FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY USERS

SO IF I HAVE RESULTS WAY TO THE LEFT, DOES THAT MEAN THAT I'M NOT COMPETENT AT ALL IN THAT AREA?

The profile of each participant is relative to everyone else who has taken the GCI. Each person's results are compared to everyone else's results such that the profile is a relative position rather than an absolute position against an artificial standard. As a result, it is possible that an individual could have results in the "lower" columns yet still be somewhat competent in that dimension. If, for example, the average result on Relationship Interest is 4 on a 1-5 scale (reflecting that we all have a fundamental interest in having relationships), it is possible that someone might have a result of a 3, reflecting a fairly good interest in developing relationships, yet has results in one of the left-hand columns.

In essence, the individual might be somewhat competent in that particular dimension but less, or much less, competent than others. Since in reality, much of our perception about how skilled someone is in a particular area is a judgment about the skill level of that person vs. the skill level of others we know, the relative position can be a stronger, more reliable indicator of that person's strength or weakness in that dimension.

Some competencies can be evaluated against fairly objective standards and others cannot. For example, we can measure someone by how many words he or she types in a minute and get an absolute value as well as a relative standing against other typists. With "soft" competencies, such as those measured by the GCI, objective standards do not exist, and we are unlikely to advance to the point where they do exist for many, many years. As a result, a relative standing is presently the best way to measure a person's competency level.

HOW CAN I BE HIGH IN ONE AREA OF THE DIMENSIONS AND LOW IN ANOTHER ON THE SAME FACTOR?

This can happen quite easily. The dimensions within each factor are largely independent, though they can be inter-related. For example, a person can be high in Inquisitiveness yet low in Tolerance of Ambiguity. It may well be, for example, that one of the main reasons the person is motivated to search out information (Inquisitiveness) is because they do not tolerate ambiguity well and have a strong need to know. Yet, if a person is low in tolerating ambiguity, they will tend to avoid situations that are not predictable for them, thereby lessening their opportunity to learn.

A second example might be useful. "John" might have a high result in Relationship Interest but a low result in Interpersonal Engagement. Having a strong interest in people does not mean that the person is equally confident in approaching people and engaging them in conversation. Yet, both of these competencies are essential to developing relationships, which is why they are found in the same factor.

THE FACTOR RESULT IS PRETTY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE AVERAGE OF THE DIMENSIONS. HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?

This is possible because the broader factor results are not a simple average of the constellation of related dimension results. Each of the dimension results is a result of adding up a person's responses across the specific GCI survey questions used for that dimension and then comparing that result to the population norms.

However, the three factor results (PM, RM, and SM) are the result of a different comparison. The best way to think of your factor result is that it represents how "typical" your pattern, or constellation, of dimension results is relative to the general population-whether it's similar to, lower, or higher than how other people's results.

So which should I pay more attention to—the dimension results, the factor results, or the overall GCI result?

Yes! All three results are important, each one telling a slightly different story. The overall result gives the big picture – how "John" compares overall to others. This result is helpful if we need a quick answer to "which person is most likely to do well in an intercultural or international setting?" The factor results tell the macro story; that is, since they tell "John's" position on all the dimensions in that factor compared to everyone else's, it gives a macro-level picture of where "John" is on that factor.

However, neither the overall result nor the factor result are really helpful for "John" to determine where his specific strengths and weaknesses lie on the 16 dimensions and where improvement needs to be made. Only the individual dimension results provide such detailed information.

Which factor is most important?

No factor is more important than another. That's a little like asking which component of an automobile is most important—the engine, transmission, brakes, or steering? They are all important for different reasons, and they are all interdependent. It is not possible to work effectively with people who are different from us if we (a) don't know much about them (Perception Management) or have stereotypes about them, (b) aren't good at developing relationships with them (Relationship Management), and (c) are in a constant state of distress because we can't manage our emotions given the challenges of the context (Self Management).

