

# Saville Consulting Wave Professional Styles Handbook

PART 1: OVERVIEW



**First Published in October 2009. Saville Consulting Group, Jersey, CI.  
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ISBN: 978-0-9562875-1-9

## **Acknowledgments**

Saville Consulting would like to thank the many individuals, charities and organizations that helped to make the development of Saville Consulting Wave® possible. We would like to recognize the contribution each person made from the 50 countries involved in the development in giving their time to complete and review the questionnaires. We would also like to thank every person who completed the early versions of Saville Consulting Wave® Styles online and every individual who provided an independent rating which allowed us to select the most valid items for use in Saville Consulting Wave® Styles assessments. Since the initial development of Professional and Focus Styles many more individuals have completed and many more independent ratings of performance at work have been collected allowing us to cross validate the results in other groups. We thank you all.

## **Citation**

Citation: Saville, P., MacIver, R., & Kurz, R. (2009). Saville Consulting Wave® Professional Styles Handbook. Saville Consulting Group, Jersey.

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## 1.0 Introducing Saville Consulting Wave® Styles

Saville Consulting Wave Styles assessments are built around one integrated model based on a rich understanding of personal motives, talents, competency potential and preferred culture. The concepts of motive and talent are central to the structure and have real implications for selection, individual development, career planning and performance management.

Saville Consulting Wave Styles are part of the multidimensional assessment suite. The styles assessments measure motivation, talent, competency potential and preferred culture in one questionnaire. They provide value in both recruitment and development, transforming the quality of the assessment process through the use of technology and well researched, performance-driven models of effectiveness in the workplace.

The Saville Consulting Wave Professional Styles questionnaires have 216 questions measuring 108 behavioral facets. The Professional Styles questionnaire takes about 40 minutes to complete. The ultra-compact Saville Consulting Wave Focus Styles questionnaires have 72 items measuring 36 behavioral facets that were selected for their strong validity. Focus Styles is typically completed in 13 minutes.

Professional Styles have been developed from first principles as work relevant, high validity, international tools available in many languages and suitable for a range of job roles across different industry sectors.

Saville Consulting Wave Styles questionnaires were designed specifically for the internet. Rather than taking a paper questionnaire and putting it on the internet, Wave Styles assessments form an innovative suite of self-report measures developed with the opportunities and challenges of the internet at the heart of their design. They operate as both trait and type instruments and rely on a new hierarchical model of work performance developed by Saville Consulting. The model is aligned to the Big Five personality factors and the Great Eight competencies but provides more information than either of these models.

The development of the questionnaires has benefited from a performance-driven methodology we call "validation-centric." The methodology maximizes the validity of the questionnaires by selecting the most valid items from our item pools so only the best predictors were included in the final questionnaires.

A new dynamic online format integrates rating and ranking responses and results in a combined profile that highlights differences between the ipsative and normative scores on the profile. This new scaling technology also allows unprecedented levels of detail to be tapped, yet with radically reduced completion times.

The research matching the questionnaire to the preferred culture, environment and job demands allows individuals (and their managers) to gain new perspectives on what they can take from their job and what will motivate them.

### Saville Consulting Wave Styles Approach

Saville Consulting Wave Styles are based on a unique perspective which makes it different from many other popular assessments. Some of these unique properties and features of Wave Professional Styles are outlined below.

## 1.1 Performance Driven

Saville Consulting Wave Styles questionnaires have been developed (and continue to be developed) using a variety of development strategies, but at the core is a *performance driven, validation-centric strategy*.

This strategy is based on starting with what a questionnaire is designed to predict, i.e., the criteria. This is to take a *criterion centric* rather than *predictor centric* perspective on measurement. To be *performance driven* is to adopt a validation-centric strategy which selects items with the best criterion-related validity into the questionnaire (i.e., selects the best predictors of the criteria and removes the weaker predictors in order to maximize prediction of the criteria).

For the initial development of the Professional Styles questionnaires, 214 work constructs were written (each with separate motive and talent components, 428 work constructs in total). 108 of these constructs (facets) made it into the final questionnaire with item/facet selection based first and foremost on criterion validity. Items were correlated with external ratings on relevant work behavior competencies as well as overall job proficiency and potential for promotion.

Saville Consulting Wave Styles are therefore based on the work constructs which are the best indicators of performance and underpin not only effectiveness in terms of key behaviors but also in terms of overall performance.

The Criterion Centric and Performance Driven foundation is a central feature of the Wave Styles model. Wave Styles is not like other questionnaires that are based on parsimonious factor structures of self-report variables or solely measuring a particular deductive or theoretical model.

This approach is designed to have the impact of not only making the validity clearer and more transparent to the assessment user but also maximizing the validity and the return on investment from Wave Styles assessments.

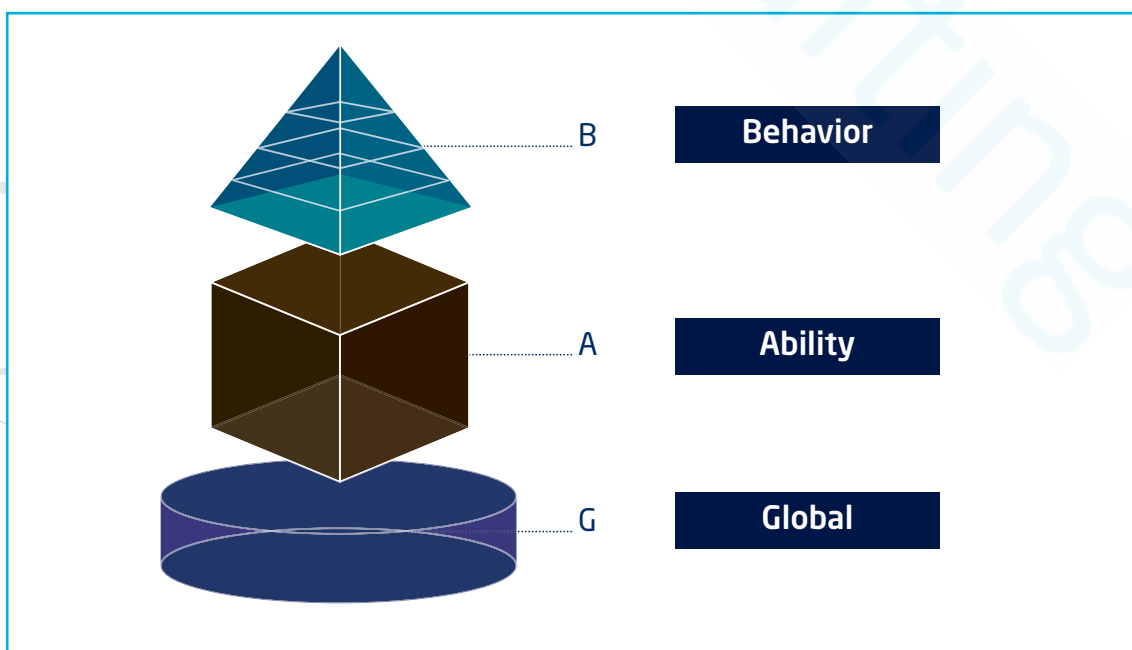
Further discussion on the rationale for performance driven, criterion centric development is given in the Validity chapter.

