

Real World Group TLQ – Diversity & Inclusion

Reducing bias in career development opportunities

- One of the most powerful and often least considered barriers to leaders from underrepresented groups both feeling comfortable in an organisation and particularly in being able to climb the career ladder can be the **criteria** applied to determine what successful leadership looks like in an organisation.
- What commonly happens is that the success factors (or criteria) being applied to assess and develop leaders are drawn up based on profiling current, effective performers in that or a similar role. This often includes how they tend to lead and the typical career path that led them there.
- This might initially seem like a sensible approach. However, the problem is that we know from decades of research that there can be significant differences in leadership style and career path between equally effective people based on demographic differences such as ethnicity and gender. For example, female leaders and leaders who are Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) have been found by different research studies to, on average, have more of a transformational leadership approach than white males.
- Therefore, basing leadership criteria on typical factors that are common to individuals in a role – considering that leadership roles are typically held by a less than diverse group of people – introduces a major barrier in front of different but potentially as successful approaches and individuals.
- It also means that the organisation is unlikely to experience fresh and new ways of achieving success in such roles – even when the organisation says that new approaches are what they want.
- Furthermore, on the occasions when an individual from an underrepresented group does progress in spite of potentially biased criteria, they can find that the mould they are expected to fit into can significantly stifle their true potential and value to the organisation – which could be much more than has been achieved in that role in the past.
- Real World Group's TLQ360 is a leadership assessment tool that enables organisations to have much greater confidence that the criteria for success being assessed and developed are not biased towards the typical demographic of senior leaders in the UK.
- This is because the Engaging Transformational Leadership model which the TLQ360 assesses was developed using a deliberately diverse sample of leaders, and has been further validated in this regard.

- Specifically, research we undertook to explore what makes employees from more diverse demographic groups feel that they are treated fairly and valued for what they contribute as an individual by their leader, an engaging transformational style of leadership was described.
- Still today, many leadership models that are popular have not been developed in an inclusive way, nor tested for possible adverse impact against people who are not in the majority demographic groups.
- What all of this means is that the TLQ360 is significantly less likely than tools not developed in this way to contribute bias to the career experience of diverse candidates, and it is more likely to enable diverse leaders to realise their potential.

The double-benefit of assessing & developing more appropriate and challenging leadership skills

- It is important to note that the criteria assessed by the TLQ360 are not “easier” or less challenging than the criteria that are typically applied in senior leadership assessment, nor are they less relevant.
- If anything, the TLQ360 assesses leadership that is much more relevant than what is typically applied today. The Engaging Transformational Leadership model is one of the world’s most proven models, and has a wide range of published evidence demonstrating that these leadership behaviours not only predict improved performance, but they are also strongly correlated with improved innovation, collaboration, readiness for change, self-confidence, motivation, reduced stress, achieving more with less, and many other positive factors in organisations. They are exactly what is needed in today’s turbulent and uncertain world.¹
- The behaviours go beyond what is usually assessed – such as personality factors that are said to be more or less likely to make you successful, or those that could lead you to derail yourself.
- They enable an organisation to develop leaders who will not only perform well, but who will maximise the potential of people around them, and thus multiply success for the organisation. And as the famous leadership guru, Warren Bennis, famously said, “*The “soft” stuff is the hard stuff*”.
- This double benefit, then, means that in using the TLQ360 as a basis for developing leaders means that not only is the organisation able to assess **all** leaders against the most relevant leadership criteria for today’s challenging world, but they are also increasing the chances that leaders from underrepresented groups will have a fair chance to demonstrate their unique talents and aptitude to lead.

¹ For more information, see the table at the end of this document, and wider information about the TLQ360

Developing leaders who are more likely to enable the career development of underrepresented groups in your organisation

- Since our conception in 2001, we have been conducting primary research and literature reviews into what barriers exist to the career progression of underrepresented groups, and how they can be overcome by organisations. Demographic characteristics here include:
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Sexual orientation
 - Faith and religion.
- As a result of our expertise in these areas, we have written commissioned reports, best practice guides and book chapters on the barriers and enablers to career progression for leaders from underrepresented groups for various industry-level and private sector organisations.
- We have also been asked to speak at international conferences on the subject of diversity and career progression, and asked to contribute to or run positive action programmes in various sectors.
- Our wide experience and research has led us to understand what the key behaviours are of leaders who increase diversity and inclusion in their organisations. They are assessed in the TLQ360 through dimensions such as *Showing Genuine Concern; Enabling; Being Accessible; Encouraging Questioning; Being Honest & Consistent; Acting with Integrity; Being Decisive & Focusing Team Effort.*
- We have also been able to demonstrate that leaders who enact these types of behaviours not only increase engagement among underrepresented groups, but also among the majority group members – creating a win-win situation (alongside substantial cost savings - in one case £12.5mil).
- In other words, leaders who are successful in enacting the behaviours assessed by the TLQ360 are more likely to have direct reports who feel that they are treated fairly and valued for their individual strengths – thus enhancing diversity and inclusion themselves.

Brief overview of the TLQ360

Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and aspiring leaders from the front line to CEO • 360-degree feedback
Behaviours assessed predict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance (assessed through longitudinal research) • Employee engagement (motivation, satisfaction, commitment to the job, commitment to the organisation) • Employee wellbeing (reduced stress, increased self-confidence and self-efficacy) • Readiness for change • Creating an innovation culture • Ability to achieve more with less through one's team • Includes extensive behaviours that demonstrate emotional intelligence.
Value in enhancing D&I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps address unconscious bias created by typical leadership criteria as it is based on a deliberately inclusive sample that enables everyone to shine • Leaders from underrepresented groups have been shown to be rated higher in a number of key leadership areas assessed • The leadership criteria being assessed have been shown through extensive research to increase diversity and inclusion in organisations
Unconscious bias/ adverse impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on a deliberately inclusive model • Enables leaders from both typical and more diverse demographic groups to shine
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £170+VAT per leader • Accreditation is available for 360 facilitators