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ORIGINS OF THE FIRO BUSINESS™ INSTRUMENT

Organizations seeking to develop and get the most out of teams and leaders have found assessments helpful in maximizing their investment in human capital. Many leading organizations have used the *Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation– Behavior*™ (FIRO-B®) instrument, developed in the late 1950s by William Schutz, to examine interpersonal needs and how needs affect behavior. The richness of data from this instrument is prized by consultants, practitioners, and clients alike.

Although the FIRO-B instrument is often used within organizational contexts, it was not developed specifically for business application. As language has evolved since the FIRO-B tool first came out in 1958, terms such as *inclusion, control,* and *affection* now are perceived differently when used in business settings. Practitioners who use the FIRO-B tool in such contexts appreciate the FIRO® information but have expressed their desire for a shorter instrument that describes interpersonal needs in terms of workplace behaviors. Thus, the FIRO Business™ instrument, an extension and updated version of the original FIRO-B assessment, was developed to meet these requests.

Goals in Developing the FIRO Business™ Instrument

Three specific goals guided the work that led to the FIRO Business instrument:

- Make the user experience more positive by reducing redundancy in the FIRO items.

- Use terms that are suited to business applications.

- Establish international norms so the tool can be readily used by organizations around the globe.

The first goal for the extension was to reduce apparent redundancy of the item content found in the original 54-item version of the FIRO-B assessment while maintaining the psychometric quality of the tool. In its original form, duplicate item stems were often used to measure both the *expressed* and *wanted* dimensions of an interpersonal need. Although this makes sense from a measurement perspective, the subtlety of the approach was often frustrating to individuals completing the assessment. Upon analysis,

it was determined that the concepts embedded in the FIRO-B instrument could be adequately measured with fewer items that would be less redundant. Thus, the FIRO Business tool was shortened to 30 items instead of the 54 items in the FIRO-B assessment.

The second goal for the extension included improving the business application of the FIRO-B instrument. This was done by removing psychological jargon and other terms for the scales that were less appropriate for use in a business environment. The terms *inclusion, control,* and *affection* in the FIRO-B instrument were therefore replaced with the terms *involvement, influence,* and *connection* in the FIRO Business instrument. It should be noted that the FIRO Business construct descriptions remain the same as those in the original assessment. While updates to theoretical constructs in instrument revision are not uncommon (e.g., the revision of the WAIS-III by the Psychological Corporation; Wechsler, 1997), the FIRO Business instrument is not intended to broaden the scope of the constructs being measured. Rather, the FIRO Business instrument utilizes a subset of items applicable across cultures to measure the preexisting constructs examined by the FIRO-B tool.

Developing this extension offered the opportunity to make a global instrument based on data from respondents around the world, with items administered in several languages. This responds to businesses' need to have tools that employees in multiple remote offices speaking a variety of languages can use. Thus, the third goal for the extension included the development of an international business–specific norm group. This goal resulted in a large-scale project that included the translation and adaptation* of the FIRO-B instrument items and instructions into several languages, simultaneous data collection in over a dozen countries, and an analysis approach that looked at both the combined international samples and the data from individual adaptations of the as-

sessment. The decision to develop an international norm group was made based on current international usage of the FIRO-B instrument.

Theory of Interpersonal Needs and Behaviors

The intent of the FIRO Business and FIRO-B instruments is to examine behaviors driven by interpersonal needs. Understanding needs and the resulting behaviors can help individuals increase interpersonal effectiveness and ultimately improve their relationships with others (Hammer & Schnell, 2000). Interpersonal needs, as defined by Schutz (1958, p. 15), are needs that are "satisfied only through the attainment of a satisfactory relation with others." The FIRO-B instrument is based on the theory that fulfillment of the three interpersonal needs—Inclusion, Control, and Affection—serves as motivation of behaviors in daily functioning. The FIRO Business instrument measures these same interpersonal needs. However, in the FIRO Business instrument they are renamed Involvement, Influence, and Connection, respectively. See Table 1 for descriptions.

Interpersonal Needs

The interpersonal need Inclusion, called Involvement in the FIRO Business tool, refers to the extent to which individuals need to have social interactions and associations with others (Hammer & Schnell, 2000). Individuals with a high need for inclusion seek attention, contact, and recognition from others (Waterman & Rogers, 1996), often stemming from a desire to belong and to be noticed by others (Hammer & Schnell, 2000). Individuals' need for inclusion pertains not only to the need to be accepted by others but also to the extent to which those individuals interact with or invite others to join a group. Those who engage in inclusion behaviors go out of their way to attract attention from others in group settings. They partake in behaviors that serve to distinguish themselves from others and thus make them identifiable (Schutz, 1958).

**Translation is used here to mean translating words from one language into another. *Adaptation* is used here with a broader meaning, that of making an assessment appropriate to use in another country or culture. Adaptation includes a translation process, typically.