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Profiles International®

# CASE STUDY

Customer Service Company Targets Key Players in the Hospitality Industry



imagine great people®



# ProfileXT<sup>®</sup>, Customer Service Profile<sup>™</sup>

## Customer Service Company Targets Key Players in the Hospitality Industry

A privately held, ultra-luxury hotel management company based in Dallas, Texas operates more than 20 properties around the world, including the U.S., England, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, and the Caribbean, and is also a recognized leader in the resort industry. It has received more than 200 awards and honors from the likes of Travel + Leisure, Conde Nast, and Forbes Traveler magazines.

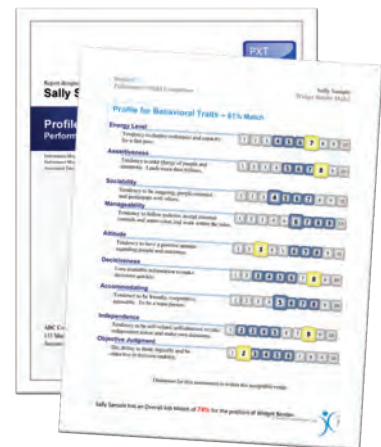
### Overview

In 2004, the organization began looking for a partner to help reduce turnover and increase productivity. The company ultimately selected Profiles International because of its variety of reports, language capabilities, and customer service. The management company uses two products—ProfileXT<sup>®</sup> (PXT) and Customer Service Profile<sup>™</sup> (CSP; hospitality version). The core objectives have stayed in place over the years, including lowering recruiting costs and increasing employee engagement. Today, however, the company's relationship with Profiles has evolved, as has the application of these two tools. As described by the corporate human resources manager, "We have evolved to a point where we can take what we have and leverage it in ways we couldn't have imagined in the beginning."

### ProfileXT<sup>®</sup>

The ProfileXT<sup>®</sup> (PXT) assesses individuals in three key areas—thinking style, behavioral traits, and occupational interests.

- 1. THINKING STYLE**—The corporate human resources manager refers to this as "the smarts." The tool evaluates an individual's verbal and numerical reasoning; the responses are either correct or wrong. A weighted average score is computed based on the type of role. For example, numerical reasoning would not be as critical for an HR role as compared with a role in accounting.



- 2. BEHAVIORAL TRAITS**—Referred to by the company as "the hearts," this part of the tool assesses 10 esoteric "feel good" characteristics. Examples of the behavioral traits include energy, assertiveness, sociability, attitude, decisiveness,

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Companies like the hotel manager **understand** the limitations of an **assessment** and **how the information** will be used.

independence, and objective judgment. These questions are subjective, and there is no correct or wrong answer.

Profiles developed a distortion scale that helps its clients determine if people are being honest with their responses. The tool asks four different questions that evaluate the same trait in determining if an individual



answers them consistently. The more consistent the responses, the higher the distortion scale is—which leads to the conclusion that the individual is being truthful. As the corporate human resources manager stated, “Some candidates will tell you what they think you want to hear. This scale increases the reliability of the responses.”

**3. OCCUPATIONAL INTERESTS**—This section assesses an individual against six areas of interest. As described by the corporate human resources manager, every job has some areas that are more applicable than others. For example, in the human resources profession, “people service” is high. Every job has three areas of interest that are more important and three that are less important. The theory is that, if an individual’s areas of interest match, he/she will be happier in the role, and will be a better performer (See Figure 1, page 7).

### ProfileXT® application

The company uses the ProfileXT® for three distinct purposes—selection of new hires, coaching, and career and succession planning.

#### Selection of New Hires

All management candidates are required to complete the ProfileXT® at the final stages of the interviewing process. A placement report compares the person’s profile against a pre-determined job pattern. The organization initially used the PXT’s predefined job patterns. Over time, however, the company was able to develop its own patterns customized to the company’s culture and positions, so it would have a more accurate tool. As management experienced, the creation of custom job patterns can happen quickly. Every six to twelve months, the company revisits patterns and updates them based on the current top performers and the dynamics with which it is dealing.

The corporate human resources manager shared that 30

percent of the hiring decisions are based on the ProfileXT® report, in addition to interviewing data and feedback, work history, and reference checks.

### Coaching

The hospitality giant progressed from only using the tool for placement to understanding its application in talent management. For existing employees,

a coaching report can be created. If someone is not performing well, the company can run a report to see deficiencies and patterns where the employee is not aligned with the job profile. The report offers tips for managers to help them coach employees into alignment. For example, an HR role requires a numerical reasoning range of five to eight out of 10. The corporate human resources manager shared that her numerical reasoning score was a two; the report gave detailed guidance to her manager on how to coach her to the job pattern.



