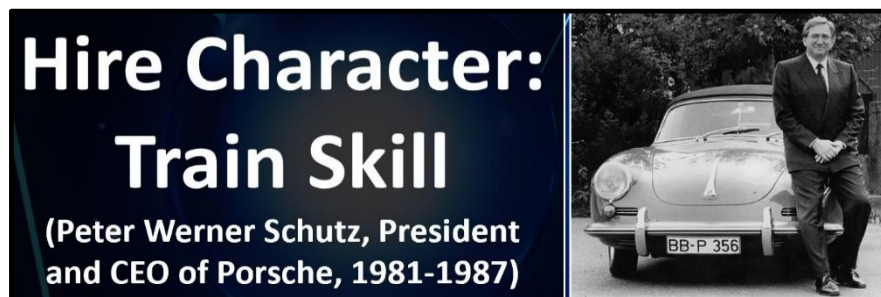




CHARACTER + EXPERIENCE + SKILL = PERFORMANCE
GENERAL POINTS TO PUT CAST ASSESSMENTS INTO CONTEXT

The 1st step in developing a high-performance culture – select on character.
(Owen Eastwood, Leadership Consultant)

Character triumphs over talent.
(James Kerr)



Expanding on the point by Schutz, Randle (2021) claims,

Skill and experience are not necessarily predictive of success, but character is.

The selection and development of people for jobs is one of the most important and challenging tasks facing any organization. W. Edwards Deming, the American business theorist and management consultant, stated (1982, 2000),

What Western industry needs is methods that will improve the outcome. Suggestions follow.

1. Institute education in leadership; obligations, principles, and methods.
2. More careful selection of the people in the first place.
3. Better training and education after selection.
4. A leader, instead of being a judge, will be a colleague, counseling and leading his people on a day-to-day basis, learning from them and with them.

Deming's points 2 and 3 are what the Character Assessment and Selection Tool (CAST) was created for. It has been developed over several years of research and used to specifically assess qualities of character for staff selection and development. The following points are to help put the assessment into context.

1. CAST assesses character qualities. These tend to be underlying aspects that influence the way we go about our lives and work.

The qualities that CAST assess are,

- Growth mindset
- Perseverance
- Ownership
- Sense of purpose
- Supportive - demanding styles in relation to development
- and Resilience

In addition to identifying strengths, vulnerabilities, and areas for improvement, CAST evaluates how various combinations of a person's qualities can be applied to different roles, tasks, and contexts.

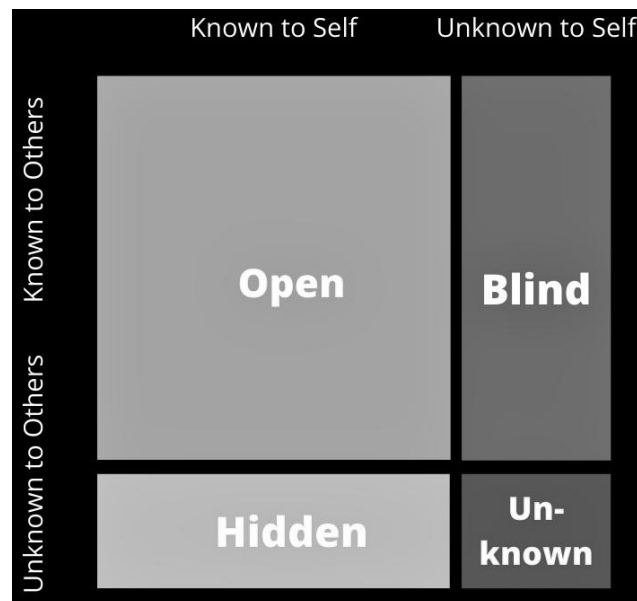
Some of our character qualities are known and conscious, and other parts may be less unconscious. Johari's window (Luft and Ingham, 1955) explains this well.



Our character has a major influence on the way we work and on our development. Kerr (2013, p.12) states,

Our values decide our character. Our character decides our value.

