

Thomas assessment tools prove instrumental in helping Johnsons Workwear to deliver an award-winning talent management programme.



Workwear
40,000 clients
2,700 employees
17 UK sites



Objectives

- Attracting, encouraging and developing a new pool of rising stars
- Launch a new Academy talent management programme
- Identify the best candidates to join the Academy
- Tailor a personalised development programme based on each candidate's talents, personality and behaviours



Results

- ★ 70% of 2017 Academy graduates promoted in 18 months
- ★ Growth in Academy from 12 to 48 members
- ★ Winners of 2018 Personnel Today Award for Talent Management
- ★ Finalist in 2019 HR Excellence Awards for Best Talent Management Strategy

THE CHALLENGE: Accurately Profiling Talent in the Workforce

Johnsons Workwear successfully delivers its workwear services to more than 36,000 clients across a broad range of industry sectors throughout the UK. Headquartered in Fulwood, Preston and employing more than 2,300 staff across 17 sites, Johnsons Workwear sets the bar high in the customer service that it delivers and the continued investment in its people.

With an ambitious plan for sustained business growth, nurturing a pool of talent was recognised as being a critical factor to success. However, attracting the best talent into the world of industrial laundry was proving to be costly and challenging and the training of new recruits was often a lengthy and complex process.

In 2017, the idea to launch the Johnsons Academy, a year-long, executive-sponsored talent management programme, took shape. Places on the Academy were open to employees in all departments, from junior through to executive level. With only 12 places available, successful applicants were to take part in classroom training and regular telephone and face-to-face coaching, before being given one of two projects to work on.



We needed to get a clear picture of each individual's talents, personality and behaviours so that we could tailor a development programme to meet their needs. Equally important was the need for candidates to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their own potential away from their day-to-day jobs.



Academy applications were reviewed by the company's board and senior management team using feedback from the Thomas Personal Profile Analysis (PPA), an eight-minute self-assessment tool, to identify the 12 candidates with the highest potential to join the Academy. The Learning & Development team had embedded a range of Thomas assessment tools into the Academy process, not only for the selection of candidates but also for their ongoing development and self-awareness, having successfully used them for a number of years in the recruitment process.

Following the huge success of the first Johnsons Academy, applications opened for a total of 48 places onto the 2018 Academy. In addition to the training programme, there were now 5 Academy project groups looking at key business issues ranging from employee engagement through to quality control. Similar to the previous year, projects had to be completed alongside existing roles and Academy candidates were given a timescale, budget and access to internal resources to help them complete their project. Their ideas were then presented to the board 12 months later.

Michela Deegan, Learning & Development Manager at Johnsons Workwear, explained "Beyond the selection process, we needed to extend and deepen our use of Thomas assessment tools in order to gain a complete understanding of the 2018 Academy candidates, whatever their level, background or experience. We needed to get a clear picture of each individual's talents, personality and behaviours so that we could tailor a development programme to meet their needs. Equally important was the need for candidates to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their own potential away from their day-to-day jobs."



The combined use of the Thomas PPA and HPTI tools has been critical to the continued success of the Johnsons Academy. The report profiles have given us the foundation on which to build solid, individual development plans and to further tailor the talent management programme to meet our Academy candidates' needs.



For our senior team members, who are highly skilled and experienced people, HPTI has helped to bring clarity to conversations on where to go next helping us to put leadership action plans in place.



THE SOLUTION: Deep Profiling for Tailored Development Plans

The solution was to combine the feedback from the PPA profiles conducted at the beginning of the programme with the HPTI (High Potential Trait Indicator) for relevant individuals. This gave the Learning & Development team a wealth of information around each candidate's behavioural and personality traits, potential frustrations and showed how they were likely to behave under pressure. The feedback also gave an insight into each candidate's strengths, the areas they needed to develop and a deeper insight into where they could be of most value to the Johnsons Workwear business.

"The combined use of the Thomas PPA and HPTI tools has been critical to the continued success of the Johnsons Academy. The report profiles have given us the foundation on which to build solid, individual development plans and to further tailor the talent management programme to meet our Academy candidates' needs. The profiles also provided a huge step forward for candidates to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their capabilities as well as giving them sight of where they might excel in future within the Johnsons Workwear business" stated Michela. "For our senior team members, who are highly skilled and experienced people, HPTI has helped to bring clarity to conversations on where to go next helping us to put leadership action plans in place."

THE RESULT: Deep Profiling for Tailored Development Plans

The Johnsons Academy has proven to be a huge success with over seventy per cent of 2017 Academy graduates receiving a promotion within 18 months of completion and with many claiming it had helped boost their confidence. The 2018 Academy group are similarly enjoying high levels of success in the business with over 10% of the group already being promoted, including one to a senior management role. Based on their learning gained from the programme, a further three Academy members are now moving forward with Masters' degree-level education under the Apprenticeship scheme.

Further endorsement of the success of the Johnsons Academy has come from winning the 2018 Personnel Today Award for Talent Management as well as being nominated as a finalist in the 2019 HR Excellence Awards for Best Talent Management Strategy.

Peter Egan, CEO, commented "We truly believe our people are our greatest asset. That's why we've created the Johnsons Academy, to encourage the talent within the business and to help our rising stars to develop. We are delighted with the results achieved so far and working with the Thomas range of assessment tools has been instrumental to the success of our programme." Egan added "Winning the award is the icing on the cake – the real reward has been retaining and developing talented people from within our business and witnessing a huge increase in staff motivation."



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Tools used



Personal Profile Analysis



High Potential Trait Indicator

For more information about how we can help deliver confidence for your organisation, get in touch



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