### Career and Succession

The ProfileXT® report can be used to assess individuals against a future position. The system can take the results of the ProfileXT® assessment and indicate the jobs for which employees are best-suited. For employees, the tool is also useful for helping them make career decisions. If an individual is at a crossroads, the company can give him/her the assessment to find out what jobs he/she is closely aligned with, based on personal interests and styles.

### Customer Service Profile™

The Customer Service Profile™ is similar to the ProfileXT®, and measures behavioral traits, proficiencies in mathematics, and vocabulary. A “thinner” version of the PXT, the CSP measures six behavioral characteristics (instead of 10) that are most relevant to a career in customer service. The six areas are trust, tact, empathy, conformity, focus, and flexibility. The assessment gives the company a good indication of how people will interact with their guests. The CSP report is presented in five sections, including behavioral characteristics (see Figure 2, page 8), proficiencies, job match percentage, and considerations for interviewing (see Figure 3, page 9). In the last section, the company service perspective evaluates the degree of alignment between the individual’s perspective on customer service and that expressed by the company.

Custom  
**job patterns**  
should be  
**evaluated** and  
**updated** to align  
with **company**  
**specific needs** and  
criteria.

The company service perspective asks individuals to indicate if they agree or disagree on 50 statements about the philosophy of guest service. Examples of statements include the following:

- **GENERALLY, WHEN MY PATIENCE** with a guest reaches its limits, the best option is to get my supervisor involved.
- **GUESTS NEED TO FEEL** that I have the capability to serve their needs without supervisory support.
- **IF A GUEST HAS TROUBLE** understanding what I am saying, I should ask someone else to explain it to them.
- **EVEN THOUGH I MAY** personally disagree with a patron, they should always be served cooperatively.

## Customer Service Profile™ Application

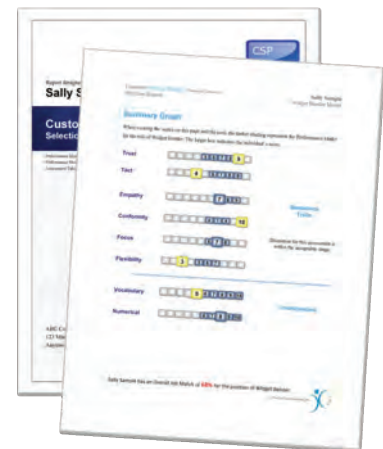
The organization began using the CSP assessment in 2008. The tool is only used for its hourly line-level positions and is utilized more so by its properties than at the corporate office.

The corporate human resources manager admits that the company has not evolved in its use of this tool as much as the ProfileXT®. For example, the hospitality company is just beginning to build custom job patterns. The company divides its jobs into two groups—“front of the house” and “back of the house.” For the “front of the house” positions, it expects better customer service. The company is building patterns for high, medium, and low guest contact. Examples of the segmentation of roles into these three categories include:

- **HIGH**—Doorman, front desk agent, concierge;
- **MEDIUM**—Cafeteria worker, room attendant; and,
- **LOW**—Gardeners, launderers.

## Business results

The company has realized a number of key benefits by using the ProfileXT® and Customer Service Profile™ assessments.

