

INFORMATION BRIEF

# Workplace Alignment Assessment (WAA)



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Find candidates who are aligned with your organization

The ideal candidate isn't just someone who will excel in their job; you also need someone who will stick with your organization for the long run as a committed and engaged employee.

The Workplace Alignment Assessment asks candidates to describe their ideal workplace using a standardized set of 20 work factors. For example, do they value job security over advancement? Or recognition over compensation? The assessment compares these preferences to an organizational profile that describes what the organization offers employees. By selecting candidates whose work preferences are aligned with what the organization provides, you'll build a more engaged, satisfied, and committed workforce.

### MEASURES

Alignment between what a candidate is looking for from their ideal employer and what your organization provides



### PREDICTS

Employee commitment and satisfaction with the organization



### QUESTIONS

Candidates rank 20 work factors into five importance categories



### TIME

The assessment is untimed and takes around 10 minutes



## Why Assess for Workplace Alignment?

The Workplace Alignment Assessment (WAA) draws on over sixty years of research demonstrating the benefits of alignment between an individual's preferences and the organizational environment. Multiple large-scale studies<sup>1</sup> of person-organization alignment involving tens of thousands of individuals have shown that alignment is associated with:

- ✓ Increased commitment to the organization.
- ✓ Increased satisfaction with the job.
- ✓ Decreased likelihood of turnover.
- ✓ Increased tenure.
- ✓ Less distress at work.

Both employees and organizations benefit when alignment is considered in the hiring process. Employees benefit because they are more likely to find that their most important workplace needs are met within the organization. This reduces distress and increases satisfaction. The organization benefits because the employees are more likely to remain committed and engaged in the organization for longer periods.

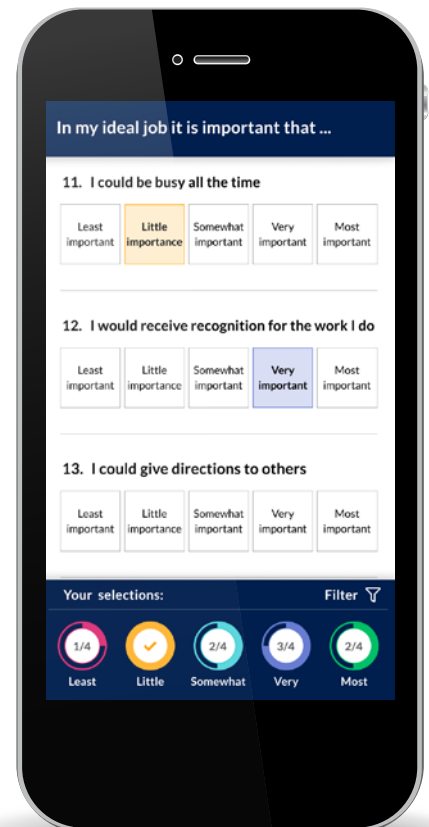
## How does the WAA Work?

The WAA focuses on 20 key work factors that have been shown to be important drivers of organizational commitment and satisfaction. The work factors addressed in the WAA are based on the Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment<sup>2</sup> and are aligned with the work factors used to describe occupations in the U.S. Department of Labor's O\*NET® database.

Because the WAA evaluates alignment between a candidate's preferences and the organizational environment, it is a two-sided assessment.

- ✓ The supervisor of the job that the successful candidate will be placed in sorts the same 20 work factors into five importance categories, based on the extent to which the organization provides or emphasizes those work factors in the role.
- ✓ Candidates sort the 20 work factors into five importance categories, based on how important they are to them in their ideal job.

The ranking task is simple, intuitive, and can be completed on any device, including mobile devices. It is an untimed task and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.



1 Hoffman, B. J., & Woehr, D. J. (2006). A Quantitative review of the relationship between person-organization fit and behavioral outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68(3), 389 – 399.

Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: a meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-group and person-supervisor fit. *Personnel Psychology*, 58, 281-342

2 Davis, R. V. (2005). The Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Career Development and Counseling: Putting Theory and Research to Work* (pp. 3 – 23). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

# Reporting

Once both the candidate and the supervisor (or other organizational representative) have completed their ranking tasks, the WAA calculates the degree of alignment between the candidate's preferences and the organizational environment. This degree of alignment is reported as a percentile figure. A percentile of 62%, for example, indicates that the degree of alignment between the candidate and the organization is higher than 62% of other likely candidates.

## Lisa Sample

Position: Sample Test Portfolio  
Test Date: Oct 12, 2021  
Test Event ID: ABC-1def-gH23-jK4mN | Test Ver: 2.0



### PERSONALITY TEST

#### Workplace Alignment Assessment

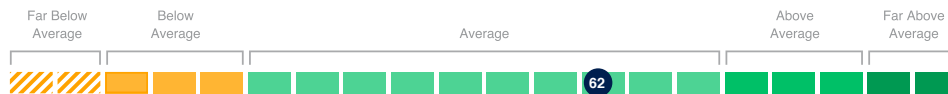
This assessment measures the degree of alignment between a candidate's work-related preferences and the environment provided by the organization. Candidates are more likely to be committed to their employer and put in extra effort during their time at work when their most valued needs and preferences are emphasized by the organization.

#### Results Summary

**62nd Percentile**

Average

#### Results Summary

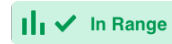


#### Selected Score Range



#### Sample Score Range

Overall Percentile: 50-100



Lisa's overall Workplace Alignment score was higher than 62% of other people who have completed this assessment previously, which indicates that they are likely to:

- Feel a sense of alignment between what's important to them in their ideal job and what's provided by the organization
- Experience a sense of commitment to the organization
- Generally go above and beyond role requirements to benefit the organization
- Generally feel satisfied with the working environment

