

## Career Advice

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# Self-assessment can motivate career success



Recent studies show a correlation between self-awareness in leaders and the overall financial performance of their companies. Understanding your own work-related strengths and skill gaps is an important step toward improving your overall work performance. Strategies to improve self-awareness include self-reflection, assessment tests and maybe even a personal coach or mentor.

### Q. How can an assessment test help me?

**A.** A self-administered assessment test (personality test, behavior test, leadership skills test, etc.) can help you recognize your strengths as well as identify skills for further development and focus. Knowing your own strengths and weaknesses is a powerful tool for both personal and organizational growth. As you understand yourself better, this can lead to a better understanding of others as well. It also may assist you in working more collaboratively with others who have different strengths and viewpoints.

Ideally, assessment tests administered by an employer should be used for development and not disciplinary purposes. Employers should consult legal counsel if they have questions about the use of assessment tests.

### Q. Aren't personal coaches exclusively for senior executives?

**A.** A qualified and experienced personal coach can be a worthwhile investment, but for many aspiring executives, hiring someone may not be economically feasible. Check whether there are leadership development fellowships or other programs in your industry that might be a suitable substitute. Seeking a mentor who may have experience in coaching or professional development also can be helpful.

### Q. How do I keep track of my progress?

**A.** Keeping your own written log of your work performance can provide material for annual self-reflection. It also can help you compare your employer's evaluation of your performance to your own perception. Over time, notes on a calendar or in a log can reveal trends or traits that can help you identify opportunities for improvement.