## 1.2 The Saville Consulting Wave® Performance Culture Framework

At the heart of Saville Consulting Wave assessment tools is the Wave Performance Culture Framework model. The Saville Consulting Wave Performance Culture Framework is an extensively researched model of the key characteristics that underpin success at work across different occupations. It is the starting point for Saville Consulting's new product development, because validation evidence has demonstrated its elements are important correlates of work performance.

The Saville Consulting Wave Performance Culture Framework is made up of Behavior, Ability and Global areas (see Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1 An Overview of the Structure of the Wave Performance Culture Framework**



**'Behavior'** refers to work behavioral styles and competencies. The Saville Consulting Wave model has a hierarchical structure consisting of four clusters, 12 sections, 36 dimensions and 108 facets. These behavioral areas can be directly assessed using Saville Consulting Wave Performance 360. Saville Consulting Wave Professional and Focus Styles have been developed to indicate individuals' potential to perform in these behavioral areas.

**'Ability'** assesses a person's abilities to perform certain intellectual or cognitive tasks. Many areas of cognitive ability can be assessed such as verbal comprehension, numerical reasoning or strengths in working with designs or systems. These abilities can be assessed using the Saville Consulting portfolio of Aptitude Assessments (for more information see [www.savilleconsulting.com](http://www.savilleconsulting.com)). These abilities can also be assessed in practice in the workplace, with a 360 degree approach using the Saville Consulting Wave Performance 360.

**'Global'** describes broad overall effectiveness characteristics of performance at work. These refer to a person's overall performance at work in key areas such as Applying Expertise, Accomplishing Objectives and Demonstrating Potential. The Saville Consulting Wave Performance Culture Framework includes a hierarchical model of Global work performance consisting of three sections and nine dimensions. These can also be assessed with Saville Consulting Wave Performance 360.

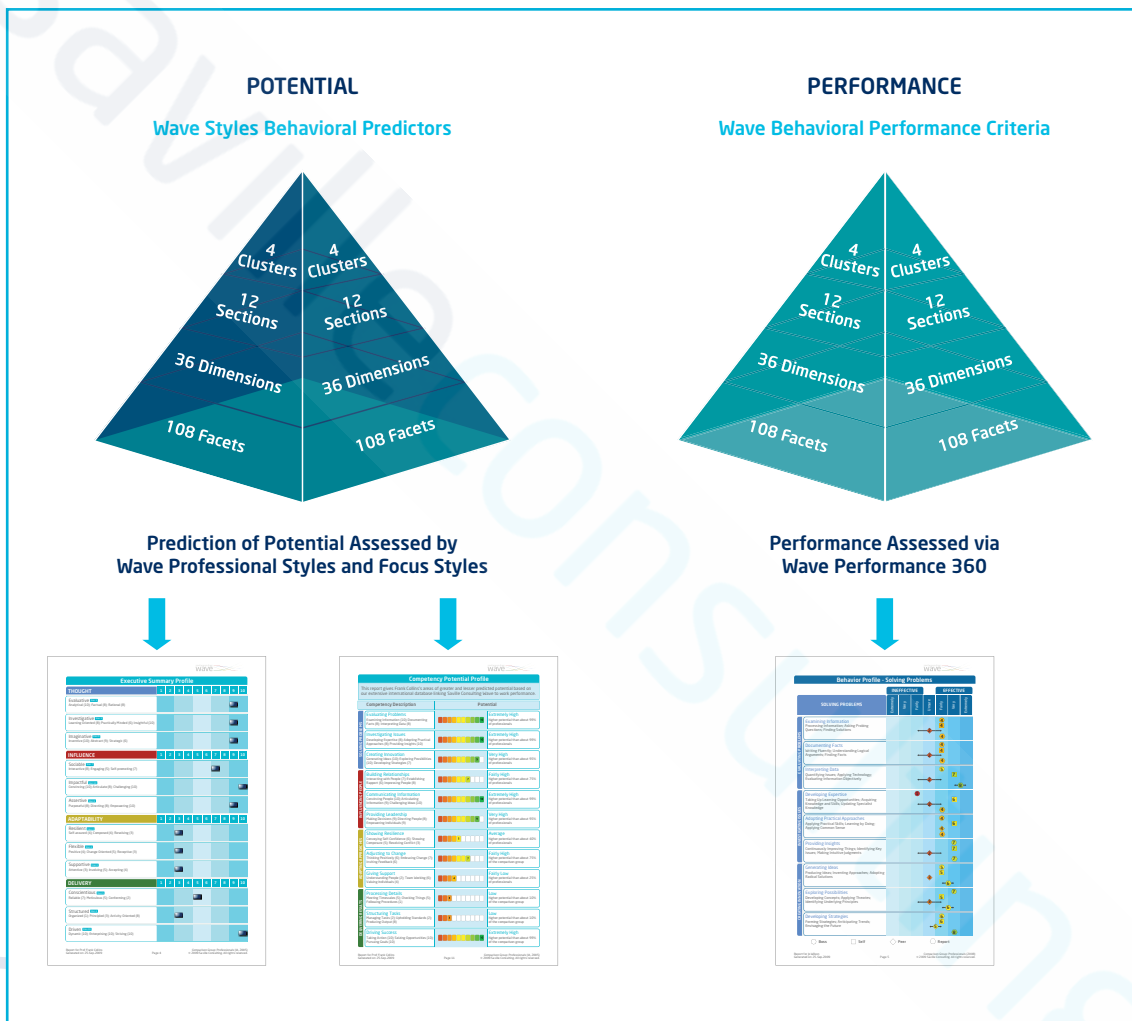
The importance of work requirements for individuals or teams to demonstrate superior performance on these behavior, ability and global elements of effectiveness can be assessed in a small group using a deck of cards from the Saville Consulting Wave Performance Culture Framework. They can also be rated online with Saville Consulting Wave Job Profiler.