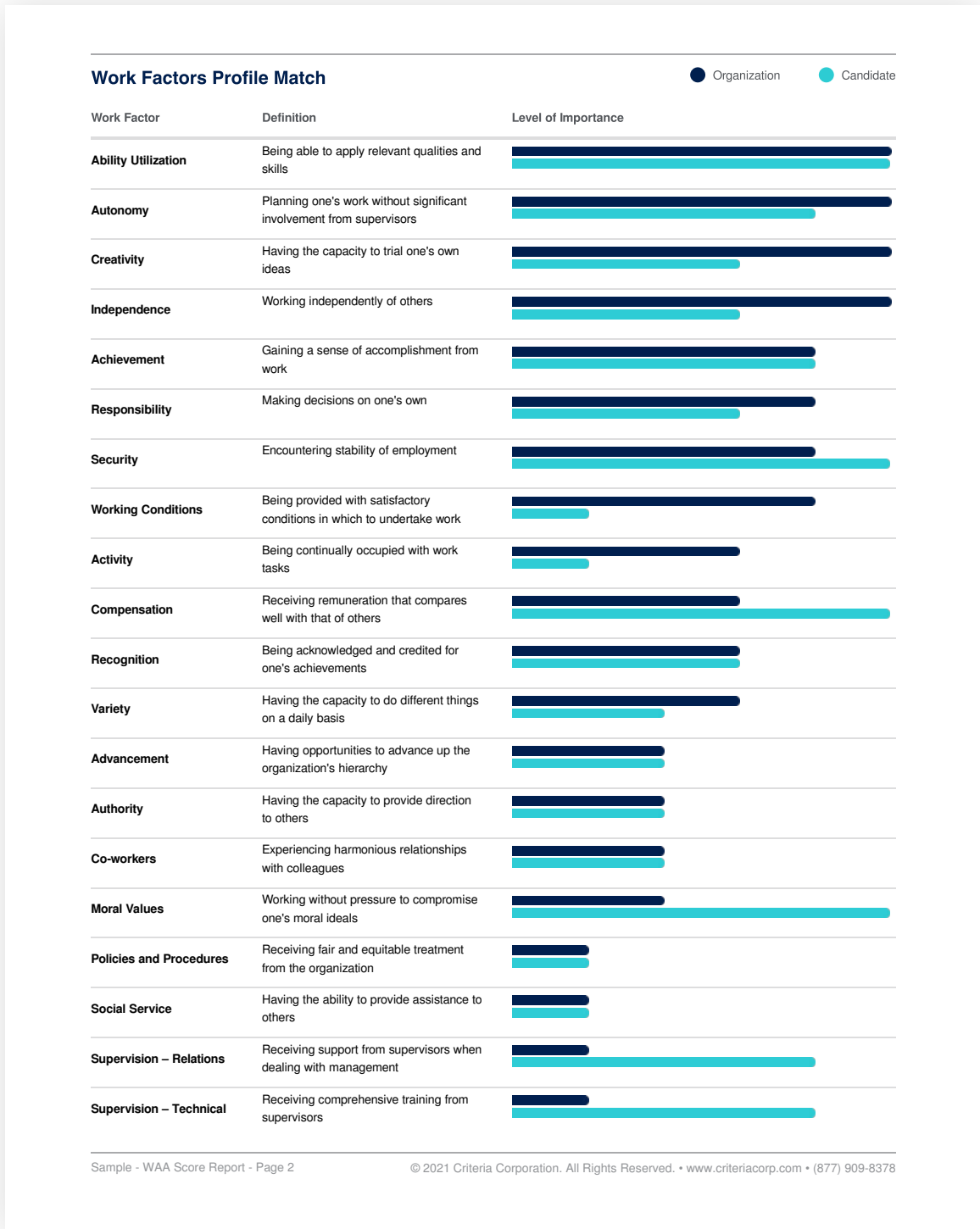
#### Results Details

Of the 20 Work Factors Lisa was asked to rank, the top four were:

- Ability Utilization: Being able to apply relevant qualities and skills
- Moral Values: Working without pressure to compromise one's moral ideals
- Compensation: Receiving remuneration that compares well with that of others
- Security: Encountering stability of employment



The WAA report also provides a detailed breakdown of alignment levels across each of the 20 work factors. This more detailed alignment map is useful in highlighting work factors where there is a potential unmet need. For example, if a candidate has indicated that they highly value the opportunity to work independently of others, but the workplace does not provide this kind of work, then the report will highlight this area as a potential source of misalignment. The report will also provide suggested interview questions to assist the hiring manager to exploring the issue.



[View an example candidate score report here.](#)



## Validation and Psychometric Summary

The WAA was constructed to provide a reliable, valid, and fair indication of alignment between individual work preferences and the organizational environment.

The candidate-facing side of the WAA was derived from the O\*NET® Work Importance Locator (WIL)<sup>3</sup> and uses the same item content. The ranking procedure used by candidates to complete the WAA is the same as the ranking procedure used in the WIL, with adaptations to allow for device-agnostic on-line delivery.

Research using the WIL shows that individual preference rankings are relatively stable over time. Specifically, a work factor ranked in the top importance category had an 80% probability of being within the top one or two importance categories when the assessment was completed again several weeks later.

The WAA itself was validated through a series of three studies involving 1,512 individuals from 50 different organizations. In these studies, the alignment percentiles from the WAA were correlated with ratings of job satisfaction and commitment made by employees on the job.

The correlation between the WAA alignment percentile and concurrently measured employee commitment was 0.25 ( $p < .05$ ).

The correlation between WAA alignment assessed during the recruitment process and satisfaction with working conditions, assessed 3 to 12 months after employment, was 0.32 ( $p < .05$ ). Corrections for unreliability in the criterion and range restriction increased this predictive validity of the assessment to 0.35.

### Normative Data

The Alignment percentiles used by the WAA are based on a normative dataset consisting of WAA rankings and alignment scores for 7,396 individuals. The sample includes people who applied to a wide variety of organizations in 20 different industry groups.

