in the question.
- Read the question and information carefully before answering.
- Ensure you know the competencies required for success in the job.

Understanding Personality Questionnaires

- These are not tests
- It is less likely that there are 'right' or 'wrong' answers
- Answering honestly is usually recommended
- Follow the instructions

General Practice Test Sites

www.assessmentday.co.uk

www.graduatesfirst.com

- Answers are provided after taking each test, so you can analyse where you are going wrong.
- Tips and advice are also provided.
- Both sites include practice tests of non-verbal reasoning

Practice Tests Offered by Test Producers

CEB Gartner (SHL)

<https://www.cebglobal.com/shldirect/en/practice-tests>

Cubiks

<https://practicetests.cubiks.com/>

Talentlens (Pearson)

<https://www.talentlens.co.uk/practice-aptitude>

Saville Assessment

<https://www.savilleassessment.com/PracticeTests>

TalentQ

<https://www.trytalentq.com/>

Capp

<http://practice.cappassessments.com/>

You may have to
register & create a
password before
taking a practice
test

Sources of Support in Your University

- Maths support service
- English language support service
- Your careers service might offer:
 - Information about taking tests on their websites
 - Opportunities to practise tests and receive feedback
 - Discussion with an adviser to address your concerns
 - Links to websites with practice tests

Other Useful Resources

- Online courses e.g.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/numeracy-skills>

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/workplace-english>

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/logical-and-critical-thinking>

- Books e.g.

‘How to Pass Graduate Psychometric Tests’ M Byron

‘How to Pass Diagrammatic Reasoning Tests’ M Byron

Thank you

Any questions ???