



The Birkman Method

How does The Birkman compare to other psychological tools?

Developed in 1949, The Birkman has been taken by over 3 million people in 12 different languages. This tool distinguishes itself from other psychological tools in that it provides multiple perspectives on how an individual or a team can work together most effectively:

- **Areas of Interest:** this measures the degree to which different activities motivate individuals. Such knowledge can be used to re-structure specific roles or overall teams to ensure each person's position best meets their interests, thus leading to increased effectiveness
- **Preferred Work Styles:** this area measures an individual's preferences for different leadership styles, problem solving approaches, and work environments. . Such knowledge can be used to re-structure specific roles or overall teams to ensure each person's position best meets their interests, thus leading to increased effectiveness
- **Behavioral Components:** this area identifies the specific effective behavior an individual displays in each of 11 areas, and compares this with their internal need in each area. It is in not assuming there is an automatic link between an individual's observable behavior and their internal (unobservable) needs which further differentiates The Birkman from other psychological tools. And, when one's needs aren't met, (because people are treating the individual based on how they behave, which may not be what they need), ineffective behavior can result. This insight helps individuals and teams uncover potential areas of stress and then develop strategies to reduce stressful or ineffective behavior.

What are the different ways The Birkman can be utilized?

The robustness of the data gleaned from The Birkman makes it a very effective tool to use when coaching individual leaders. The additional self awareness gained naturally leads to identifying opportunities for development, whether they be focused on a specific behavior change or in identifying ways to enrich a current role to be more satisfying.

However, the depth of The Birkman also lends itself to working with teams to increase their knowledge of themselves, of each other, and of their team as a whole. Experiential exercises can be delivered at multiple levels, ranging from high level knowledge (Interests and Work Styles) to deeper levels of understanding the behaviors and needs of team members. With this insight, proactive steps can be made to address potential areas of stress behavior to enhance team effectiveness.