

# Niche Update



Happy Birthday to Us  
Niche Consulting turns 5 years old  
this month

**Special points of interest:**

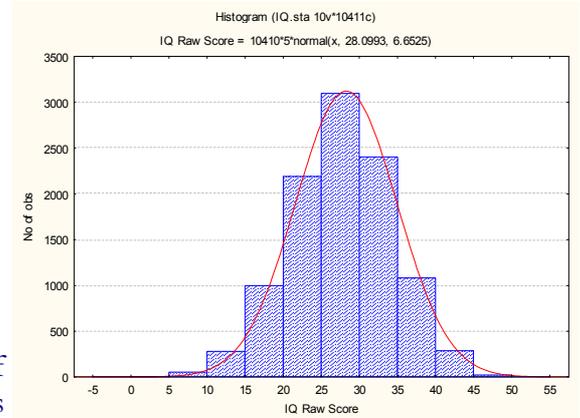
- New 2010 Norms for standard assessments
- Candidate Feedback – change in our process
- Procrastination & what to do about it
- Spotlight on the PRB integrity assessment

**New Norms Released for 2010**

Niche has now developed new norms for many of our standard and popular assessments and tests. You may notice these changes in your reports in the future. Where there was enough data we have also added some addition norm groups. Neisha has been collecting normative data for over 10 years and we now have over **13,000** people in the overall NZ business norm for some of our assessments.

**Additional norm groups have been created for the EAS, IQ, and CPI assessments:**

- ◆ Administration Manager
- ◆ Customer Service Manager
- ◆ Team Leader
- ◆ Human Resources Non-managerial
- ◆ Telemarketer
- ◆ Graduate
- ◆ Engineer
- ◆ Veterinarian



The graph to the right shows the histogram of IQ scores in our NZ/Australasia general business norm.

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Test	Norm group	Number in Norm
CPI	General NZ Business	11,165
PRB	General NZ Business	5,100
IQ - Wonderlic	General NZ Business	10,410
EAS1 - Verbal Comprehension	General NZ Business	12,304
EAS4 - Visual Speed & Accuracy	General NZ Business	720
EAS6 - Numerical Reasoning	General NZ Business	13,091
EAS7 - Verbal Reasoning	General NZ Business	13,982
Watson Glaser Critical Thinking	General NZ Business	870

Some of our clients have organisational norms which also have been updated with the new data. Should you wish to have an organisational norm developed for your organisation, please let us know. Also let us know if there are any specific occupational norms you would like us to collect data for.

## Assessment Spotlight – The Personnel Reaction Blank

Neisha introduced the Integrity Test called the Personnel Reaction Blank (PRB) to NZ over 10 years ago and since then we have developed an impressive NZ norm of over 5000 business people. Many of our clients utilise this assessment alongside other assessments, and some also use it on its own for lower level roles as a screening tool.

Central in the development of the PRB was an attempt to measure an individual's ability to control their "wayward impulses". These impulses make a person more likely to engage in disruptive behaviours in the workplace. The test focuses on a single continuum defined by the inhibition of wayward impulse at one end and its expression at the other. It should be noted the tool says nothing whatsoever about intelligence, leadership, supervisory ability, initiative, ambition, or other factors that might enter into the calibre of performance in a certain job.

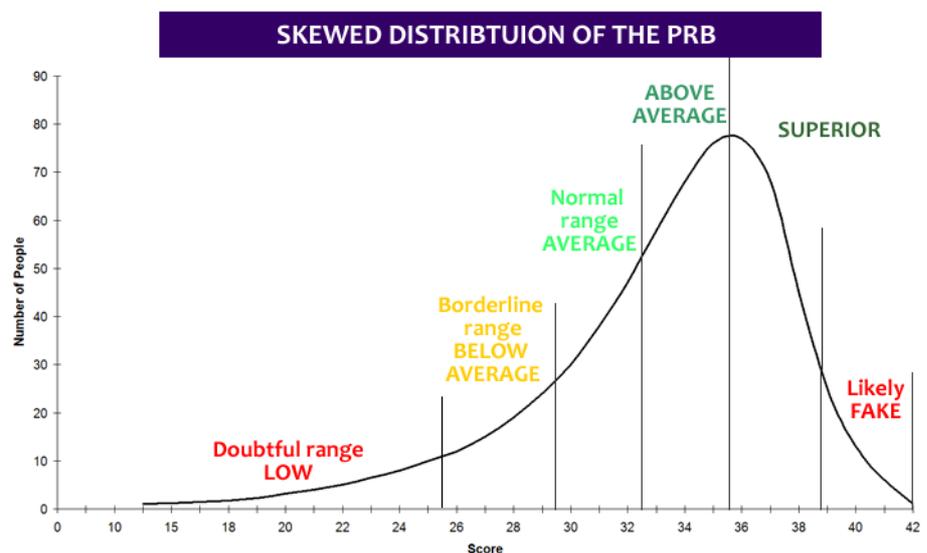
Descriptions of Individuals by Observers	
Low Scores on PRB	High Scores on PRB
Restless	Co-operative
Bitter	Appreciative
Moody	Responsible
Conceited	Reliable
Boastful	Modest
Temperamental	Fair minded
Self-pitying	Self controlled
Rebellious	Considerate
Selfish	Good natured
Touchy	Sincere
Unstable	Capable
Hard headed	Resourceful
Defensive	Rational

The ability to control impulses is central to success in most roles, but it is especially important in safety critical roles as the consequences of impulsiveness can be quite dire. Being able to stop oneself from acting on urges and impulses, often stops us from taking stupid risks and displaying undesirable behaviours. Reynolds & Schiffbauer (2004) found that those people with low impulse control often discounted the possible negative consequences (e.g. getting caught or injury) as being an unlikely or an uncertain outcome of acting on an impulse.

