

Psychometric Instruments for Creating Positive And Productive Working Cultures



Geil Browning, Ph.D.
Founder & CEO
Emergenetics International

CEOCFO: *Dr. Browning, would you tell us about Emergenetics?*

Dr. Browning: Emergenetics International is a company that assesses how people think and behave. We have international office headquarters in Denver with additional offices in New York, Washington, DC and Singapore. We assess how people think and behave around the world through several different psychometric instruments. We have created instruments we use in training employees, as well as instruments used in hiring, management and leadership development. We developed these tools with the idea of valuing the individual employee, as well as demonstrating how teams can collaborate more effectively so companies can grow.

CEOCFO: *When you say instruments are you talking about physical instruments or do you mean techniques and tactics?*

Dr. Browning: These tools are psychometric instruments with programs that accompany them. Online service is generally the form of which these instruments manifest themselves. We also offer training and consulting, which enhance the results from what our surveys produce.

CEOCFO: *Would you give us an example of what you do and how it works?*

Dr. Browning: We have something we call the core model, a series of products that fulfill the whole life cycle of the employee. The Emergenetics Selection Profile, also known as ESP, is used for hiring. Next, the Emergenetics Profile is used for personal development, leadership/management training, team building, and assembling cognitive diverse teams. The Emergenetics Profile is initially introduced through an introductory workshop we call the Meeting of the Minds. After that, we have several applications used to deepen the employee's knowledge of their Profile. We have 11 applications we call the Power of WE, which "WE" stands for Whole Emergenetics. Another part of the model that we are developing right now is the 360 Feedback. Our hiring instrument, ESP, looks at nine different motivators and four different aptitudes. The Emergenetics Profile looks at four thinking attributes and three behavioral attributes. As far as I know, we are the only tool on the market that separates and captures both thinking and behavior attributes all in one report. We are also unaware of any organization that ties all of this under one roof -- selecting, managing and training individuals and providing feedback with a common theme and language. Finally, we have a mobile app that allows anyone access to his or hers and others Profiles, if they give permission. For example, if you are going to give a presentation to your boss and you have her Profile on your mobile app, the app will help you understand how to best communicate with her. We have several competitors who are also using different apps, but we think our app is special because we have added a communication piece to it.

CEOCFO: *Once you have devised the questions for the employee, do the results tabulate themselves or is there an interpretation element?*

Dr. Browning: The psychometric nature of our tool is based on years of research and statistical analysis of how people answer our questionnaire. We have an algorithm based on statistical analysis that we routinely come back and check to see how well it reflects the population at large. Merely delivering these results can be dangerous and misinterpreted easily, so we have generated a certified network of associates who use our instrument to debrief Emergenetics results to participants. We are a strength-based assessment, and we are very positive in our nature as we consider every Profile a

gift. We highlight the differences between the ways you think and behave, how others think and behave, and how you can best leverage these differences moving forward.

CEOCFO: *How do you know who is trying to game the system or answering questions the way think you want them answered?*

Dr. Browning: I would say 96% of the people who take our questionnaire answer the questions honestly in terms of what they believe at the time. Upon completing the questionnaire and receiving their results, our participants always say the Profile is an amazing instrument because it tells them how they think and behave. Can you fake the instrument? Sure, you can go in and put down any number, but people generally want to know who they are. My favorite story is about a basketball coach of a large university. He came up to me after a seminar and told me he “did not want to fill that thing out” and that he was in a hurry. He later told me he had his assistant complete the questionnaire for him. After doing so, he said the result is not who he is, and he asked if he could take it over again. There is little incentive for people to game the Profile. We have another instrument we call the Emergenetics Youth Profile, which is normed for children between the ages of ten and eighteen. This instrument is now being implemented in schools to help teachers better understand how their students think and behave, as well as how he or she can design lessons based on their gifts.

CEOCFO: *What types of organizations are turning to Emergenetics?*

Dr. Browning: Fortune 500/100 companies, universities, government agencies, and public/private schools.

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CEOCFO: *Are organizations turning to you because they are looking for increased profitability at the end? Are they looking for better long-term relationships with employees?*

Dr. Browning: Yes. I am particularly pleased that our larger corporations are actually seeing an ROI on human capital development and no longer just doing one-day training without having some kind of outcome with it. It is our firm belief that our clients use Emergenetics to drive profitability and efficiency through quality culture and employee motivation. In many ways, you cannot separate one from the other. Most of our clients turn to Emergenetics because they are looking for a better workplace for their employees, which ultimately will drive profitability. One of our clients, who you would recognize very well, recently went through a client merger. As of today, they have completed over eight thousand Profiles utilizing Emergenetics as the common language to bring these two large organizations together. They report how successful this has been for them so far.

CEOCFO: *How would an organization find Emergenetics in an internet search?*

Dr. Browning: Much of our business is derived through word of mouth. Within the industry, I think people get to understand what tools are available and what seems to work for them. There is a great deal of movement between large organizations. We contribute to Inc.com and other business blogs and magazines that discuss our views on development and culture.

CEOCFO: *Do people understand the depth of your approach or are they often surprised to find out how deep and comprehensively you are able to conduct projects?*

Dr. Browning: When we do certifications where we train our associates, people will come and say they are drawn to Emergenetics because it seemed simple and easy to interpret. But once they deepen their learning, they realize Emergenetics principles are simple, but not simplistic.

CEOCFO: *Often cultural differences are important. As an international company how do you adapt the tools or do you find they are universally effective?*

Dr. Browning: We use global norms, and all of our psychometrics indicate that people in Asia or Europe answer these questions similarly as people from other parts of the world. Every two years we re-norm all of our instruments so they are up to date with what is happening in current culture. In addition, this summer we performed extensive research on questionnaire answers from people in North America, the APAC countries, and Europe, and we found no significant difference in their answers.

CEOCFO: *What surprised you as the company evolved and the industry also has evolved?*

Dr. Browning: Two things. First, organizations are beginning to understand the importance of human capital management. People are finally beginning to understand that people make a difference and that you need to understand

who those people are if you want them to be creative, collaborate with one another, and communicate effectively. I think the work we are doing now has hit its stride in terms of understanding people. When I went to make my first sales call in 1978, the client, an Executive Vice President of a large bank, asked what we could do for him. I told him I would help his employees be more empathic. He looked at me and asked what the word empathic meant, and I thought to myself, "Ok, I am in trouble." Organizations now realize that empathic employees and managers will make a difference in their ROI. Second, I never believed we would be a global company. People are people regardless of where we live in the world. We all have the same interests, motivations, hopes and dreams. Thankfully, with the use of Emergenetics' work and our partners from around the globe, we have data to demonstrate this.

CEOCFO: *Why is Emergenetics International an outstanding company?*

Dr. Browning: Our goal is to create positive organizations and to help people understand their own gifts and the gifts of the people with whom they work or communicate. We have sound psychometrically validated instruments, which accurately show people their brilliance. Emergenetics is outstanding because of our phenomenal employees, associates, and clients.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine



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