



## The Center of Hospitality Research at Cornell University Publishes Research Recommending the Use of Integrity Testing

In October 2007 researchers from Cornell University released a Cornell Hospitality Report entitled “The Truth About Integrity Tests: The Validity and Utility of Integrity Testing for the Hospitality Industry.” The Report included a discussion of the various issues surrounding the use of integrity tests (e.g., legal, accuracy, cost effectiveness) and the findings of the authors’ recent research, as well as recommendations regarding the use of these tests in the hospitality industry. This paper will summarize findings and conclusions of this Report.

### Business Operator Concerns

The Report observes that the hospitality industry has been somewhat hesitant to implement integrity tests due to five different concerns, which are as follows:

- Whether job applicants can fake test results
- Whether these tests accurately predict employee counterproductivity
- Whether the tests have adverse impact on protected subgroups
- Whether integrity tests violate the Americans with Disabilities Act
- The expense of using integrity tests

### Research Addressing the Five Concerns

The Report provides a degree of discussion regarding the existing research and indicates that this research consistently disposes of these issues. Additionally, the Report includes the results of a specific study conducted by the authors involving almost 30,000 hotel job applicants. This study found that:

- Job applicants were far from hesitant to be candid on the test. Over 1,800 applicants admitted to stealing money from their prior

employers, approximately 2,400 acknowledged that they had stolen merchandise from a prior employer and over 1,500 prospective employees admitted to using cocaine.

- The study focused on predicting various aspects of worker’s compensation claims. Among other things, the study found that use of the test would lower each employee’s worker’s compensation claims by \$66.75 per year.
- The integrity test did not have a disparate impact on the basis of race, age or gender. In fact, some racial subgroups performed slightly better on the test than the white subgroup (e.g., African Americans, Hispanics) and females performed a bit better on the test than their male counterparts.
- Nothing in the authors’ research addressed the Americans with Disabilities Act issue, but the Report concluded that given the non-medical focus of such tests, this is really a non-issue.
- The Report indicates that integrity tests can be a valuable selection tool even assuming a price of \$9.00 to \$20.00.

### Conclusions

The Report concludes that integrity tests can have a strong return on investment. In the authors’ research, which only focused on worker’s compensation claims, it was estimated that the test had a cost of \$270,100 and a benefit of \$405,773—over a 50% return on investment. As an aside, this return on investment is based on a cost of \$9.30 per test--it is very common for Wonderlic clients to pay less than this amount per test thereby allowing for even greater return on investment.