### Promoting Diversity

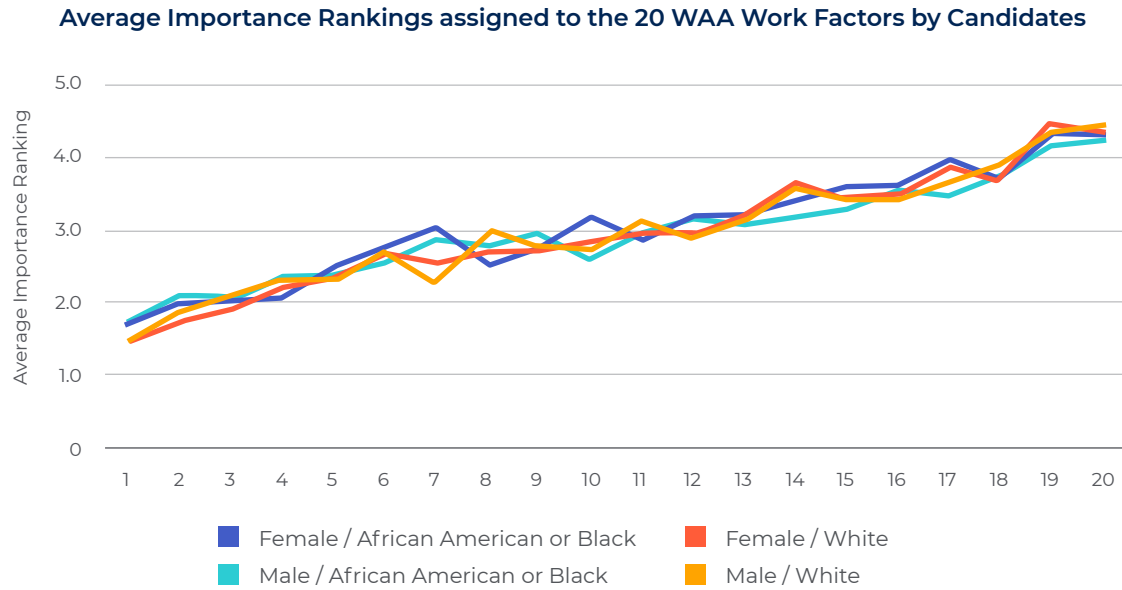
Using the WAA in the hiring process can help an organization to promote alignment between the organization and employees in terms of work needs and preferences, while also promoting diversity in age, gender, ethnicity, and racial categories.

Criteria's research shows that when alignment is examined based on what a candidate is looking for from their ideal employer, we see stark differences between individuals, but almost no differences on average between groups. Differences in WAA alignment percentiles between African American / Black, Asian, Hispanic and White applicants are three percent on average. Differences between female and male applicants are less than one percent on average, and differences between candidates over and under the age of 40 are less than one percent on average.

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<sup>3</sup> McCloy, R., Waugh, G., Medsker, G., Wall, J., Rivkin, D., & Lewis, P. (1999) Development of the O\*NET™ Paper-and-Pencil Work Importance Locator. National Centre for O\*NET Development

The figure below shows the average importance rankings assigned to the 20 WAA Work Factors by Black, White, Male, and Female candidates, drawn from an archival database of over 24,000 candidates. As can be seen, the average rankings supplied by the different groups differ only marginally and inconsistently between the groups.



Users of the WAA therefore find that the assessment helps them bring together a committed, engaged, and diverse set of employees.

## Case Studies

**Federal regulatory authority predicts job performance and career advancement**

[View case study](#)

**Professional services firm hires more diverse and higher performing employees**

[View case study](#)

## Acknowledgment

The WAA uses elements derived from the Workplace Importance Locator developed by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (USDOL / ETA) under the terms of the O\*NET® Tools Developer License ([https://www.onetcenter.org/license\\_tools.html](https://www.onetcenter.org/license_tools.html)). O\*NET® is a trademark of USDOL / ETA. The USDOL / ETA has not approved, endorsed, or tested the WAA

