

THE SCIENCE OF UPPLFT

**How we match talent and why
there's no such thing as a
perfect match.**

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Overview

Our initial hypothesis at Upplft, written on butcher paper on one of our founder's apartment walls back in 2021 was "Why isn't hiring like dating?" We spend more waking hours in the office than we do at home and with our significant other. Yet when it comes to hiring, we still rely on outdated data and rarely scratch the surface as to **WHO** a person is versus **WHAT** they can do.

The opportunity cost of a bad hire or placement can equate to nearly 3x the annual salary of that role and with an over dependence on verifying capability, how do we create lasting working relationships? And build an engaging and efficient hiring experience?

Upplft draws on the latest evidence in psychology, sociology and business studies and applies this to the science of matching. So, whether you are a Candidate or Hiring Manager, you can make informed decisions, remove biases, and unlock the opportunities that are right for you.

The power of the science behind Upplft is based on:

- 1 The unique blend of three evidence-based factors we know are important to a good match; personality, values and culture; and
- 2 The savvy approach to collecting these factors that elevates the whole experience.

At Upplft we recognise the tricky balance between data and experience. We continue to challenge ourselves as to how can we facilitate informed decisions without compromising the experience for all.

Ultimately the most important step in hiring is meeting someone. And our role at Upplft is to help you get to that stage as quickly as possible.

In this whitepaper we explore and explain how we think about matching, the frameworks we use and the experience that supports it.



PERSONALITY

It's powerful but it is not all as it seems

You've probably come across personality as a factor that gets used in hiring to match Candidates and roles. Personality is important as it reflects the behavioural, thinking and emotional patterns that shape how we approach the world and interact with our roles and each other.

Research shows that personality traits correlate with work behaviours such as:

- **Emotionality** (emotional stability) plays an important role in the ability to adjust and suitably respond to ensure successful workplace stability.
- **Extraversion** relates to assertiveness, influence and sociability in the workplace. It's not always that simple though, for instance multiple high assertive individuals leads to friction and reduced team performance.
- **Agreeableness** relates to trust, warmth and kindness and can be very important in team settings to create supportive environments, however, in certain environments it can lead to groupthink.

- **Conscientiousness** often relates to a focus on the task at hand. This is usually an important characteristic however it might also result in lack of flexibility or burnout.

There is no right or wrong in personality, people are people and it is often more about fit, for the brand, the team and the role. Every attribute can be a superpower or a nemesis.

Critically, not all measures of personality are the same. While popular, some personality measures verge on pseudoscience. Upplft draws on the highly validated and replicated **HEXACO** model of personality.



The **HEXACO** model of personality structure is a six-dimensional model of human personality measuring Honesty-Humility (H), Emotionality (E), Extraversion (X), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), and Openness to Experience (O).

When considering how to capture personality we wanted to remove friction in the experience. From a Candidate perspective, there's nothing worse than creating unnecessary steps in an application process. However, we also wanted to ensure there's enough friction to obtain a commitment from a Candidate to apply for a role.

As part of any application, we provide both a short and long form self-administered assessment, minimising the burden but providing strong reliability, for only a few minutes of your time.

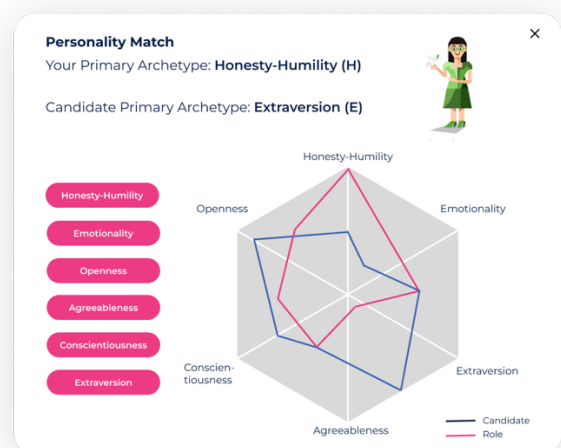
We then match this to a personality that the Hiring Manager determines as suitable for the role and display that alignment in our platform.

Through feedback we've identified that there isn't necessarily a need for deep psychometric testing up-front in an application process.

What we do at Upplift is provide additional data and indicators of a match. This allows Hiring Manager's and Candidates to think differently, ask better questions as part of an assessment process and surface data that matters.

The HEXACO survey has the highest self-reported validity for personality (0.7 to 0.8 correlation with observer) so we can be confident in our match, even from a short form assessment.

The HEXACO framework also allows us to present negative impacts of personality misalignment and therefore helps Hiring Manager's and Candidates identify concerns that may need to be clarified during an assessment process.



Upplift Personality Alignment

VALUES

They are our compass

What about values? We know values are important, as they represent the fundamental beliefs and principles that drive our behaviour. Values guide behaviours in the absence of explicit direction, values shape our goals and ways of doing things.

When employees find that their roles call for behaviours that are congruent with how they like to see themselves (their preferred self-image), they are more likely to find their roles inviting, valuable, worthwhile and more willing to fully engage themselves.

Research suggests that when the values of the employee do not match the values of the organisation, the employee experiences a conflict with work and life value congruence.

