

SkillsOne® Technology Enables Texas Instruments to Get More Out of Assessments

Although strong concentrations of tech giant Texas Instruments' 34,000 employees live and work in northern Texas, many are scattered around the United States and nearly half live outside the nation's borders. Steve Hardesty, manager of Coaching and Assessment Services, needed to find ways to serve this far-flung workforce both efficiently and consistently. Part of the answer was technology.

When Hardesty was hired by Texas Instruments (TI), he was already a believer in the potential of assessments to improve workplace development. Upon his arrival at TI, he found that his enthusiasm for the use of assessments was shared by management, but he also recognized that there was room for improvement. What enabled Hardesty to help TI achieve a breakthrough in its use of assessments was online administration—provided by CPP's SkillsOne® Web site.

Assessments can be powerful tools for improving people's ability to understand themselves and others. In the hands of an experienced workshop facilitator, assessments can streamline and focus a leadership development or team-building exercise. They are efficient as well, usually requiring only a few minutes for the participant to complete. But, as Hardesty saw at Texas Instruments, the scoring of assessments is not always so efficient.

For some assessments there, the questionnaire had to be mailed to a scoring center, and the turnaround time could be up to a week. Participants who signed up late for a workshop or were otherwise delayed in completing the questionnaire wouldn't have their results back in time for the workshop. And with self-scorable assessments, the trainer would often not see the results for some or most participants before the session began. These problems were sometimes compounded by the tendency of trainers, some with no formal certification in the use of assessments,

to select instruments that were not validated or were inappropriate for the purpose of the workshop.

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Steve Hardesty,
Manager of Coaching and Assessment Services

Then CPP, Inc., introduced online administration and management for its assessments. “The SkillsOne Web site was just what we needed,” says Hardesty. “Now, everyone who will be participating in a workshop or training session is asked to complete a questionnaire online. Last-minute sign-ups are no problem. The trainer gets the results in advance—in time to tailor each session to the specific participants. For the trainer, it makes all the difference to have the assessments completed and the results in hand.” With its diverse, dispersed, and technologically advanced workforce, TI was ready for online assessments. “When the SkillsOne site came out, we were all over it,” adds Kathryn Collins, IT's director of worldwide training and organization effectiveness.

For Hardesty, an extra benefit of SkillsOne was that it enabled him to “standardize around a smaller number of assessments.” Plus, he continues, “executive coaching is an important part of my job. Online administration lets me



use assessments more effectively. The coaching subject can complete the pre-work in easy chunks, and I have a great deal of information before a session begins.” CPP’s SkillsOne Web site has even given Texas Instruments leverage with other assessment providers. “In one case we were able to push a vendor that was entirely paper based to go online—first on our intranet and eventually on its own Web site.”

Here’s how the process works now at TI. When Hardesty is using Myers-Briggs® assessments—to help improve team communication, for example—he reviews the results in advance but holds them back. “I start by explaining the underlying theory and type preferences,” says Hardesty. “Then we go into an exercise in which each participant tries to identify his or her own preferences. When I finally reveal their individual assessment results, they are genuinely ready. And they are open to the next step—the practical application of Myers-Briggs awareness in the workplace.” Plus, all CPP assessments, including the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*® instrument, have a strong foundation of research and user experience, and a wealth of supporting materials.

The assessments have not changed, but the use of technology to deliver and manage them has enabled both trainers and trainees at Texas Instruments to arrive at workshops better prepared and to leave with more tangible and longer-lasting results.

About CPP, Inc.

At CPP, our only job is to help you be a better HR professional and, in turn, help every employee flourish. While we’re best known for our products, like the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*® assessment, CPP is also a group of people who can offer you the information, guidance, and support you need.

We offer solutions to help you improve organizational performance and address whatever challenges you face—from team building, leadership and coaching, and conflict management to career development, selection, and retention. Perhaps that’s why millions of people in more than 100 countries use our products each year. They include individuals at Fortune 500 companies and businesses of all sizes, as well as educators, government agencies, and training and development consultants.

Since its founding in 1956, CPP, Inc., has been a leading publisher and provider of innovative products and services for individual and organizational development. Available in more than 20 languages, the company’s hundreds of products help people and organizations grow and develop by improving performance and increasing understanding. Among CPP’s world-renowned brands and services are the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*®, *Strong Interest Inventory*®, *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument* (TKI), *FIRO*®, *CPI 260*®, and *California Psychological Inventory*™ (CPI™) assessments, and CPP Professional Services.

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