For more information on the Saville Consulting Wave Performance Culture Framework please refer to the User Guide provided with the Saville Consulting Performance Culture Card Deck.

## 1.3 Aligned Model of Potential and Performance

The Saville Consulting Wave model of potential and performance consists of two models that are aligned with each other. Work performance criteria are aligned with the Styles predictors that best measure them. Figure 1.2 shows the Saville Consulting Wave Aligned Criterion and Predictor Model.

**Figure 1.2 Saville Consulting Aligned Model of Performance (Criteria) and Potential (Predictors)**



The final model therefore clearly aligns each predictor with a matched criterion. Every component at every level in the criterion (or competency) model has a corresponding component in the predictor (or styles) model. However, the matched components in the two models are not identical. For example, Inventive is one of the 36 Styles dimensions with items selected that specifically predict effectiveness on the competency/criterion of Generating Ideas. Hence, Inventive and Generating Ideas are aligned in the model.

The aligned model is designed to increase the empirical validity available to the user by providing a direct link between the motive and talent components measured in the Wave Styles questionnaires and effective performance at work. This link is explicitly shown in the Wave Styles report.

Cross validated prediction equations of Competency Potential are also provided. This was accomplished using empirical validation evidence and the aligned performance model. The creation of these prediction equations maximizes the validity in predicting a person's competency potential from the Wave Professional Styles assessments. For more information about validity refer to the Validity chapter and for more information about predicting competency potential, refer to the Construction chapter section on 'Development of Competency Potential Equations.'

The aligned model is also designed to help individuals realize and develop their potential. This can be done by contrasting results from the self-report Professional Styles or Focus assessments with the assessment of performance using the Saville Consulting Wave Performance 360.

In addition, the aligned model allows for Job Profiling in organizational competency language down to the 108 facet level using tools such as the Saville Consulting Wave Performance Culture Framework and the Saville Consulting Wave Job Profiler.

## 1.4 Integrated Model and Application

The Saville Consulting Wave Performance Culture Framework is assessed using a variety of tools for a range of human resource applications. Figure 1.3 gives an overview of what is measured by each of the assessment tools.

**Figure 1.3 Integrated Saville Consulting Wave Assessments**



The Applications chapter of this handbook and the Saville Consulting Performance Culture Framework User Guide give more information on the integrated model and its application.

From this point on, this handbook will focus on the Behavior segment of the Wave Performance Culture Framework as predicted by Wave Professional Styles and Wave Focus Styles.

## 1.5 New Levels - New Insights

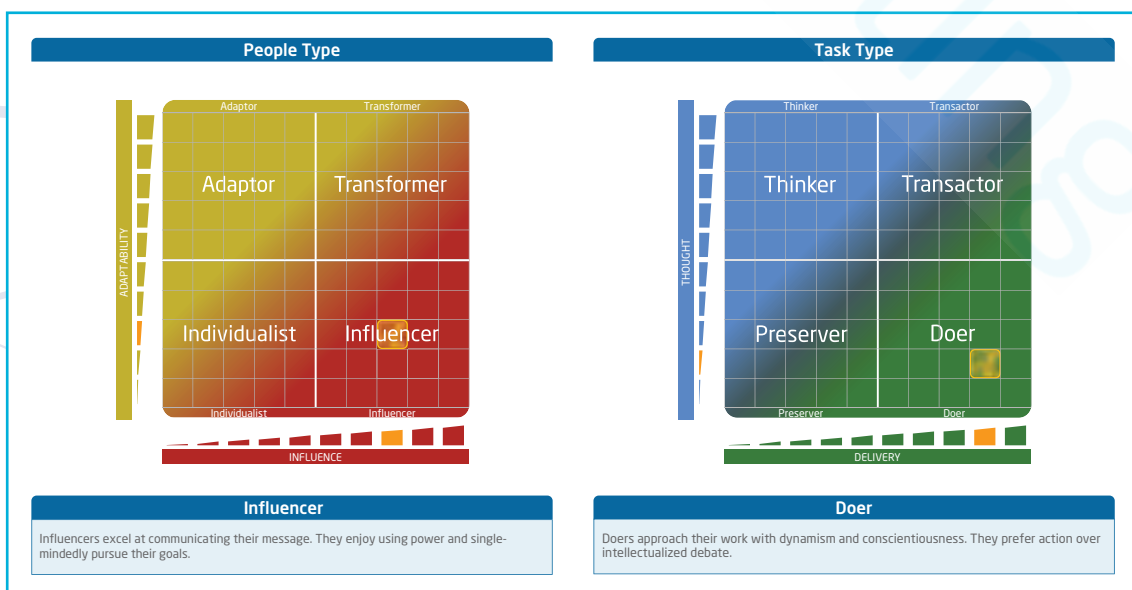
The Wave Behavioral Model is hierarchical in that there are four levels that, starting from the highest level, include: Clusters (4), Sections (12), Dimensions (36) and Facets (108). The levels and the number of components at each level are the same in both the Styles and the aligned Competency model. Users can focus on the cluster level for a quick and simple view of a profile or dig for deeper insights by focusing on the facet level of a profile.

The hierarchical approach allows for a broad measurement and understanding of how each of the four clusters in the predictor domain (measured by Wave Styles) is directly linked to the criterion domain. For example, Thought is a Styles cluster and Solving Problems is its aligned Competency cluster. This matching applies to every component at all the levels in the hierarchy. Colors are associated with the four sections to aid differentiation and ease interpretation.