There are lots of models of values but what is important is identifying the wide range of values that are relevant to a good match.

We conducted research of over 300 company websites and value statements and created a list of 20 nouns that we believe represent the common values we can match on.

In the Upplft Platform a business profile captures their values and we request the top 10 values from Candidates, meaning they need to filter from our list to find their own core values alignment. We can then simply match these and present to both parties, if and where their values are aligned.

Interestingly, in the early days of testing we identified the need to up the number of values captured from a Candidate from 5 to 10 as we found most would choose a subset of values (Teamwork, Communication, Trust, Honesty, Respect) as they were subconsciously gamifying their application on the pretence that's what they'd expect from a company value statement.

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for a form titled "Tell us about yourself" (5 of 6). The question is "What's your top 10 values?" with the instruction "Please select as many as you like". Below the question is a search bar labeled "Select option" with a dropdown arrow. Below the search bar are 10 value options in pink rounded rectangles: Trust, Honesty, Passion, Optimism, Commitment, Efficiency, Positivity, Reliability, Culture, and Respect. At the bottom are "Back" and "Next" buttons.

Upplft Candidate Values

We've found asking for a larger set of values helps identify what we call a Candidates' "true values". These are the values that identify a true self and therefore a deeper insight into the way a Candidate may think, act or behave in a workplace.

Then there is the consideration for how you prove either a Company or Candidate live and breathe their values.

Ultimately, you can't (up front).

However, understanding the foundational thinking of a Candidate and what a Company stands for is one more step or dataset that you can't garner from a resume, allowing for more informed interactions during assessments.

We help a Hiring Manager to understand what types of questions to ask, what considerations there may be or even what type of assessment process is suitable for a Candidate to help drive the best business outcome.

And we help Candidates find a Company that aligns with their core values, something you won't find in a Job Description.



CULTURE

It is more than just the vibe of a company - it is the tribe we belong to

Organisational culture is “the set of shared, taken-for granted implicit assumptions that a group holds and that determines how it perceives, thinks about and reacts to its various Environments”.

A meta study exploring data from more than 80 empirical studies identified a framework of Competing Values which outlines a matrix of 4 types of culture.



The Competing Values Framework

The **Clan** culture type is internally oriented and is reinforced by a flexible organisational structure. A core belief in clan cultures is that the organisation's trust in and commitment to employees facilitates open communication and employee involvement. Consequently, clannish organisations value attachment, affiliation, membership, and support.

The **Adhocracy** culture type is externally oriented and is supported by a flexible organisational structure. They believe that an idealistic and novel vision induces members to be creative and take risks. Hence, adhocratic organisations value growth, stimulation, variety, autonomy, and attention to detail.

The **Market** culture type is externally oriented and is reinforced by an organisational structure steeped in control mechanisms. They have a fundamental assumption that an achievement focus produces competitiveness and aggressiveness, resulting in productivity and shareholder value in the short and immediate term. The primary belief in market cultures is that clear goals and contingent rewards motivate employees to aggressively perform and meet stakeholders' expectations. Therefore, market organisations value

communication, competence, and achievement.

The **Hierarchy** culture type is internally oriented and is supported by an organisational structure driven by control mechanisms. A core assumption in hierarchical cultures is that control, stability, and predictability foster efficiency. A predominant belief in hierarchy cultures is that employees meet expectations when their roles are clearly defined. As a result, hierarchical cultures are believed to value precise communication, routinisation, formalisation, and consistency.

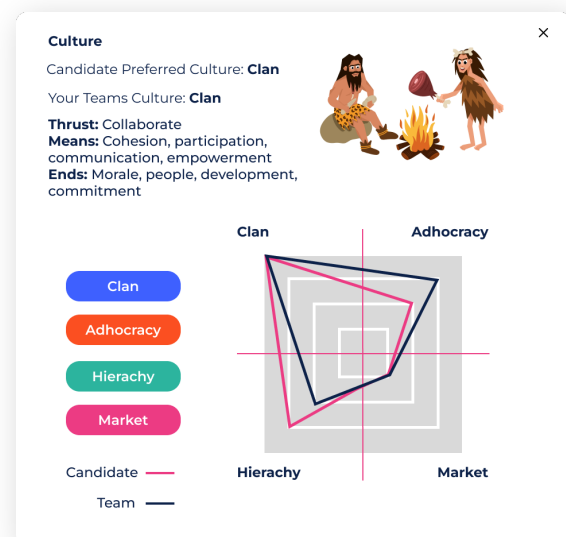
At Upplft we consider Company culture to be tiered. At a minimum we see 3 types of culture that we would want a Candidate to be aligned with:

- 1 Company – documented and matched through their values, mission and purpose statement(s).
- 2 Founder/Leadership – through their behaviours, management styles, values and personality and;
- 2 Team – through their ways of working, communication and team values.

With multiple levels of culture to consider, how do we align a Candidate to a Company?

At Upplft we consider alignment to Company and Leadership culture through values matching i.e. do and can you co-exist for the same purpose?

We then ask Hiring Manager's as part of raising a role to identify the Team culture which we then match to a Candidates' preferred environment they believe they will excel within.



