

INTERIM PROFILE RESEARCH

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

We profiled 50 practicing interim managers. The breakdown of the profile was as follows:

- 68% male and 32% female
- 41% were involved in solely change projects, 21% were involved in solely gap projects and 37% were involved in both
- In terms of earnings, 13% made £0-£50K (some of these were new to Interim Management), 43% made £50K - £100K, 30% made £100K - £150K and 11% made £150K+
- 37% worked solely in the public sector, 22% worked across all sectors and 41% worked in the private sector
- Functionally, 17% worked in Finance, 15% in HR, 15% in Project/Change Management, 11% in General Management, 11% in Sales and Marketing and 30% in various other areas.

Our overall objective was to identify if there was:

- An overall predominant behavioural profile for Interim Managers
- A predominant behavioural profile based on the type of assignment undertaken

This information will be valuable input in helping those considering Interim management and indeed existing Interim Managers identify:

- which type of assignments are likely to suit their own behavioural profile
- areas they can develop to improve their performance in winning and delivering on assignments

ANALYSIS

OVERALL

In looking at the data overall, the most relevant figure to note is that 85% of those who took part in the research had high D (driving, assertive self-starter) and/or high I (influential, persuasive, positive communicator) in their profile. Nearly half of these had both D and I, which again is not surprising. This profile implies a drive for results, with recognition of the need to bring people along with you, which pretty much sums up the challenge of being an Interim Manager.

The percentages for each aspect of behaviour are as follows:

- 59% had high D in their profile
- 63% had high I in their profile
- 39% had high S in their profile
- 50% had high C in their profile
- 85% had either high D or high I or both in their profile

We then analysed the data against the additional key factors collected in the research. They were:

- Type of assignment
- Industry Sector
- Functional Specialisation
- Earnings

TYPES OF ASSIGNMENT

Let's now look into the different types of assignments. We have divided the Interim Managers into:

- Those who only take on projects addressing the need for change (43%)
- Those who only take on projects maintaining the status-quo during client employment 'gaps' such as maternity/paternity leave (10%)
- Those who would accept either of the above assignments (47%)

For the group who only take on change projects:

- 60% had high D in their profile
- 65% had high I in their profile
- 40% had high S in their profile
- 25% had high C in their profile

For the group who only take on gap-filling projects:

- 60% had high D in their profile
- 60% had high I in their profile
- 30% had high S in their profile
- 70% had high C in their profile

For the group who only take on either project:

- 59% had high D in their profile
- 59% had high I in their profile
- 41% had high S in their profile
- 59% had high C in their profile

An area which is of note here is the scoring for the high C (precise, accurate, systematic, compliant) factor, which is significantly lower in the change only Interim Managers than the other two groups. This indicates that these people are **less** concerned with following externally enforced rules and regulations and more likely to create a new set or ignore the existing ones if they hinder progress. This is not surprising as simply following the rules of the 'now' is not going to create transformational change whereas gap-filling (e.g. covering for absence) is much more about maintaining the status quo.

INDUSTRY SECTOR

Now we'll look into the different industry sectors. We have divided the Interim Managers into:

- Those who only take on projects in the public sector (39%)
- Those who only take on projects in the private sector (10%)
- Those who take on projects in both sectors (41%)

For the group who only take on projects in the public sector:

- 59% had high D in their profile
- 65% had high I in their profile
- 35% had high S in their profile
- 25% had high C in their profile

For the group who only take on projects in the private sector:

- 59% had high D in their profile
- 71% had high I in their profile
- 53% had high S in their profile
- 53% had high C in their profile

For the group who take on projects in both sectors:

- 70% had high D in their profile
- 70% had high I in their profile
- 30% had high S in their profile
- 80% had high C in their profile

The figure here to note is the 80% score factor on the C (precise, accurate, systematic, compliant) for those who take on projects in both sectors. We could neither see nor deduce any immediately obvious explanation for this. It is possible this behavioural profile however lends itself to specific, specialist projects, which are not sector dependent, but we will need to investigate this further.

FUNCTIONAL SPECIALISATION

Next we'll look at functional specialisation and focus on the major ones represented in the group which were Finance, HR, Project/Change Management, General Management and Sales and Marketing. The other groups did not have sample sizes large enough to create valid analysis.

For the Finance group:

- 57% had high D in their profile
- 57% had high I in their profile
- 43% had high S in their profile
- 100% had high C in their profile

For the HR group:

- 29% had high D in their profile
- 71% had high I in their profile
- 57% had high S in their profile
- 57% had high C in their profile

For the Project/Change Management group:

- 57% had high D in their profile
- 57% had high I in their profile
- 57% had high S in their profile
- 29% had high C in their profile

For the General Management group:

- 100% had high D in their profile
- 60% had high I in their profile
- 0% had high S in their profile
- 20% had high C in their profile

For the Sales and Marketing group:

- 60% had high D in their profile
- 60% had high I in their profile
- 40% had high S in their profile
- 40% had high C in their profile

The key statistics to note here are:

- The relatively low number of high D people in HR - only 25%. This was the only grouping where the majority were not high D (driving, assertive, self-starter). It's worthwhile noting also that this group also had the joint highest score for I (influential, persuasive, positive communicator). It may be somewhat stereotypical of HR but indicates they make things happen through influence and persuasion rather than direct and forceful assertion.
- That 100% of those in General management are high D ((driving, assertive, self-starter) and also that 100% of those in General Management are low S (active, restless, fault-finding, impatient). This indicates they want results and they want them quickly!