Styles Cluster	Competency Cluster	Associated Color
Thought	Solving Problems	Blue
Influence	Influencing People	Red
Adaptability	Adapting Approaches	Gold
Delivery	Delivering Results	Green

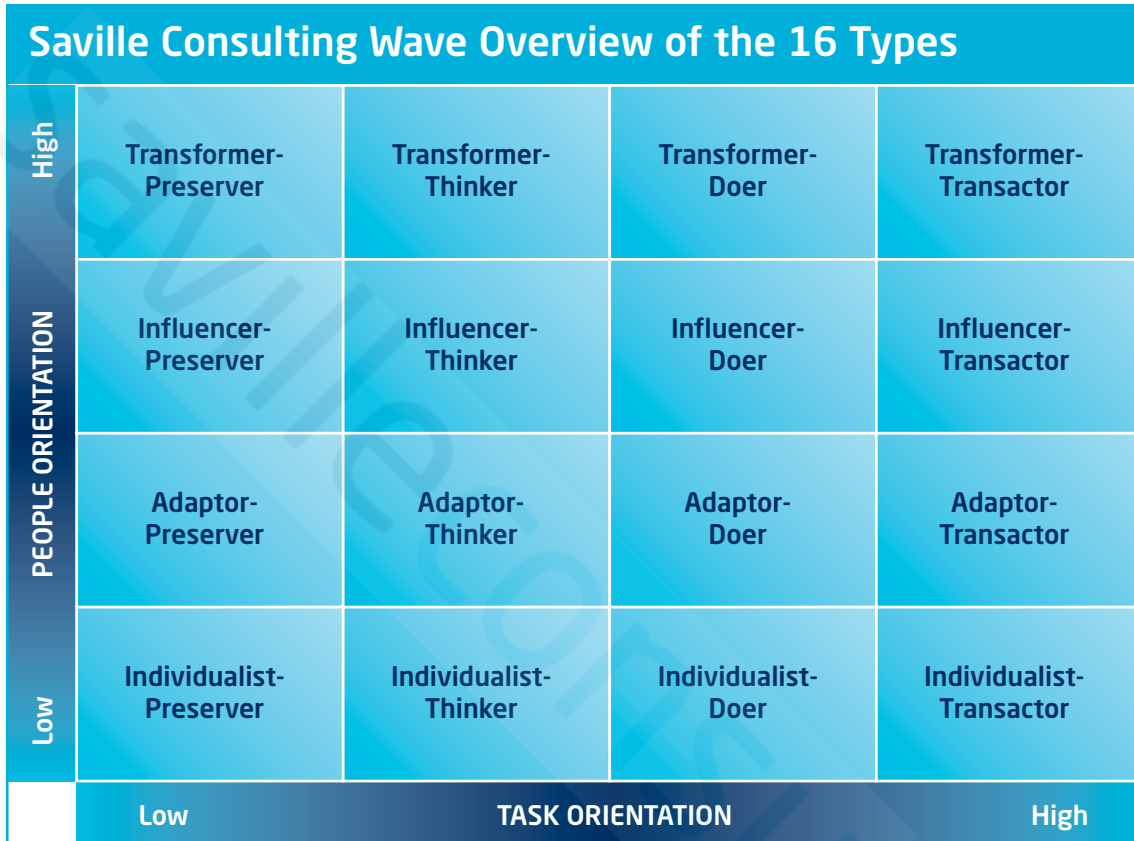
The hierarchy allows the user the opportunity to have a broad overview of an individual. It may indicate, for example, that the person profiled is strong on 'Delivering Results' (Green) and 'Influencing People' (Red), but less strong on 'Solving Problems' (Blue) and 'Adapting Approaches' (Gold). These four clusters provide a simple overview of an individual that relies on the aggregated validity of the Wave scales.

**Figure 1.4 The Saville Consulting Wave Types Report**



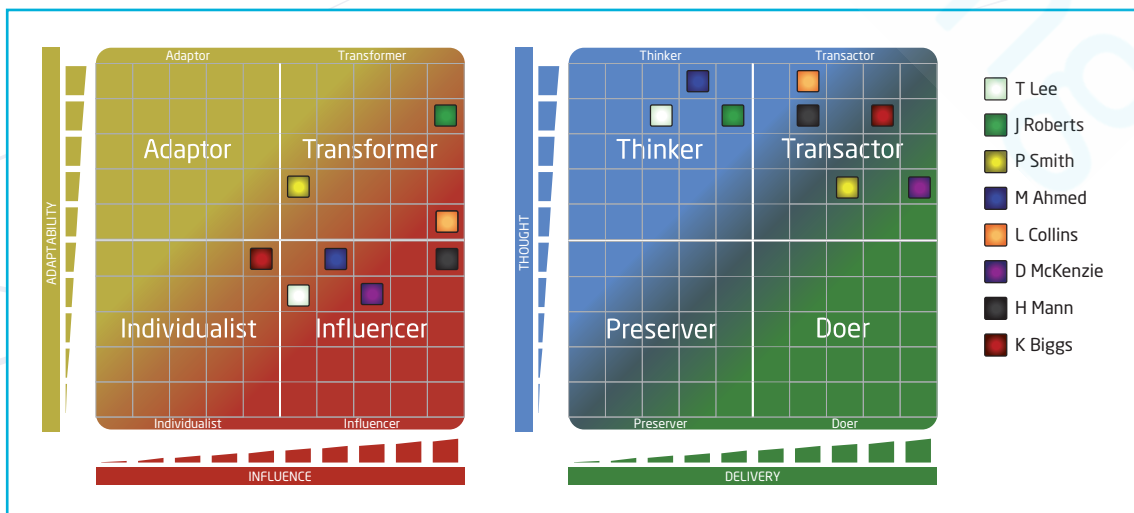
This forms the basis of the Types report.

