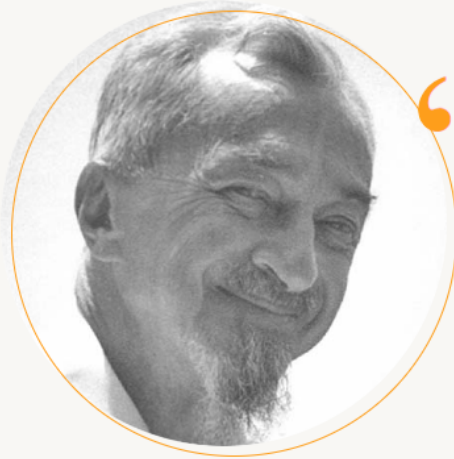


Research and guidance since 1922

The Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation, Inc. grew from a testing program begun in 1922 by Mr. Johnson O'Connor for the General Electric Company in Massachusetts. Mr. O'Connor, who had graduated from Harvard University, started working at General Electric because he wanted to learn about engineering. One of his main projects was trying to find ways to increase efficiency in an effort to reduce overall costs. Along with Mr. F.P. Cox, Mr. O'Connor theorized that if people were doing work that was natural to their abilities, efficiency would increase and employees would be more satisfied and productive.



“The Individual who knows his own aptitudes, and their relative strengths, chooses more intelligently among the world’s host of opportunities.”

~ Johnson O'Connor

The early years of industrial testing

Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Cox decided to analyze various jobs to see if they could identify the natural ability each one would need. One of the first jobs analyzed was that of meter assemblers. A dexterity test, which is still in use today, was designed and administered to nearly all of General Electric's 3,000 employees, most of whom had volunteered to be involved in Mr. O'Connor's work. From that one test, the Foundation was born.

Fitting people to the right jobs

As they continued to work on test development and analyses, the point of view of what they were doing was slowly shifting. Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Cox now began to consider individuals first, instead of their particular jobs, becoming more interested in placing them in the jobs most suitable to their abilities.

Demand increases

Soon, employees wanted to have their children tested because they felt that students could also benefit from learning about their aptitudes, and Mr. O'Connor was hard-pressed to keep up with the demand. He began doing testing in his own time, and started thinking about setting up an actual testing center. The first office, the Human Engineering Laboratory, was established on Beacon Street, in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood, in 1938. A center in Chicago came soon thereafter, in conjunction with what is now the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Growth and expansion

In 1939, the Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation / Human Engineering Laboratory, Inc. was incorporated as a nonprofit educational and scientific organization. Since then, hundreds of thousands of people have found out about their natural abilities and used the information to make career and educational decisions. The Foundation now has eleven offices around the United States, as well as a Research Department located in Chicago.

A Portrait from Memory

George Wyatt, President of the Foundation from 1978 to 1993, relates his personal memories in [Johnson O'Connor: A Portrait from Memory](#).

Aptitude Assessment

You will be asked to do a wide variety of tasks during your testing, such as assembling blocks, remembering numbers, solving puzzles, and listening to simple tunes. Paper and pencil tests are kept to a minimum. About half of our tests are given individually by a trained test administrator; the rest are given using audio-visual equipment.



How the tests are administered

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How our tests are different

Many people ask how our testing differs from other kinds of tests people take to help them make decisions about education and work. Personality tests, interest questionnaires, and IQ testing are all familiar concepts to many people.

Have questions about learning differences? See [here](#).

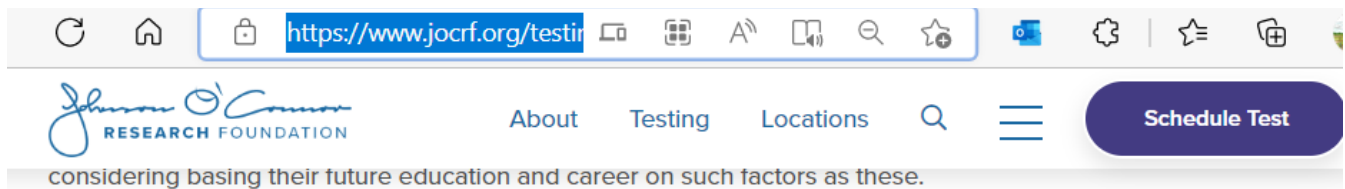
Interest and personality tests

One important difference is that our tests do not consist of answering self-perception questions or filling out forms. It is too easy to answer an attitude, perception, or interest question depending on your mood or opinion, or as you feel it ought to be answered. Even if approached sincerely, a personality test or interest questionnaire's results are based solely on how you feel about yourself, not on how well you actually can do a particular task.

