

a 1 = *not important* to 5 = *extremely important* scale. The following skills/qualities were the six most highly rated.⁸⁹

1. Honesty/integrity	4.7
2. Communication skills (oral and written)	4.7
3. Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	4.5
4. Motivation/initiative	4.5
5. Strong work ethic	4.5
6. Teamwork skills	4.5

Clearly, integrity is an important quality in applicants; integrity tests are designed to tap this important attribute.

Integrity tests are paper-and-pencil or computerized tests that attempt to assess an applicant's honesty and moral character. They are alternatives to other methods—such as polygraph (so-called lie detector) tests or interviewer evaluations—that attempt to ascertain an applicant's honesty and morality. For most employers, polygraph tests are prohibited by law. Even if they were legal, polygraphs are so invasive that negative applicant reactions would weigh against their use in most situations. Interviewer evaluations of applicant integrity are, of course, not illegal, but they are unreliable as a method of detecting dishonesty, as dishonesty is very hard to detect. Even experts such as FBI agents, judges, and psychologists scarcely perform above chance in detecting lying. A review of 108 studies revealed that people detect lies at a rate that is only 4.2% better than chance.⁹⁰ For these reasons, integrity tests are seen as a superior alternative to polygraph tests and interviews, and indeed the use of integrity tests in selection decisions has grown dramatically in the past decade. The tests are especially likely to be used where theft, safety, or malfeasance is an important concern. For example, retail organizations lose an estimated \$19 billion per year to employee theft, and it might surprise you to learn that theft due to employees accounts for roughly half (46.8%) of all inventory shrinkage—much greater than that attributed to shoplifting (31.6%).⁹¹ The promise of integrity testing is that it will weed out those most prone to these counterproductive work behaviors.⁹²

Measures

There are two major types of integrity tests: clear purpose (sometimes called overt) and general purpose (sometimes called veiled purpose or personality-oriented). Exhibit 9.8 provides examples of items from both types of measures. Clear purpose tests directly assess employee attitudes toward theft. Such tests often consist of two sections: (1) questions of antitheft attitudes (see items 1 and 2 in Exhibit 9.8), and (2) questions about the frequency and degree of involvement in theft or other counterproductive activities (see items 3 and 4 in Exhibit 9.8).⁹³ General or veiled purpose integrity tests assess employee personality with the idea that personality