The CAST assessment aims to help make the qualities of character and values more transparent. Using Johari's window, Hires (2021) shows that the aim is to improve our understanding of what is relatively hidden and unknown. In the diagram below, the open section becomes larger, and the unknown, blind spots, and hidden sections become smaller. In the case of CAST, this means that the assessment improves the understanding of the selection panel about the candidate, and if we are thinking about the candidate's development, understanding can be improved on both sides.



2. Character, experience, and skills are distinct aspects of our personality and who we are.

Character development begins from birth. Our experiences and environment are influential on character development, as well as influencing our interests and skills. While character, experiences, and skills are distinct, they may be interrelated and complementary. For example, certain types of character qualities, such as perseverance, are helpful in skills development.

3. Potential is mainly part of our character and is influenced by opportunity. The potential for great achievement can be set before we have developed significantly in our skills. CAST can be used equally well for assessing students as it can for CEOs because it assesses character and development potential.

4. Whilst character can become quite set by adulthood, it is always possible to change and develop. Character is affected by our experiences, and significant events can be both a spur for development as well as a setback. Greater consciousness about our underlying character can help boost our possibility of change and the potential of others to help us develop.

5. Character, skill, and experience are the core elements that combine to influence our ability and level of performance that we are capable of. For example, a young person of 18 years old may have great character qualities, good skills, but little work experience. Therefore, they need time to gain experience before taking on a high level of responsibility.

Another person may have great character and experience, but not a high level of skill, so they could potentially carry a reasonable level of responsibility and be reliable and effective. If we think of the combinations, it is easy to identify the different patterns.

Different situations require a different combination of the core elements. Some situations require a steady hand where character and experience may be the most helpful combination. Other situations may require an extraordinary level of skill to deliver the desired outcome. The highest levels of skill may be most effective where quick results are needed. Character and experience may be more helpful where long-term sustainable results are needed. A bit like the 'tortoise and the hare'.

These are illustrated simplistically below. The different levels of each of the 3 core elements are variable and complex, but it is a useful framework for comparing and evaluating different possibilities.

- A. Character + Experience + Skill = performance
- B. Character + Skill – Experience = great potential
- C. Character – Skill – Experience = good potential
- D. Skill + Experience – Character = may do well, but be unpredictable and not develop so steadily
- E. Skill – Character – Experience = has potential but will need high-quality support
- F. Experience – Character – Skill = can develop, but would need a big commitment

6. Task, Environmental, and Cultural factors. Character is not a matter of whether one is better than another, but what character qualities are suitable for different tasks and environments. For example, high-stress work requires different qualities than low-stress work; some tasks require extreme levels of resilience, etc.

The environmental situation will also influence the type of qualities of character, skills, and experience that are required. For example, a new start-up organization will require different qualities than a well-established one. What is helpful at the beginning may not be so useful later.

Cultural factors are also very relevant to the fit between character and task. Experience and skills may also be relevant to the cultural needs and preferences. Different character qualities lead to distinctly different ways of approaching the organization's primary task. There are usually different ways that could be adopted in approaching the task. For instance, people who are especially strong in the combination of perseverance and growth mindset tend to be quite different from people who are strong in purpose and ownership. Both can be effective ways of approaching the same task. Sometimes it is useful to have a combination of people whose strengths are different but complementary.

Within the organization's primary task, there may also be many different types of roles that require different aspects of character, skills, and experience. It is important to know what kind of character qualities are needed. An assessment profile that looks more positive on paper may not always be better than another for a particular context.

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Patrick Tomlinson - Brief Biography: The primary goal of Patrick's work is the development of people and organizations. Development is the driving force related to positive outcomes in all areas of life and work. It is strongly associated with happiness and fulfilment, which underpins achievement.

His experience spans from 1985, mainly in the field of developing mental health and care services. Beginning as a residential care worker, his roles have included senior leadership positions, consultant, and mentor. He is a qualified clinician and author of numerous publications. Patrick has vast experience in the selection, training, and development of individuals, teams, and organizations. He has carried out longitudinal studies and research on staff retention. He has helped organizations significantly reduce the costs of ineffective staff selection and development. In 2008, Patrick Tomlinson Associates was

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