



Tips For Selecting a TOWES Assessment

Selecting the appropriate TOWES assessment will yield the results you are looking for. The following questions will help guide you through the selection process.

What is the purpose for testing?

A first step in selecting an assessment is to clearly establish the purpose for testing. Common reasons for testing include:

- identifying skill gaps in preparation for training.
- measuring work readiness for a specific occupation.
- recruiting and selecting employees.
- helping clients make career planning decisions.
- measuring learning gains.

In general, for employment related testing the national occupational standards found the Essential Skills Profiles provide a good indication of the level of assessment and version of the assessment that should be used. If the purpose for testing is related to training or career planning, a General Series assessment is often selected.

What are the skill level requirements?

Selecting the appropriate level of assessment is crucial. Assessments that are too basic or too complex for their intended use will yield poor results and provide limited information.

For recruitment, work-readiness and other employment applications, you should select an assessment that measures at the level required for successful employment. This information can be located in the Essential Skills Profiles, but in most cases, the Canadian labour market requires skills at Level 3 or higher.

For identifying skill gaps, measuring learning gains and other training applications, you should select an assessment that will diagnose individuals who are at-risk and may require additional support. Typically, individuals with skills at Level 3 or higher are successful in training so a Level 2/3 assessment will allow you to identify those who may need remedial interventions, and those who already have the skills needed.



TOWES

What is the predicted skill level of the test taker?

Consideration should be given to the anticipated skill level(s) of a client or group of clients, especially when working with low-skilled or high-skilled individuals.

- Individuals with low-skills will become easily discouraged when writing TOWES, regardless of the purpose for testing. In these instances it is appropriate to select a Level 1/2 test.
- Conversely, highly-skilled individuals will be motivated to demonstrate their full range of abilities and should complete a Level 2/3 or Level 3/4 assessment.

Will test results be used for recruitment, selection or succession planning?

Employment testing is considered high-stakes. In general, selection criteria are chosen based on bona fide occupational or training requirements, and not on an arbitrarily selected skill level. In other words, the assessment used should reflect the skills needed for work. The Essential Skills Profiles provide a good resource for information on the skill level requirements for over 200 Canadian occupations.

Is a specific result or general indication of skill needed?

If the purpose of testing is to gain a general indication of a test taker's ability, select a version of TOWES that will provide you with a broad range of information. The most broadly-based version of TOWES is the G2 (level 2/3) because it is representative of several different sectors and occupations. It will also allow for a wide range of test scores as it measures mid-range in the testing scale.

Will the test be administered to a diverse group of test takers?

If the group of test takers is expected to have a range of skills and abilities, you may wish to select a version of TOWES that is appropriate for the largest number of individuals (if no other occupational or training requirements are a factor in testing). The General Series Level 2/3 is the most broadly-based version of TOWES.

Is the test group from a particular industry or sector?

TOWES has developed five sector-specific assessments for industries including manufacturing, aerospace, office administration, health care and apprenticeable trades. The assessments are constructed from workplace materials that are commonly used in these industries which lends face validity to the tools. The tools also target the skill level requirements for work in these industries and are based on a compilation of several Occupational Profiles.

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