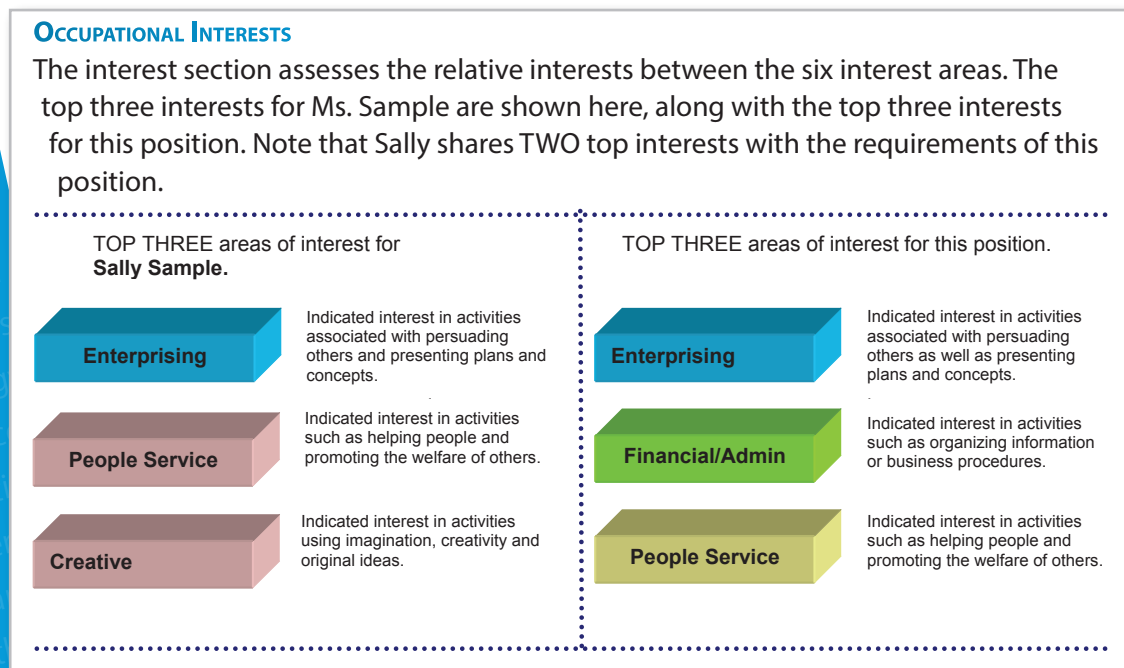


The company has realized a number of key benefits by using the ProfileXT® and Customer Service Profile™ assessments.

- **NEARLY 10 PERCENT MORE** “poorly-matched” employees are being terminated than those who were “well-matched.”
- **AVERAGE TENURE OF EMPLOYEES** who are “well-matched” is a running total 16 months and growing, as compared with only 11 months for “poorly-matched” employees.
- **RECRUITING EXPENSE PER HIRE** dropped by almost 80 percent. The cost for a “well-matched” employee is about \$3,600, versus \$5,200 for a “poorly-matched” employee.
- **“WELL-MATCHED” EMPLOYEES** continue to grow their skills and capabilities, while “poorly-matched” employees’ capabilities are almost stagnant.

The company’s corporate human resources manager says, “We now make more informed hiring decisions, selecting people who will stay with us longer. But it doesn’t end there. Profiles’ products have become an important part of our culture. We use the terminology and the concepts in our performance reviews, our recruiting decisions, and everyday discussions. If we took the products away from our managers, we would be dealing with some disappointed internal guests.”

Figure 1: Sample Text from ProfileXT®

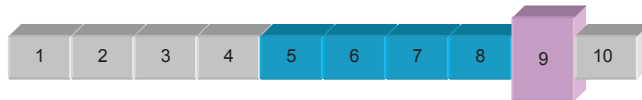


Source: Profiles International, 2013.

Figure 2: Sample Text from “Summary of Behavioral Characteristics”

The darker shading represents the Job Match Pattern for the role of Demonstration Pattern (NOT FOR ACTUAL USE). The larger box indicates her score.

**Trust** – Tendency to hold an unquestioning belief that the motives of others are honorable



**Considerations for Interviewing**

Ms. Sample has a score on the Trust Scale above the Job Match pattern for this position. The issue of interest is whether she is able to discern the motivations of others who may try to take advantage of her. Is too much trust in everyone's motivations a liability that she cannot overcome? A few typical questions may include:

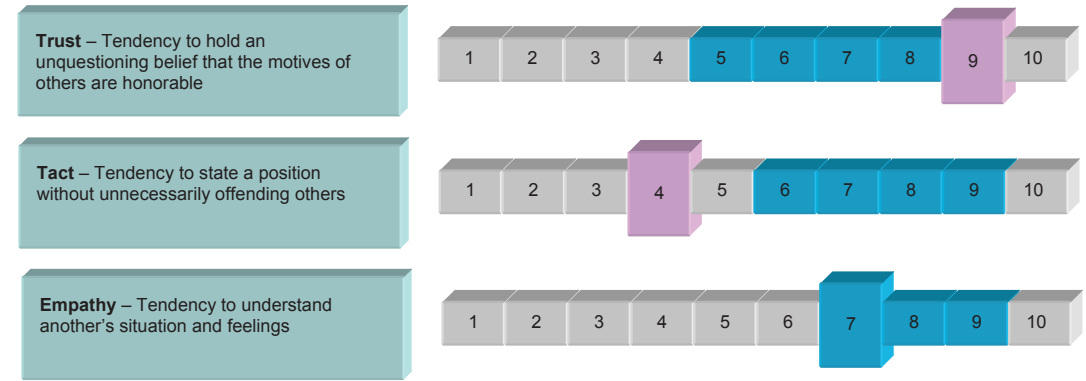
- How do you feel about co-workers who think that most people are basically dishonest? Is there any truth to such an opinion?
- Describe a recent situation in which you discovered that a customer was trying to take advantage of your good nature. Does this happen often?

Source: Profiles International, 2013.



Figure 3: Sample Text from “Considerations for Interviewing”

The darker shading represents the Job Match Pattern for the role of Demonstration Pattern (NOT FOR ACTUAL USE). Ms. Sample scored outside the Job Match Pattern in the areas listed below. Information and interview questions are provided to facilitate the selection process.



Source: Profiles International, 2013.