**Figure 1.5 The four 'People' types and four 'Task' types combine to create 16 overall Saville Consulting Wave Types**



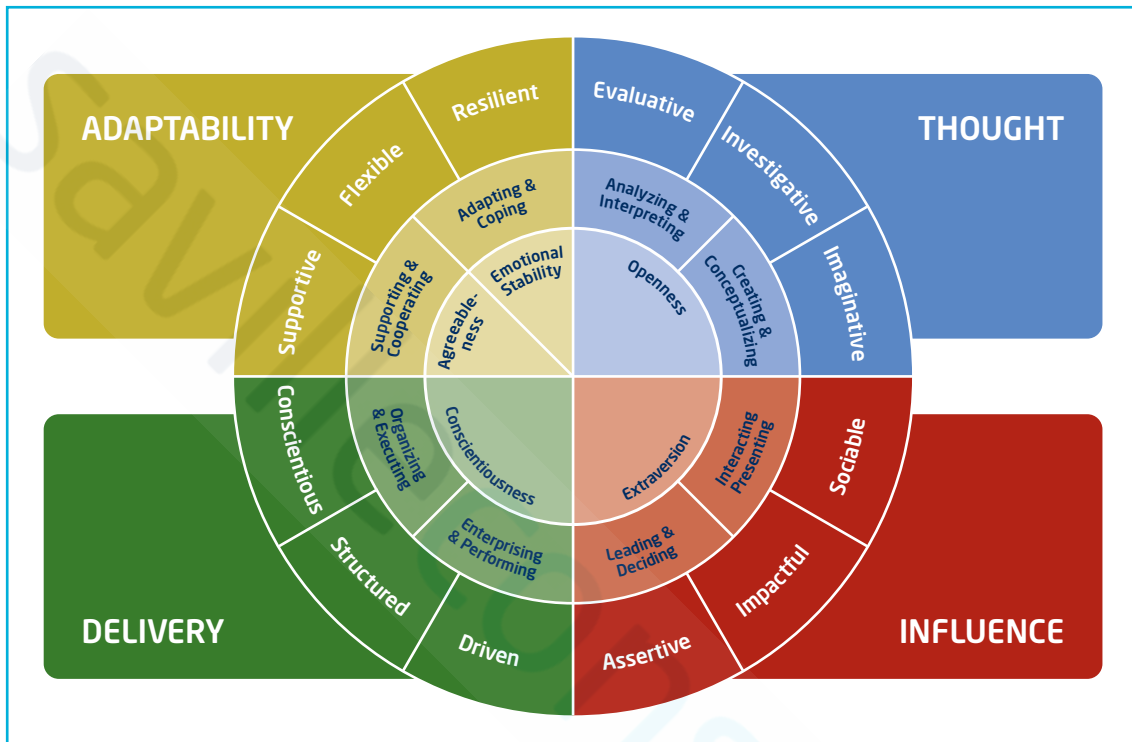
This level is also particularly useful when comparing and contrasting individuals in exercises such as Team Profiling or Relationship Management. The Types chapter of this handbook provides more information on the Types reports and model.

**Figure 1.6 Multi Graph Types**



The next level in the hierarchy is the twelve sections which provide more detail and form the basis of the Saville Consulting Wave Wheel.

**Figure 1.7 The Wave Wheel**

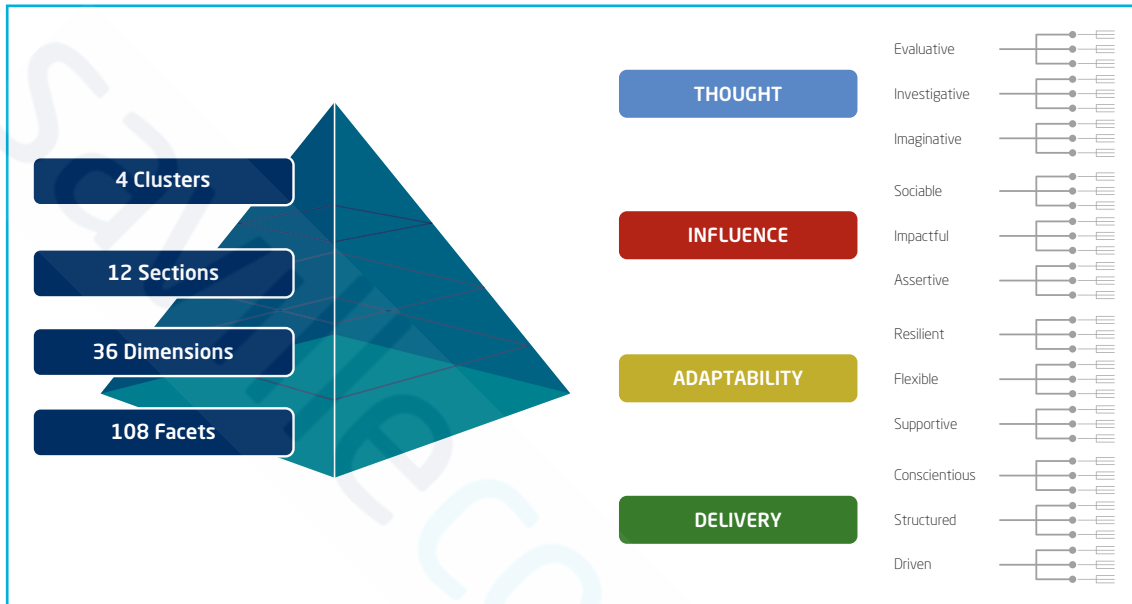


The “Wave Wheel” provides a mechanism for understanding how Wave compares with other major models of personality and performance in its structure (Musek’s Big One, Digman’s Alpha and Beta, The Great Eight Competencies, The Big Five).

Refer to the Construction chapter for further discussion on the Wave Wheel and how it integrates previous research and models of both personality and performance at work (and see Kurz et al. (2008) for a discussion on the use of the Wave Wheel in coaching).

Each of the four clusters then breaks down into three sections to create 12 sections (four clusters x three sections) as follows:

**Figure 1.8 The Saville Consulting Wave Work Hierarchy**



### Clusters:

- **Thought** encompasses the sections Evaluative, Investigative and Imaginative. This cluster is focused on developing ideas, from analyzing problems and showing interest in underlying principles through to being more expansive and divergent in thought by being creative and strategic.
- **Influence** encompasses the sections Sociable, Impactful and Assertive. This cluster relates to communication and working with others. It is concerned with establishing positive relationships with people and demonstrating positive leadership behaviors.
- **Adaptability** encompasses the sections Resilient, Flexible and Supportive. This cluster covers areas of emotional, behavioral and social adaptability, respectively.
- **Delivery** encompasses the sections Conscientious, Structured and Driven. This cluster is focused on implementation and delivery of results, from ensuring high standards of delivery through to proactively making things happen.

