

How Silverlake used Thomas assessments to attract and retain a younger talent pool as part of their growth strategy.



Automotive recycling

Established 1946

Family run business



Objectives

- Expand their workforce by recruiting a more diverse range of employees
- Develop their current employees and make sure they were in the right roles
- Increase productivity levels through development



Results

- ★ Productivity has increased by 110% per employee
- ★ Business has grown by over 300% in 10 years
- ★ Improvement in retention - 50% of employees have been at the company for between 5-10 years

THE CHALLENGE: Recruiting the right people

For many years Silverlake was mainly a scrap yard, but in 2008, through significant reinvestment, it expanded its market by offering vehicle dismantling, recycling, scrapping and recovery services.

With these plans for growth came several challenges. Silverlake needed to expand its workforce, but this wasn't simply a matter of recruiting more people; the company needed to make sure it was selecting the right type of people to fulfil the many new and varied roles in the new service areas.

If Silverlake were to access a wider talent pool and draw in people who could work in different ways, it needed to be good at attracting a younger, more diverse range of applicants. For an industry that is typically populated by older white men, this was a major challenge, which other companies in the sector struggle with.

With new vacancies opening up within the business, Silverlake also wanted to ensure that those it already employed were in positions best suited to them – and if they weren't, it needed to smoothly redeploy them.

Lastly, once people were in place, the company wanted to ensure it maximised the return on its investment, which meant ensuring productivity levels and staff retention rates were high.

Simon Bastin-Mitchell, Commercial Manager at Silverlake, says: "We didn't want a revolving door – spending a lot of time and money finding and recruiting great people and training them, only to see them leaving us quickly. That would be a huge drain on resources, very disruptive for our customers and very distracting for the business during the time of expansion."



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THE SOLUTION: Strengths and limitation analysis

The leadership team at Silverlake decided that the key to much of this lay in better understanding how candidates and current employees behave in the work environment - their strengths, their weaknesses and how quickly they learn new information. Armed with such insights, they would be able to improve Silverlake's recruitment process, staff engagement levels and how teams are managed. They would also be able to identify if current employees had skills better suited to other areas of the business.

After researching the most successful people assessment tools on the market, Silverlake chose Thomas International's psychometric assessments and began working with the company.

Thomas first suggested that Silverlake ask its employees to take part in a Personal Profile Analysis (PPA), an eight minute self-assessment that provides an insight into how people behave at work, as well as a General Intelligence Assessment (GIA), an aptitude assessment which delivers an accurate prediction of the time it will take someone to get to grips with their new role. This implementation was designed to identify the most suitable internal candidates for new roles and to make sure that each team member was positioned correctly within the organisation.

Having deployed these assessments with its current staff, Silverlake then used them as part of the recruitment process as it brought new people onboard.

This was 10 years ago and the business has been using these assessments ever since.



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Simon Bastin-Mitchell comments: "We simply would not be where we are today without the PPA and GIA from Thomas International. The feedback that these assessments provide is invaluable. It allows the senior team to facilitate employee development, we have a better understanding of what motivates each worker, and the assessments remove all assumptions from the recruiting and redeployment processes; our decisions are rooted in science rather than being based on hunches and suppositions."

In fact, Silverlake is so committed to the assessments that six members of its senior management team have become officially accredited to feed back on the results to staff, on a one-to-one basis.

Simon explains how his accreditation has given him a deeper understanding of what the assessments can do for the organisation: "By providing the feedback ourselves, we get a greater insight into each person's motivations and behaviours. We understand how each individual should be managed, and we identify where their attributes and skills can best be utilised."

"As a result, we are able to attract and hire top quality talent and ensure everyone within the organisation is happy and satisfied within their role. The assessments have had a major impact on how we as a business operate and will continue to do so as we grow further."

THE RESULT: 300% business growth in 10 years

"Introducing Thomas' assessments into the business has delivered huge benefits. We have hired great staff and the working environment is more harmonious. We have less frustrated workers who feel 'stuck' in the wrong roles. Plus we have achieved a greater level of people awareness - employees understand themselves better and the leadership team has a much better appreciation of the team," continues Simon.

In terms of more tangible results, Silverlake has successfully expanded its employee base - it has 115 members of staff, which is up from just 60 in 2008. This is more than a 90% increase in just 10 years.



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During the same period, productivity has increased by 110% per employee.

Not only are staff numbers and productivity up significantly, but people are also staying at Silverlake long-term. 50% of employees have been at the company between 5-10 years, with 25% coming on board within the last five. This longevity of employment is no mean feat. According to Simon, "Introducing a host of new services brought with it a lot of change within the business. Other companies in similar circumstances have seen their established employees become alienated and leave, but that hasn't happened with us. That's down to the fantastic working environment we have created and by having people in roles that suit them. In an era where employees are more than happy to vote with their feet, we are seeing phenomenal retention rates from both old and recent hires, which is something we credit to the data and information produced by the PPA and GIA. It is clear that the recruitment strategy is succeeding."

Silverlake reports that since the implementation of the PPA and GIA, it has also been able to attract a younger workforce, with the average age of its staff dropping from 30 to 25 in the last five years. This has opened the business up to a new talent pool and introduced a younger generation into a notoriously 'old school' industry – which is good for the business' future.

Simon concludes: "Psychometric assessments have revolutionised our recruitment process. We now know what the ideal candidate is like – and have the tools to spot them. We're no longer falling for stereotypes, instead we have a systematic approach. This has also helped us identify, attract and retain younger staff – something everyone in the industry is trying to do, but we've cracked it!"

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**Tools
used**

PPA
Personal Profile Analysis

GIA
General Intelligence
Assessment

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



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