

# THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COGNITIVE, AFFECTIVE AND CONATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Assessments like the Kolbe A™ Index, CliftonStrengths®, MBTI®, Wonderlic, and DiSC® are measuring different parts of the mind. Discover which one can make your team more productive and less stressed.





## KNOW WHAT YOU NEED

If you're leading a team, you're probably always looking for ways to increase productivity and work more effectively.

Assessments that give insight to make better decisions about your team can be a valuable way to meet your goals. But what type of assessment do YOU need to improve group dynamics, boost employee productivity and team engagement?

Picking the right kind of assessment for your team starts with identifying the type of problem you're trying to solve and knowing which part of the mind will drive the behavior you're looking for.

### **First, did you even know there were three parts of the mind that impact team success?**

What are the Three Parts of the Mind?

Well, the first two you've likely heard of, but the third part is the missing link that most people don't know about but can help drive the most productivity in your workplace.

### **The three parts are:**

- cognitive (thinking)
- affective (feeling)
- conative (doing)

# Three Parts of the Mind

**Cognitive** assessments evaluate your knowledge and skills — how smart somebody is and what they know.

## **Why use a cognitive assessment – an IQ or skills test?**

Cognitive assessments, like the Wonderlic Cognitive Ability Test, help you understand what your people know or their general ability to reason. It's unusual to use these types of assessments in a group or team setting.

On an individual level, a cognitive assessment helps leaders understand where members of their team may need some additional training or experience to fill any gaps. The reality is that some of the brightest people don't always get a lot done and hiring a team of super-smart people doesn't mean your team will function well, and that's why leaders look beyond cognitive assessments.

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**Affective** assessments evaluate your personality, preferences, and motivations — someone's interpersonal skills.

## **Why use an affective assessment — a personality test?**

Most of the popular assessments on the market are measuring the affective part of the mind. These assessments are useful for understanding what motivates a team member, knowing what their values are, and how they prefer to interact with others (e.g., are they an introvert or extrovert?).

So, if you're having issues on a team with one or a few individuals and you think it's driven by a clash of values or what each person sees as important, or how they prefer to interact, you may use an affective assessment, such as CliftonStrengths® assessment, or Predictive Index® or even DiSC® and Enneagram.

These assessments are great for spotting differences in values or interpersonal skills, but in terms of reliability, they often come up short because a person's likes, dislikes, preferences, and even motivations will change over time.

# Three Parts of the Mind

A **conative** assessment evaluates your instinctive talents — the way you naturally take action to do your job, and the only assessment available that measures this is the Kolbe A™ Index.

## Why use a conative assessment?

The conative part of the mind will help you predict how your team will complete tasks when they're striving. In other words, a conative assessment will tell you specifically how a person takes action, regardless of their personality or cognitive abilities.

The Kolbe A™ Index is used by people leading teams of all sizes to understand how their people make decisions, solve problems and work together with others. This conative assessment is much more reliable than other assessments and you can count on the results for a lifetime. So, if you have hired somebody who is super smart and fits in with the company in terms of their interpersonal skills, but they're just not doing the job how you need it to be done, there's likely a conative mismatch.

Unlike affective assessments, discovering the conative part of the mind helps a team leader understand how their team will execute in specific domains (such as dealing with details, organization, uncertainty, and tangible solutions), so it can be used for improving team productivity, team communication, job alignment, and even hiring new team members.

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## Bottom line, should you use an assessment to improve team productivity?

*Yes. Maybe a few of them.*

A team leader can be exponentially more effective by understanding how their team members operate in all three parts of the mind. If you truly want to improve team productivity and employee engagement, you'll explore how assessments can help.



# ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

## *For Team Leaders*

Check the boxes below next to questions you need answered to identify which type of assessment can help you form a more productive team.

### Thinking (Cognitive)

What are this person's skills, knowledge, or experience? Cognitive assessments tend to be industry specific and could answer questions like:

- Does this person have the proper competencies and training to do this job?
- Is this person smart enough to keep up with the subject matter at this organization?
- Does this person have the cognitive ability to learn more and maintain a certain level of expertise?

### Feeling (Affective)

What values and personality traits might be motivating to this person?

Affective assessments tend to help individuals understand their own motivations, and may answer questions like:

- How can I tell if this person enjoys working with others or prefers working alone?
- Is this person motivated by external praise and team success, or by their own internal drive to succeed?
- Does this person's values (honesty, fairness, and responsibility) align with the company and job?

### Doing (Conative)

What instinctive ways of taking action help this person get results? A conative assessment tends to help both individuals and teams execute at higher levels, and could answer questions like:

- How can I tell if I have the right people in the right roles based on the tasks required by the job?
- I hired somebody who is very smart and motivated, why aren't they more productive and reaching their potential?
- How do these team members handle various methods of problem solving? For example, how will they deal with risk and uncertainty? Are they going to follow our established processes or find shortcuts?

## What are the different types of assessments and companies?

There are a wide variety of assessments on the market and they all measure different things. Only Kolbe Corp measures the conative or “doing” part of the mind.



### Get Immediately Actionable Advice

Only Kolbe measures the part of the mind that predicts how your people take action. The Kolbe System™ will help you be more productive, less stressed, and build teams that get the job done exactly how you need it.

Ask your **Kolbe Certified™ Consultant** how to get started today with the right assessment for your team.