

Faster access to better assessment information



The Crédit Agricole Group is a major French banking group, established in 1880 and now an international group across 60 countries with 9 million customers. Decentralised and multi-brand, it can recruit more than 16,000 people across different contracts. The need to collate, review and assess its high volume of applicants led it to seek an integrated assessment solution.

The challenge: managing and assessing fairly high volumes of applications

The shift in the image of the banking sector as a whole following the global economic crisis meant that one of the challenges facing Ms Christine Applanat, HRIS Project Manager at Crédit Agricole, was to create a more attractive employer brand and to bring this to life through its candidate management and assessment. The company also recognised the influence of the now global labour market with the number of applications increasing dramatically: each year around 250,000 CVs or resumes are received.

Ms Applanat comments, "We knew we need to develop our attractiveness as an employer and to reach new people by changing our sourcing strategy. We knew that we needed to develop a great candidate experience that engaged our applicants and kept them informed as the selection process progressed. We also understood that managing the volume of applications we were receiving in an objective and timely manner was imperative."

The solution: a library of online assessments integrated with an Application Tracking System

The goal was to introduce a more objective and standardised approach to selection and decision-making. Ms Applanat explains, "We were keen to make sure that we were not falling into the trap of recruiting very similar people and not creating a more diverse workforce: we had noticed a slight tendency to recruit people with similar management or business school backgrounds. With this in mind, we wanted to make sure that the first stage of selection indicates clearly those who are likely to be the highest performing candidates."

Crédit Agricole had already introduced *cut-e* tests into its general recruitment processes of graduates, undergraduates, apprentices and interns as well as those applying for more specific programmes. It chose to use the ability test series scales to measure verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, logic, the ability to learn, the ability to multi-task as well as an assessment of English. In total, it drew together 15 *cut-e* assessment tools or combination of tools depending on the position being assessed. The result is a highly customisable selection process.

But the challenge of managing the high volume of applications meant that the company also looked to update its Applicant Tracking System – and to integrate this with the *cut-e* assessment platform. Ms Applanat explains, “We knew we wanted to have a single, unique system which could post jobs on several job boards, manage the applications and store the assessment results from the *cut-e* tools and another assessment we use. After briefing, technical and design meetings, we were able to have the system move into the development stage in about three months.”

The outcome: a faster, engaging recruitment process and more objective information

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Ms Applanat comments on the project, “The integration between the software from the ATS provider and the *cut-e* assessments was a smooth process due to the openness and co-operation between the two main partners. We benefited from their experience and track record across similar projects.” The ATS was capable of being adapted to manage different types of scoring and score reporting and provides instantaneous access to the results for the HR decision-maker. A single click for the candidate provides access to their own test scores.

The integrated system now has 450 HR users across the world – and has also supported the move to a more standardised process of selection across all of the Crédit Agricole subsidiaries.

“After two years of using the *cut-e* assessments, the benefits of such testing are clear,” comments Ms Applanat. Managers now meet more qualified candidates at interview – and so see the process as faster and their time better spent. Initial line manager scepticism around the need for volume management and what objectivity could deliver has waned. There has been a notable shift in the educational background of those attending interview with a broadening out of university or business school attended by candidates invited to interview. Furthermore, candidates seem more motivated at interview as they have already invested in the selection process and are engaged with the programme.

Crédit Agricole has surveyed its candidates about the selection process. They report that it is contemporary, fun, and interactive – as well as being professional and that’s a positive outcome for Crédit Agricole. Candidates also appreciate the opportunity to try out the tests before the test proper – and being able to access the results online after the process. It’s transparent, open and makes use of technology.

Ms Applanat summarises the benefits for the HR team. “There are huge time saving costs from no longer screening CVs and the test results are easy to read, easy to extract and easy to communicate. Time is further saved by no longer needing to spend time on debriefing candidates after the testing session as they access their own results online.”

For any further information please don't hesitate to contact us!
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