



Summary: No 'real' difference in faking answers for assessments

Conclusion: Selection decisions based on personality assessment are not largely affected by participant intentions to fake answers.

Reference: Personality Assessment Across Selection and Development Contexts: Insights Into Response Distortion by J. Ellingson, Ohio State University, P. Sackett, and B. Connelly, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus, 2007. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. For more information, contact Heather Graham at hgraham@batrushollweg.com

Why this Article is Important: As companies decide to use personality selection assessments to make decisions, they must address the question: "Can applicants intentionally fake their answers?" Although there has been support that participants can intentionally distort their answers when instructed to do so, this article shows that in applied practice, there is a limited degree of response distortion. The findings in this article help those involved in employee selection to be assured that their decisions based on personality assessment are valid and are based on a very limited probability of participant faking.

Major Findings: This article investigated the extent to which individuals respond to personality assessments across time. The two time frames were varied in the participant's motivation to cheat. The first assessment was for selection (high motivation to cheat), and the second assessment was for developmental purposes (low motivation to cheat). The analysis did not yield large differences between the two contexts; thus indicating that any distortion is unlikely to produce a notable change in selection decisions.

What does it mean to you?

- a. In practice, human resource professionals can confidently make selection decisions when using personality assessments.
- b. Even if participants do find ways to fake their answers, it is unlikely that the distortion will be large enough to result in a differing selection decision.
- c. Personality tests should be seriously considered for inclusion in any selection system you are using.



Correlations Between Development and Selection Contexts

Personality Dimension	
Dominance	.57
Sociability	.66
Social Presence	.58
Independence	.48
Responsibility	.59
Socialization	.62
Tolerance	.72
Flexibility	.65
Average	.62

** please refer to the article for a full listing personality dimensions and their respective correlations.*