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LETTERS

Ancient SAT Scores Are Poor Indicators for the Mature

Using the SAT to somehow project job performance years after a candidate has taken the SAT is not a HR best practice.

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Just as you wouldn't use a ball-peen hammer to chop down a tree, so too should companies not use the SAT as a job-candidate assessment tool ("[Job Hunt? Dig Up Those SAT Scores](#)," Marketplace, Feb. 26). The SAT is simply the wrong tool for the job. As indicated by the College Board, which administers the test, the SAT is a predictor only of first-year college success. Using the SAT to somehow project job performance years after a candidate has taken the SAT is not a HR best practice and potentially exposes an employer to legal challenges by disgruntled candidates. Employers interested in assessing for problem-solving ability (the single strongest predictor of job performance, even at senior levels) should know that a number of more appropriate and empirically validated assessment tools are commercially available.

Sharon Sackett

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How ironic that some businesses are wrapping their hiring decisions around applicants' SAT scores at the same time that educators are questioning whether those same tests are reliable predictors of success. There is an important conversation under way about the most effective ways to evaluate prospective college students, and a growing chorus that SAT scores are only one piece of the puzzle. While hard numbers seem tempting in their clarity, behind them is a web of subjectivity. High scores are often associated with high incomes and don't always correlate with graduation and career readiness: our bottom line.

In a tough economy, business executives and educators are both looking closely at their investments in the talent pool. However, educators who are preparing students for professional success and leadership already know that ascertaining individual potential is much more complicated than a test score.

Ann Kirschner

Dean

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Even if I could get past the absurdity of evaluating a professional job candidate based on his/her SAT score, I am sure, as a hiring manager, I would eventually open myself up to legal problems when asking for the results. Those who give me an answer based on a 1600 score are obviously in their upper 20s. Ten years from now, the SAT inquiry will be an illegal interview question, as the response, whether based on a 1600 or a 2400 score, will automatically put the candidate into an "older" or "younger" bucket.

Keith Rosicker

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