**Occupational Aptitude & Knowledge Assessment**

Not all job applicants have metalworking or manufacturing experience. However, many of these people can make great new hires, apprentices or trainees!

*Occupational Aptitude and Knowledge Assessment* (OAKA) is designed to be a predictor of an inexperienced applicant’s potential to learn the job and his/her ability to function in today’s precision manufacturing environment. The 60-item, 60-minute, best answer multiple-choice assessment is intended for those entering into basic manufacturing training programs and apprenticeships or applying for job vacancies as entry-level equipment operators, assemblers, fabricators, inspectors and technicians. However, the test should not be the only factor in the hiring, screening, selection or evaluation process. Instructions, scoring templates, cut score recommendations, diagnostics and security practices were developed for two assessment versions (A and B, of equal difficulty).

The assessment is designed in a modular format, which allows companies and trainers to develop individualized training plans that reflect the abilities and weaknesses of each test taker.

The *Occupational Aptitude & Knowledge Assessment* test package contains:
- 10 copies of Test Version A
- 10 copies of Test Version B
- 1 Administration Guide
- 1 Answer Template (A & B)

Test booklets are color security-sealed for ease in identification by the administrator.

Assessment items were field tested by a national pilot. Two “control” groups participated in the pilot testing – 1) students and entry-level apprentices, and 2) expert workers employed at metalworking companies. Using a systematic development approach consisting of bias and content reviews, readability studies and item (statistical) analyses, the *Occupational Aptitude and Knowledge Assessments* were finalized using accepted psychometric practices and validation processes in November 2009. Cut score recommendations were determined by using a combination of normative data, item analysis statistics and a modified Jaeger method. The Jaeger method is widely accepted as a valid cut score method used for setting standards on high stakes tests.

Companies can use one of three methods of evaluating the test takers. They can use the recommended cut scores to evaluate job applicants for new hire or incumbent workers for advancement; establish and validate their own internal standard (only if the score can be justified and is used consistently for all applicants); or the test scores can be compared against or ranked with other applicants or test takers for the same job.

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Reading Level: 7th grade
The *Occupational Aptitude and Knowledge Assessment* provides another tool to evaluate those job applicants who wish to enter, transition or up-skill into a career in metalworking. This inexperienced and untapped “talent pool” is broad-based and very diverse consisting of dislocated workers, high school and community college graduates, veterans and the under-employed or temporarily employed currently working in service and retail industries, warehousing and distribution, automotive repair or in other non-manufacturing low-skill, low-paying jobs.

For further information about testing procedures, a customized cut score development workshop or test content and applications, please contact the PMA Educational Foundation, 6363 Oak Tree Blvd., Independence, Ohio 44131, call Bruce Broman 216-901-8800 ext.2102 or email bbroman@pma.org.