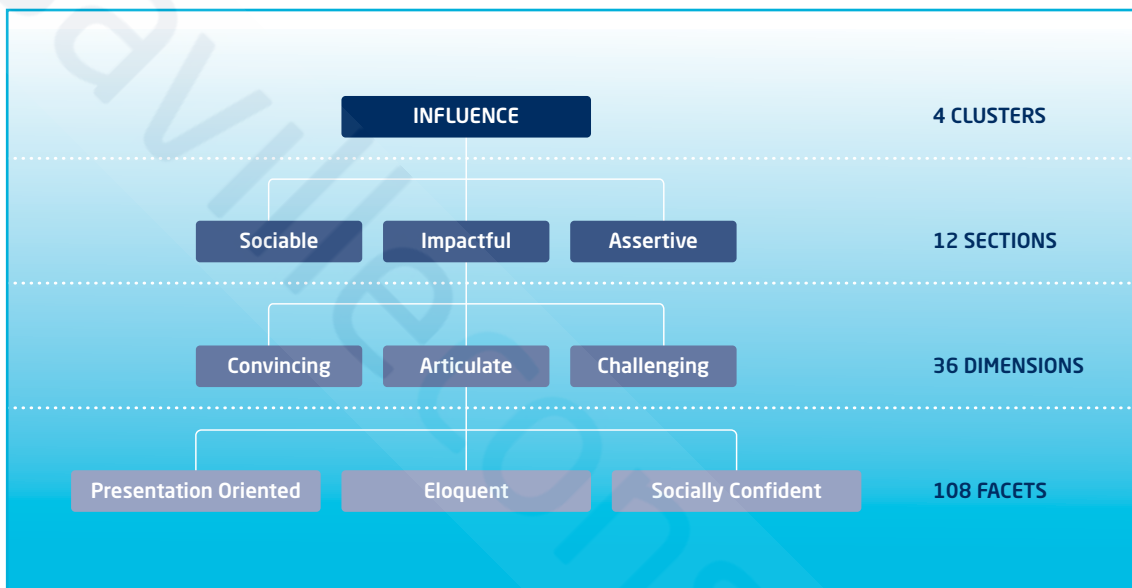
The 12 sections then break down into the more detailed level of 36 dimensions. This is the level of fidelity that would be expected from a trait instrument that typically takes 40 minutes to complete. However, the new form of scaling developed with Wave's dynamic online format allows for a further level of detail to be assessed. Both the styles predictor and the criterion models finish at the most detailed level of 108 facets.

In Wave Styles, these 108 facets are measured with two item scales to allow for narrow, clearly defined specific behaviors to be assessed. While these short facet scales of two items do not give sufficient coverage of a broader trait, this is overcome by building short precise scales (facets) that measure each concept specifically that group together to form larger, broader scales higher up the hierarchy - Wave Professional Styles dimensions (6 items from three facet scales), sections (18 items from 6 facet scales), and clusters (54 items from 27 facet scales).

A benefit of this approach is that it avoids extremely similar or tautologous items being repeated to cover a trait. At the dimension level and higher, this approach leads to scales which have a degree of breadth and are multifaceted and are not just similar items repeated again and again with no unique contribution to improved prediction.

This 108 level enables a richer degree of insight and understanding of where an individual's strengths and weaknesses lie within the context of the overall Wave hierarchy.

**Figure 1.9 Example of Wave Cluster to Facet Structure**



For an example, see Figure 1.9 highlighting one small part of the four level Wave hierarchy. The cluster 'Influence' breaks down into sections 'Assertive', 'Impactful' and 'Sociable.' If we follow the section 'Impactful' further down the hierarchy, it can be seen that it is composed of the dimensions 'Convincing', 'Challenging' and 'Articulate.' At the lowest level of the hierarchy, the 108 facet level, the dimension 'Articulate' is made up of the facets 'Presentation Oriented', 'Eloquent' and 'Socially Confident.'

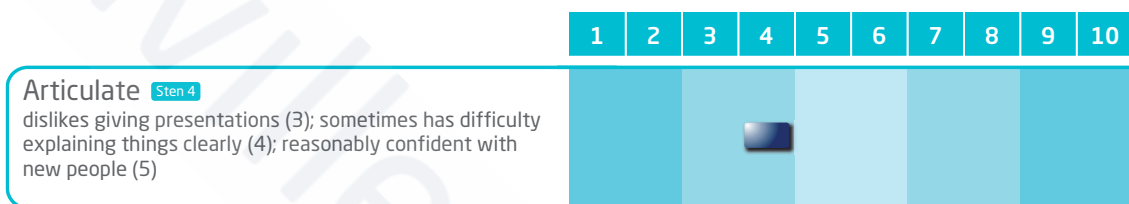
Scale descriptions of the 36 Dimensions of Wave Professional Styles can be found in the Scale Descriptions chapter of this handbook.

## 1.6 Aiding Interpretation with Dynamic Scores Description

The Psychometric Profile of the Wave report is also designed to aid interpretation by providing a narrative description of each of the 108 facets that varies according to the score the individual received on each facet. The description varies according to the sten score. There are five categories which give different statements (based on sten 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10).

**Fig 1.10 Example of Dynamic Facet Score Description**

*Articulate Styles dimension scale from Psychometric Profile of Wave Professional Styles Expert Report*

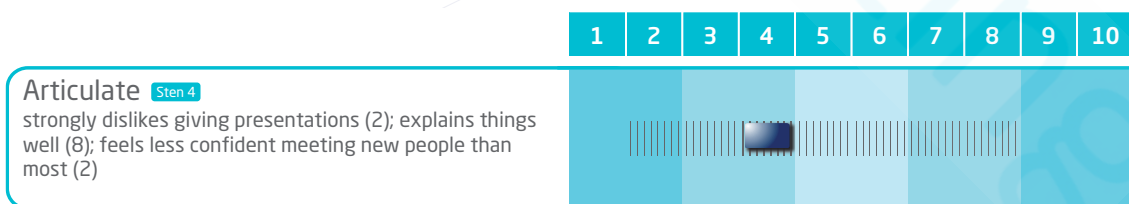


In the excerpt from the profile above the individual has a sten score of three on Presentation Oriented, four on Eloquent and five on Socially Confident. The examples that will be presented for the other features of the Wave assessment will demonstrate how the narrative text changes according to the level of the three facets within the Articulate dimension.