Two people can be interested in engineering, but which of them has the necessary abilities to become a satisfied and productive engineer? Our testing would be able to provide that information.

IQ testing

Unlike an IQ score, which is of limited value in career selection, your aptitude test results form a pattern, showing your various strengths and weaknesses. Two people can have identical IQ scores but very different aptitude patterns.



Aptitude testing is particularly beneficial to anyone in this position, as our testing provides an objective source of information about personal strengths, especially useful if done before he or she has made any decisions about the future.

The Freshman

What about an incoming college freshman who has already been accepted to a few schools? If a student likes to write but also is interested in biology, how would diverging interests affect choosing what to study?

Aptitude testing can provide this student with some indication as to which career would ultimately be more satisfying and enjoyable. Our research has shown that people working in a field that provides an outlet for as many of their aptitudes as possible tend to be happier and more satisfied in their work than those who do not.

A thorough understanding of your aptitudes can help you identify which fields warrant further exploration.

Upperclassmen

Another common scenario is that of college sophomores or juniors who have already chosen a school and a major and are partway through their education. Perhaps they are struggling or feel overwhelmed by the work. Is the issue the major they have chosen? Is it the school they have selected? Perhaps a new class has opened up a world of ideas they hadn't previously considered. Should they change majors or schools?

Before making such decisions, knowledge about where your natural strengths lie would help you determine which path would use your own aptitude pattern.

The Graduating Senior

Consider the about-to-graduate senior who has invested almost four years and thousands of dollars in his or her education. How could aptitude testing help? The most obvious answer is that a knowledge of individual aptitudes can help anyone starting to investigate how to make use of a newly-earned degree.

If a student has studied marketing, clearly he or she is interested in pursuing jobs in that field, but which ones—marketing for a software firm, an investment house, or a hotel chain?

If a student is debating graduate school versus seeking full-time work, learning about whether working with and through others or specializing in a knowledge field could create new ambitions.

Choosing whether to seek opportunities to persuade or design, to conduct research or manage others, or to aim for any of the other alternatives confronting each graduate is what a discussion of natural abilities can help resolve.

The knowledge gained from an understanding of aptitudes can help narrow down such options, making you more directed during your evaluation of your job opportunities and future goals.

Read about how aptitude testing helped a student find a satisfying new college major in [From Economics to Film: One Who Dared To Switch](#).

While our minimum age for testing is fourteen, there really is no maximum age or “best” time to take the tests. Finding out about your natural abilities at any age is beneficial.

High school students

High school students preparing for college make up one portion of the Foundation’s clients. Identifying strengths and weaknesses as a result of aptitude testing can make the process of making decisions about schools and majors much easier. Before investing time and money in education, it makes sense to give some thought to how that education relates to careers.

College students and recent college graduates

College students may have already made some decisions about education and career, and they will benefit from learning about their aptitudes too. Gaining insight into which role is most appropriate for them within a given field, or learning about new ideas they hadn’t previously considered, are just two examples of the kinds of information college students would obtain from our testing.

Working adults

About half our clients are employed adults who want help in planning their career path. Adults who decide to take advantage of the Foundation’s aptitude testing program include people unhappy or dissatisfied by their current jobs, those facing promotions or transfers, and those who are facing downsizing or other types of career transition.

It is also valuable for adults considering further education, contemplating opening a business, who are thinking about entirely new careers, or who are returning to work after raising a family. Even those about to retire who are looking for ways to make their retirement years satisfying and productive may find that learning about their aptitudes helps them make more informed decisions.

While aptitude testing is helpful for many people, it is not for everyone. If we determine that, for whatever reason, the testing process is not yielding accurate results, we reserve the right to stop the testing.