

The Inventory for Work Attitude and Motivation

"Mapping the New Landscape of Human Performance"

What is the iWAM?

- The *Inventory for Work Attitude and Motivation* (iWAM) is a unique assessment tool that measures an individual's motivational and attitudinal patterns.
- These patterns are powerful filters of experience that directly and indirectly influence emotions, decision making, and behavior yet are relatively "invisible" to the individual.
- Motivational and attitudinal patterns influence behavior by interacting with our personality traits, emotions, values, and competencies.
- Based on research, motivational and attitudinal patterns are a major force in understanding and predicting performance levels in given roles in defined contexts.

iWAM – Our "Filters" on Experience

- λ Motivational and attitudinal patterns filter and impact how we see and respond to the world by:
 - Blocking some experiences from awareness
 - Translating and giving meaning to other experiences to create our sense of "reality"
- λ Motivational and attitudinal filters are an integral part of our habits of thinking, decision making, and behaving
- λ Motivational and attitudinal filters are often below our conscious awareness ("off the radar")
- λ Motivational and attitudinal filters influence our personality and our behavior which are central to the quality of:
 - Relationships with others
 - Communication to and from us

iWAM – Context Matters!

- "Context" = Frame of reference we put around a situation
- We put different frames around different life situations and roles (e.g., job, family, play)
- Because of the impact of *context* on our "filters," we may want to behave differently in different situations
- Since iWAM results reflect the context used in completing the test, to understand someone's behavior, it is important to understand the context (framework) within which he or she is operating
- The current version of the iWAM is most useful when completed using the context of "work" or "your job." If an individual uses a context other than work or if more than one work context is considered when completing the iWAM, results may be affected.

iWAM – Understanding the Results

- In and of themselves, iWAM scores are neither “good” nor “bad.” The iWAM assesses an individual’s motivational and attitudinal patterns in the context of work. The two key questions are:

How well do this individual’s motivational and attitudinal patterns align with the requirements of the role in this organization?

How effective is this person in communicating with and relating to people who have similar or different motivational and attitudinal patterns?

Whether a given pattern is an asset or liability (or even irrelevant) is a function of the requirements of (a) the context or culture and (b) how well the patterns work for a person in a given situation.

- λ The iWAM does not assess ability. It assesses motivational and attitudinal patterns that impact how we use our abilities. The iWAM *does not tell you whether you are able to do something*; it gives you information about *how much you will want to do it or how much energy is consumed when doing it*.
- λ The iWAM is not a personality assessment. Although motivational and attitudinal patterns will interact with an individual’s personality, there are two main differences: (a) personality traits tend to be stable over time; that is, they do not change; and (b) personality will tend to be consistent across a variety of situations. Neither of these principles may be true of motivational and attitudinal patterns. They may shift over time and as a result of being in a different context.
- λ Sometimes the data do not match an individual’s perception of him- or herself. There several possibilities related to such a situation. Here are the three most common reasons:
 - 1) When looking at the results, the individual may interpret what the scale is measuring based on the title or may assume that it measures an ability rather than a motivation. For example, the “Assertiveness” scale is not a measure of someone behaving boldly and confidently. It is an indication of how much I’m motivated to have others follow my rules. “Problem Solving” is neither a measure of ability nor of how much one does it. It is a measure of how much one likes to solve problems and may reflect whether one looks out for the existence of problems.
 - 2) Since the iWAM measures patterns that are “below the surface” of awareness, there may be occasions when someone hears a description of themselves that does not fit their self-perception. This results in a discrepancy that does not make sense to the individual and often, as cognitive dissonance theory suggests, we will look to external sources as the reason for the discrepancy.
 - 3) The individual may have been thinking of a context other than current work when answering some of the questions on the survey. When someone responds on the basis of multiple contexts, the test results may appear to be inaccurate when evaluating them on the basis of a specific context. Remember, one can have different patterns in different contexts.

Whenever there is a difference between the iWAM results and the individual’s perception of self, we recommend two things: (1) Be sure the individual is interpreting what the scale measures, not just what they assumed it measures, and (2) check to be certain that the individual did not use multiple contexts in responding to the questions. Finally, there have been occasions in which the result for a given scale is not quite accurate. That may be a result of the limitations of test construction. However, we have rarely found that to be the case for more than one of the 48 scales.

iWAM – The Power of Language and Our “Hot Buttons”

- λ Our experiences are stored with and accessed through language
- λ Language or situation can trigger physical and emotional responses that are connected to our stored experiences
- λ The physical and emotional reactions triggered by language can be impacted by our motivational and attitudinal “hot buttons” (patterns)
- λ When pushed, our “hot buttons” may:
 - Motivate us to action (get us going in a desired direction)
 - De-motivate us from action (fail to get us going in a desired direction)
 - Not motivate us at all.

iWAM – Four Goals for Using the Inventory

There are four primary goals for using the *Inventory for Work Attitude and Motivation*:

- 1) To expand our understanding of motivational and attitudinal patterns in general and how these patterns influence our motivation, decision making, emotions, and behavior (Self Awareness Goal)
- 2) To identify how one person’s motivation and attitudes may be similar to or different from the patterns of others with whom they interact and to understand the potential effect of those similarities and differences (Social Awareness Goal)
- 3) To describe how the individual’s motivational and attitudinal patterns compare to those of the *standard group* for an organization or a country and the implications for the individual in those contexts (Cultural Awareness Goal)
- 4) To explore how understanding motivational and attitudinal patterns can help (a) maximize the positive potential of the individual in a given context and (b) minimize the negative impacts on communication, relationships, and overall performance in the context (Performance Goal).

iWAM – Contact Information

For information on *The Inventory for Work Attitude and Motivation* and its uses including coaching, leadership development, team building, selection, and performance improvement contact:

Carl L. Harshman, Ph.D.

The Institute for Work Attitude & Motivation

8037 Watkins Drive
Saint Louis, Missouri 63105

Telephone: 314.568.7396
Email: carl@iwaminstitute.com
Institute website: www.iwaminstitute.com.

“Mapping the New Landscape of Human Performance”