Upplft Culture Matching

Again, this provides additional information for Hiring Manager's and Candidates that helps to indicate a good match, which can be explored during the assessment process and then crucially reflected upon once in the workforce.

HOW WE MATCH

Introducing the Upplift DNA

So what's the secret sauce, how do we match?

We break down a match across 6 keys areas:

Hygiene, Technical Skills, Soft Skills, Personality, Values and Culture.

Imagine an empty glass jar. You fill it with golf balls and it looks full (Hygiene). But then you can add pebbles and they fill the gaps (Skills) between the golf balls. Then you add marbles (Personality) Sand (Values) and Water (Culture) and finally the jar is full.

That's how we match, that is our DNA.

There are some nuances of course and that is why we utilise Ai which allows us to continue to learn and evolve so that our matching improves, perpetually.

And the other aspect is choice. Our algorithm, whilst based on evidence and scientific frameworks is just that, a framework. And our core value of

Allowing our customers to design their own hiring experience means that we allow matching to be manually changed (within defined thresholds) as hiring for someone senior in comparison to an intern should be different. For example, you may weigh Personality, Values and Cultural alignment more heavily than Skills, when that person is inexperienced.

The screenshot shows the 'Matching' interface, labeled '2 of 6'. It features a header with the title 'Matching' and a dropdown menu set to 'Full-Time Employee'. Below the header, a text box explains that users can change the matching way by sliding bars or selecting templates. The main area displays a 'Match %' bar with segments for Hygiene (15%), Technical Skills (40%), Soft Skills (10%), Personality (20%), Values (10%), and Culture (5%). Below this, five sliders allow for manual adjustment: Personality (0% to 35%, set at 20%), Culture (0% to 35%, set at 5%), Values (0% to 35%, set at 10%), Technical Skills (0% to 50%, set at 40%), and Soft Skills (0% to 50%, set at 10%). 'Back' and 'Next' buttons are at the bottom.

Category	Match %
Hygiene	15%
Technical Skills	40%
Soft Skills	10%
Personality	20%
Values	10%
Culture	5%

Category	Range	Current Value
Personality	0% - 35%	20%
Culture	0% - 35%	5%
Values	0% - 35%	10%
Technical Skills	0% - 50%	40%
Soft Skills	0% - 50%	10%

Upplift Matching Algorithm Designer

Whilst we've done the hard work, we recognise the need to empower Hiring Manager's to design the way they manage, assess and match Talent (with some guidance).

SUMMARY

The balance between outcome and experience.

Hiring and Talent is an outcome driven transaction. The outcome (hopefully) being a Candidate joining a Company to help fulfil a business need.

Driving that outcome is hard due to numerous factors such as competition, economics, skills shortages, legislation and changes in workforce demands. Speed, Cost and Quality are vital to a business and for the Candidate, the experience.

Hiring is the frontline of your brand, and that means the Candidate experience is vital. The balance is how do you a) capture enough data in b) a simple way and c) create enough friction to ensure quality of applications.

We often say that “Apply Now” is the worst thing to happen to Hiring Managers and Talent Teams and we continue to test and evolve our process to ensure we find the balance of outcome and experience.

At Upplft our focus is on identifying early indicators of success, through

matching Candidates to a Company on data that we believe (and prove over time) matters.

Our desired outcome is for Hiring Manager's to meet Candidates as quickly as possible and make informed and empowered decisions.

Our research and customer testing have led us to a framework that is evidence backed, multi factored and more importantly can be designed by a Company as to the experience they wish to provide Candidates.

Whilst we can't guarantee a perfect match, Upplft facilitates longer lasting working relationships, leading to increased productivity and wellness in the workplace.



AUTHORS



Adam Caines

Founder & Chief Product
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Adam is one of the Co-Founders at Upplft, focussed on bringing all aspects of the Product to market. Over the last 18 years, Adam has worked in a broad range of industry verticals in the technology space across both the UK and Australia.

Adam is passionate about building products, working on solutions that evolve industries and bring tangible solutions to market.



Kris White

Founder & CEO KWC
Agency

Kris is a behavioural researcher and behaviour change specialist consulting on behavioural challenges facing businesses, governments, and social organisations. Over the last 20 years he has worked in research, communications and human centred design agencies in Australia, UK, Singapore and Iraq and holds a Double Major B.A. in psychology and philosophy.

Kris is the long-standing behavioural advisor to Upplft, integrating behavioural science, cognitive, social psychology into Upplft's evidence-based approach.

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ABOUT UPPLFT

Upplft are redefining the experience for contingent workforces, providing an end-to-end platform that transforms the way you engage Talent. Upplft empowers you to define your Talent experience from when Talent first engage with you through to hiring, onboarding, pay and compliance.

Create new ways of working with your contingent workforce, automate and humanise where it matters. We help you make better decisions that drive business outcomes. Manage & design your Talent and Partner experience aligned to your business outcomes.

Create a single funnel for Talent and support them through their entire journey with you.

Let us help you manage your end-to-end Candidate to worker experience.

To find out more about Upplft visit www.upplft.com or contact hello@upplft.com