## 1.7 Facet Range

Rather than profiling every score of the 108 facets on the Styles Psychometric Profile, only non-alignment of the facet scores is highlighted to the Wave user in the Wave report. When the facets are not aligned, and there is a difference between the facet scores of three or more stens, this constitutes a facet range and allows the user to delve deeper into the scores. The facet range is indicated by a series of horizontal lines on the profile running from the lowest to highest facet score.

**Fig 1.11 Example of a Facet Range**



In the facet range above, the individual's score of four on the Articulate dimension is the same as in the previous example, but the large facet range provides a very different picture for the Wave user to investigate. In this case, while the profile indicates the individual is more eloquent than others (8) it also indicates that the individual has less confidence in social situations (2) and feel much less positive than others about giving presentations (2).

Facet ranges are common on profiles with an average profile of 36 dimensions possessing 17 dimensions with facet ranges.

## 1.8 Motive - Talent Splits

Saville Consulting Wave Styles questionnaires have been developed to separate out talents from underlying predispositions or motives. For every Styles section or dimension measured there is a motive component and a talent component underlying it. At the lowest level of the hierarchy each facet is composed of one motive item and one talent item.

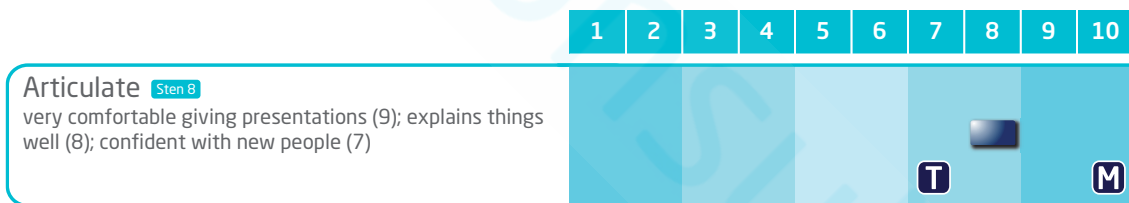
e.g.,      wants to give others encouragement – (motive)  
               is good at encouraging others – (talent)

Items were created to specifically measure Motive (will do) and Talent (can do). When differences between these exist they are indicated on the profile chart making it easy for a user to spot when Motive may be greater than Talent, or vice versa. Hence, a report may indicate that a person is higher on Motive than on Talent, which may indicate a development opportunity for this person. Alternatively, the report may show a person to be higher on Talent than on Motive, indicating that the person “can do” the task, but may not want to.

The motive-talent concept is designed to provide additional information which has important implications for selection, development and talent management. The model matches every talent component with a motive component, making it easy for the user to understand the impact of motivation on work performance.

The Expert Report Psychometric Profile indicates where ‘Motive-Talent splits’ occur. Where there is a difference of three stens or more between the three normed motive items within a dimension and the three normed talent items within a dimension this is shown with M and T symbols on the profile.

**Fig 1.12 Example of a Motive-Talent Split**



The above example indicates that the individual is higher on motive than talent, potentially opening up the prospect that this is an area for development – i.e., the individual is motivated to develop this area of strength.

Motive-Talent Splits are rarer on profiles than Facet Ranges with the average profile of thirty-six dimensions typically having three or four Motive-Talent splits. The presence of many Motive-Talent Splits may indicate that there is a mismatch between the individual’s motives, talents and the demands of the work environment.

## 1.9 Dynamic Normative-Ipsative “Ra-Ra” Response Format

Saville Consulting Wave Styles assessments use a new dynamic response format that combines a free choice rating response format with a forced-choice ranking response format (our new rate-rank or “ra-ra” format). This can help to identify where on a profile a person’s behavior may be underestimated or where a person may be responding in a socially desirable manner.

The online Saville Consulting Wave Styles questionnaires present a page of six statements (see figure 1.13).

**Figure 1.13 Screenshot of Online Normative Rating Task of Professional Styles**

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Unsure	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
I am good at dealing with uncertainty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
I am good at seeing how things can be improved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
I am good at understanding why people do things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People say I make a good first impression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am good at negotiating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am prepared to make big decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

After the six statements are rated by the respondent, the system records the normative ratings and then calculates the ipsative rankings automatically. If a respondent has tied certain ratings, the system immediately re-presents the tied items to be placed in rank order by the respondent using a forced-choice response format. If there are no tied items, then a new page of six items is presented.

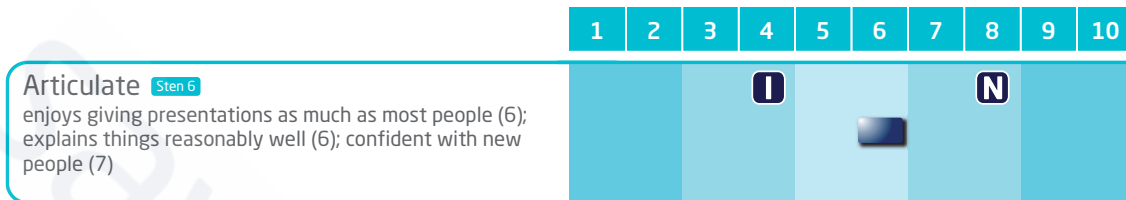
**Figure 1.14 Screenshot of Online Ipsative Ranking Task of Professional Styles**

*N.B. The ipsative score comes from both the order of the normative rating and the ranking task.*

Where there are differences of three stems or more between the normative and ipsative scores within a dimension these are highlighted on the profile to allow the user to explore the reasons for this, perhaps during a feedback session or during an interview. Unlike a scale of social desirability, this feature can help to quickly spot the specific dimensions where socially desirable responding (or overly self-critical responding) may have occurred to allow for verification.