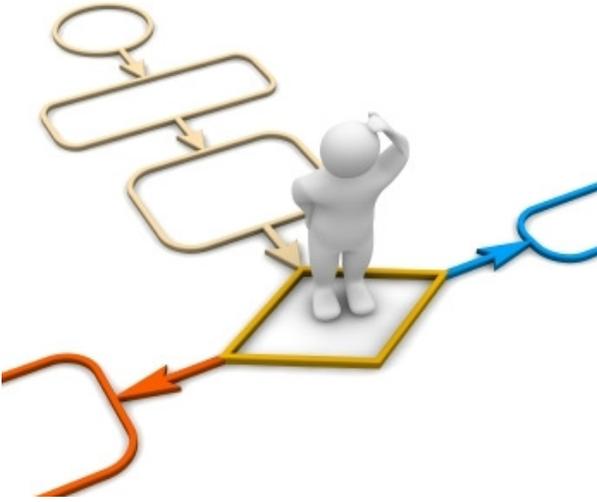
Hough (1990) reviewed the PRB and described it as a tool which identifies those who will perform successfully in roles where, following the rules, being dependable, and being honest are important attributes. The nature of levels of integrity in a normal population, are displayed not as a normal distribution curve but as a skewed distribution (see below). What this means is that we want to exclude those people who are at the low end of the curves tail (Doubtful range) and this makes it a suitable assessment to have cut-off scores for individuals who are very low on the scale, and some caution or further investigation may be needed for those in the below average or Borderline range (such as referee checking).

In their Review of the PRB, well regarded researchers Viswesvaran & Ones (1997) state:

*"The PRB is the cheapest psychometrically sound, theoretically grounded integrity test on the market. Its reliability and validity have been demonstrated in several major, large sample, studies. We agree with Gough's assessments that "In any setting where dependability, conscientiousness, diligence, and restraint are relevant to the quality of work, the PRB should yield useful information"... Organizations that use well developed and researched integrity tests, such as the PRB, are likely to have substantial utility gains that result from increased productivity and decreased delinquent behaviours on the job."*



## Procrastination and some tips to Overcome it



Procrastination is the habit of putting off tasks and responsibilities to the last possible minute, which can be a major problem in both a person's career and their personal life. The consequences of procrastination are missed opportunities, frenzied work hours, and stress. Some of the symptoms include feeling overwhelmed, resentful, and guilty.

Procrastination is a complex psychological behaviour that affects everyone to some degree or another. With some people it can be a minor problem, however with others it is a source of considerable stress and anxiety. Procrastination is only remotely related to time management, (procrastinators often know exactly what they should be doing, even if they cannot do it), which is why very detailed schedules usually are of little or no help.

### Tips to Overcome Procrastination

- ◆ Make the tasks look small and easy in your mind. (*"I've written lots of excellent reports; this is just one more report."*)
- ◆ Do only a small part of the task each time. (*"I'll just gather all the books and research I need now. Later on, I'll glance through them."*)
- ◆ Replace *"Have to"* with *"Want to"* – the implication of *"have to"* is that you are being forced to do it, if you use *"want to"* in what you tell yourself you will be surprised by how much more enthusiasm you have for the task.
- ◆ Five-minute plan: Work on something for just five minutes. At the end of five minutes, switch to something else if you want. Chances are, you'll get involved enough to keep going.
- ◆ Advertise your plans to accomplish something and let peer pressure push you forward. (*"I told everyone that I was going to finish this tonight."*)
- ◆ Find a positive role model. If you have trouble concentrating, do work in the presence of someone who doesn't.
- ◆ Modify your environment - if you can't work in an open plan environment, find a place where you can work or do your thinking work at home.
- ◆ Replace *"Finish It"* with *"Start It"* – if you think of the task as one big whole you are likely to put it off, however if you look at it as lots of small steps you will feel that it is more manageable.



*Continued on Page 4*

## Tips to Overcome Procrastination Continued....

- ◆ Plan out your tomorrow and establish priorities - some people find that simply writing down reasonable starting and stopping times help them get going.
- ◆ Give yourself permission to be human and that things do not need to be perfect. Thinking you need to do the job perfectly the first try is likely to prevent you from ever getting started. Remind yourself an imperfect job today is always superior to the perfect job delayed indefinitely.
- ◆ Another technique is to use **Timeboxing** for tasks you have been putting off for a while.
  1. First, select a small piece of the task you can work on for just 30 minutes
  2. Then choose a reward you will give yourself immediately afterwards. The reward is guaranteed if you simply put in the time; it does not depend on any meaningful accomplishment. The reward can be anything that you find pleasurable.
  3. You will find no matter how unpleasant the task there is virtually nothing you cannot endure for just 30 minutes if you have a big enough reward waiting for you.



## Changes to Our Candidate Feedback Process



As part of our candidate care and focus on improvement, we survey candidate's about the assessment process and how they felt they were treated by us and our administrators around NZ and Australia.

One of the recurring themes in this feedback is that candidates want to get a written report on their results as part of the process.

To accommodate these candidate requests we have now started providing a simple computerised written report as a standard part of the feedback process. Additionally they are encouraged to book in for a phone feedback as well.

The feedback report is a summary of each assessment written in a development style, however there is no raw data or graphs provided in these reports.