EARNINGS IN 2006

Finally we'll look at earnings (based on 2006 income). We divided the group into those who earned:

- £0-50K [this group included some who were new into Interim Management] (13%)
- £50-100K (45%)
- £100-150K (31%)
- £150K+ (11%)

For the £0-50K group:

- 16% had high D in their profile
- 33% had high I in their profile
- 50% had high S in their profile
- 50% had high C in their profile

For the £50-100K group:

- 50% had high D in their profile
- 75% had high I in their profile
- 45% had high S in their profile
- 55% had high C in their profile

For the £100-150K group:

- 71% had high D in their profile
- 64% had high I in their profile
- 36% had high S in their profile
- 50% had high C in their profile

For the £150K+ group:

- 100% had high D in their profile
- 60% had high I in their profile
- 0% had high S in their profile
- 20% had high C in their profile

Three figures of note here:

- The figures indicate a significant correlation between high D (driving, assertive, self-starter) behaviour and annual earnings
- There is a 100% low S (indicating active, restless, fault-finding, impatience) profile in the highest earners, though it is relatively constant in the other three earnings categories
- There is significantly less high C profile (precise, accurate, systematic) in the highest earners, though it is relatively constant in the other three earnings categories

SUMMARY

THIS RESEARCH AND THE CONCLUSIONS DRAWN SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS 'THE ANSWER' TO WHETHER OR NOT YOU ARE SUITED TO INTERIM MANAGEMENT OR HOW YOU SHOULD APPROACH IT AS A CAREER. IT'S PURPOSE IS TO ENCOURAGE HONEST SELF-EXAMINATION, WHICH WE HOPE WILL LEAD TO INSIGHTS, WHICH WILL HELP YOU IN MAKING THESE DECISIONS.

People go into Interim Management for an almost infinite variety of reasons, so it is impossible to have a single definition of what a successful interim career looks like. However we can say that success in whatever way you describe it is dependent on:

- The ability to win assignments
- The ability to deliver effectively on assignments

Your experience, your knowledge and the value/uniqueness of your Value Proposition will naturally be major factors in winning and delivering on assignments, but the factor, which is the subject of this research – the behavioural profile will also have a significant impact on your success.

From a behavioural perspective, the huge variety of different assignments dictates the need for a variety of different behavioural types. For example, the behavioural profile needed for an Interim Manager to work effectively and comfortably in a sales and marketing transformational role is not going to be the same as that needed to cover for paternity leave in the highly regulated area of government procurement. That is not to say that one person could not be effective in both roles, but that it would be unlikely they would be really comfortable in both. This is an extreme case but the principal holds firm.

From an overall perspective 85% Of the Interim Managers in the research had either a high D or high I or both in their profile. This is not surprising as D and I are both proactive behaviours geared towards making things happen. Without these factors as working strengths, you may find that when looking for an assignment you are less comfortable with doing all that is necessary market and sell yourself and 'close' deals. On assignment you may also be less comfortable driving for results and influencing others to join you, which will be vital in change/transformation projects though less so in gap-filling.

When we look at the profiles related to the type of assignments people take on, we see that 70% of those taking on 'gap-filling' assignments had high C (precise, accurate, systematic) in their profile, whilst only 25% of those taking on change only roles had high C in their profile. High C profiles are more inclined to accept and adhere to external 'rules' and so will often find gap-filling assignments somewhat more comfortable. The exception to this is if they are operating in a very specialist area where they are an expert. Those with low C will be less inclined to follow the rules and will generally be quite happy to break/change them in order to get results, especially if they are high D (driving, assertive, self-starter). This makes them behaviourally much more suited to change/transformation projects.

In terms of functional specialisation, the profiles loosely reflect those you would expect to see in certain roles e.g. those in finance are all high C (they need to be accurate and precise and follow the regulations), those in HR tend to be high I (they tend to influence organisations across the board rather than direct them through the hierarchical structure and those in General management are all high D and low S indicating they are keen to get results and get them fast.

So, in conclusion, I suggest the following:

- Read through the description of the behavioural profiles and establish your own profile or better still visit www.interimdevelopment.co.uk/rightforme to get your own highly comprehensive and detailed behavioural profile, from which you will gain in-depth insights into your strengths and limitations as an Interim Manager .
- Read through the research again, with your profile in mind
- From the insights you have gained, ask yourself what you believe will help and what may hinder your success in:
 - Marketing and selling yourself to win assignments?
 - Driving projects and getting people on board to effectively deliver on assignments?
- What does this tell you about :
 - What types of assignments are most likely to suit you?
 - What routes would you feel most comfortable with in marketing and selling yourself?
 - What areas of delivering on assignments would you feel least comfortable with and how could you overcome them?
- Visit the Interim Development Academy at www.interimdevelopment.co.uk for publications, tools and workshops to help you succeed