There are benefits and weaknesses to both ipsative and normative scaling. At the practitioner level, however, it is often useful to have both sources of information.

**Figure 1.15 Example of Normative - Ipsative Split**



In the example, the individual has an overall sten score of six on the Articulate dimension, but their Normative score is eight and the Ipsative is four. The reason for the difference is not immediately clear without further investigation. One hypothesis is that the normative score is more a reflection of how they like to present themselves and the ipsative is more a reflection of their behavior when they have to choose between competing commitments at work or when under pressure.

## 1.10 Clear Interpretation

A criticism that can be fairly leveled at many self-report questionnaires is that, despite their reliability and validity, there is still a degree of subjectivity in their interpretation.

Even with proper training subject matter experts in assessment believe that poor interpretation is a significant source of error in the use of personality questionnaires (Smith & Foley, 2006). A lack of consistency between interpreters is much more likely where an aspect of work performance is predicted by a complex combination of predictor scales, which is the situation with many multi-scale self-report personality instruments.

Is inconsistency a given? Can we do anything about it? With the performance driven approach, the work constructs that best predict a work competency are brought together to form a scale. This largely removes the need to look around the profile for what scales relate to a particular competency (i.e., we move from predictor centric models to criterion centric models of work performance so users have to work less hard to “join-the-dots.”)

Better interpretation inevitably leads to improved validity in decision-making based on questionnaire data. Clearer interpretation means fewer selection errors and better identification of talent in selection processes. In career development situations, it means clearer feedback and finer understanding of development needs. Ultimately, the higher the validity, the greater the return on investment from using psychometric assessments.

## 1.11 Configurable Competency Reporting

The level of detail that Saville Consulting Wave Styles achieves also enables a more detailed match with client models of performance (such as competency, capability or value frameworks) allowing for fast configuration of output reports to predict organizational client models.

This detailed configuration has enabled Saville Consulting Wave to partner with Entrecode®, the model of successful entrepreneurs developed by Professor David Hall and his associates. The Entrepreneurial Potential Report is available to all qualified Wave Styles users following completion of Professional Styles or Focus Styles questionnaires. The configuration of Wave Professional Styles scales to Entrecode is an example of the precision and flexibility of the Wave model in mapping onto other competency models.

More information about configurable competency reporting is available from any Saville Consulting office.

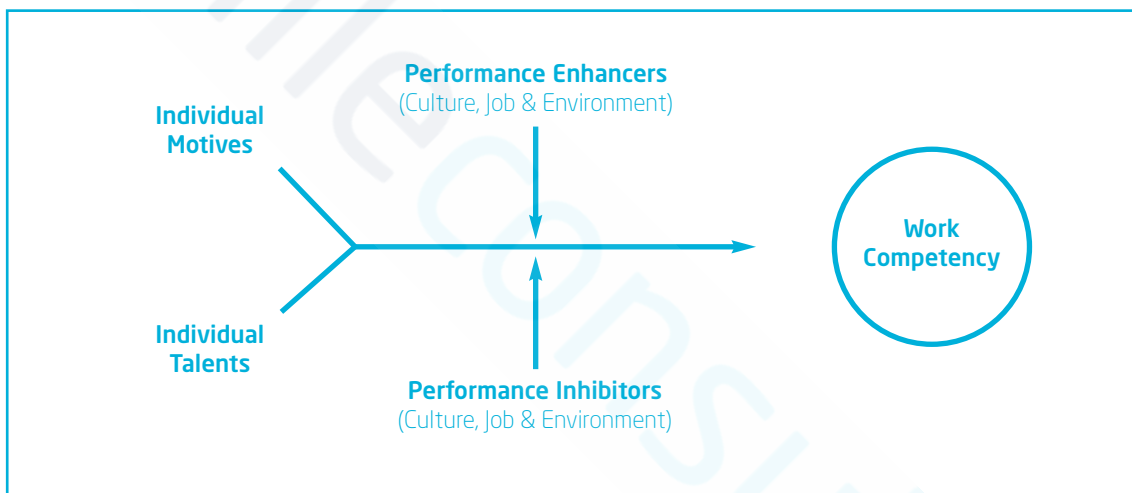
## 1.12 Culture Match

The Saville Consulting Wave development program has also developed measures of work culture that are parallel to the Saville Consulting Wave Styles model. This empirical research allows a prediction of the preferred culture/environment and job demands that would suit an individual based on completion of Saville Consulting Wave Styles questionnaires.

From the perspective of Positive Psychology, Dr. Seligman, the author of Learned Optimism, has argued that work can be changed to suit the employee (rather than just finding an employee that fits the job or trying to develop the individual to better match/meet job demands). Assessment can be constructed to support this approach.

With our unique model which ties together motive, talent, competency and culture, we can help individuals understand what work demands (culture, job and environment) they are most likely to favor.

**Figure 1.16 The Saville Consulting Model of Work Performance Effectiveness**



Armed with this understanding it becomes easier to discuss what enhances or inhibits individuals' performance at work. It also facilitates constructive discussions about how a job could better reflect a person's motives and talents.

This approach can help managers think about how to tailor work to suit individual employees in order to retain staff by keeping them satisfied and motivated.

## 1.13 Enhanced Security

Wave Styles questionnaires are available in two parallel forms: Invited Access and Supervised Access. Invited Access means the Wave Styles questionnaire is completed remotely on the internet without supervision. Supervised Access is an online version completed on-site under the supervision of a test administrator.

The internet offers great convenience in allowing individuals to respond at great geographical distance (without an administrator present) by sending a link to the questionnaire directly to an email address. This so called "controlled" mode does present security concerns, for example, not being certain that the questionnaire is completed by the person you emailed it to (and not by a group of the person's friends one evening). We believe that as well as "controlled" (or "Invited Access" forms) a self-report questionnaire (particularly questionnaires that can be used for selection or other decision-making processes) can benefit from having a separate supervised secure form.

The need for separate versions of online ability tests is essential, and Saville Consulting offers both Invited Access and Supervised Access versions of our Aptitude Assessment tests.