In addition, each factor is affected by the others. For example, if "John" has low Perception Management results he will not have a large amount of information about the culture, nor will the information be as accurate as it should be. This, in turn, will negatively influence "John's" ability to develop relationships. The less information he has, and the less accurate it is, the less there is a possibility for common ground between "John" and the host culture.

What's the difference between Self-Awareness and Self-Identity?

There is a very important difference between these two. Self-Awareness is about how clear our view is about our personal strengths and weaknesses and other characteristics and how much importance we give that kind of information. Self-Identity, on the other hand, is how clear our values and fundamental beliefs are and how consistently we apply those across situations and time. With Self-Awareness, the issue is if we do not have good self-knowledge, we cannot manage our relationships very well. If I do not understand that I tend to be loud and dramatic, I won't alter my behavior when in a formal situation with a Japanese colleague, for example, where being reserved and inconspicuous are more valued. With Self-Identity, if we are not clear about our values and belief system and/or do not apply them consistently, we will appear erratic to others, which might bring our own integrity into question. This undermines our ability to feel a sense of continuity and personal stability.

How does Emotional Resilience differ from Nonstress Tendency and Stress Management?

Emotional Resilience is our natural "armor" to deflect or absorb emotional "blows." If we have someone shooting arrows at us but we have a good shield to protect us, the arrows might make little dents in the shield but they will be deflected and our state of being (in this case our emotional state) will be essentially untouched.

Nonstress Tendency, on the other hand, assesses the number of potential sources of stress we are affected by. One source, for example, is limited time. Another source might be the workload we are under. A third source might be dealing with difficult relationships. Some of us might be affected by one of those but not the others. Others might be affected by multiple sources.

Stress Management measures the strategies and techniques we utilize to reduce the stress we actually feel. This might include regular exercise, a form of meditation, a walk on the beach, etc.

In summary, our Emotional Resilience is an important basic "shield" to keep us from experiencing stress; however, the more sources of stress that we are subject to, the more likely something might "get through" the shield. Nevertheless, if we practice good Stress Management, we can lessen the effects of whatever stress does get through.

How universal are your profiles/norms? The GCI seems to be developed from a Western or North American perspective, so does the GCI measure competencies that are culture specific or culture general?

When we look at the GCI results and profiles across various countries and regions of the world, we do see some slight differences between them. This is called "between group" difference. However, those differences are not big enough to conclude that the measure is culture specific or only relevant to a North American or Western population. Rather, when looking at the GCI results and profiles across all the people from a specific country or world region, we find results and profiles across the entire range of the GCI, from very high to very low. This is called "within group" difference and is so strikingly large that we are very confident concluding that the GCI helps us identify people who are at all levels of global competency within any given country or culture or world region. In other words, the GCI is very much a universal and culture general measure of global competencies.

Are the GCI scoring norms biased toward any particular gender, age group, occupation?

No. Similar to the previous question, tests of differential validity showed no significant differences based on gender, age, race or ethnic background, educational background, or occupation. The variance across the full range of possible GCI results in each subgroup is evidence that the GCI is equally valid for all demographic groups. Thus, "John's" individual response is a function of his personal responses, and not due to the subgroup to which he belongs. For example, a person with "Some/no College" is just as likely to be anywhere on the GCI scale as a person with graduate education. Tests of differential validity prove that the subgroup norms do not significantly bias the GCI results.

I don't think I'm as bad/good as this result indicates. Can I trust these results?

The GCI is a valid test, but two things related to the survey taker can influence his or her results. The first is the degree to which the person was motivated to answer the survey questions conscientiously. If people take the survey questions seriously and do their best to answer them thoughtfully, then their final GCI profile will be an accurate representation of their global competencies. Remember, GCI profiles are the result of how the individual respondent answered each of the 159 survey questions; no one else provided answers as to how much they agreed or disagreed with the questions. Each individual's profile is therefore result of how he or she answered the questions and no one else. If people want to see how others evaluate their behavior related to these dimensions, a GCI 360 degree survey is available from Kozai.

Second, results can be somewhat influenced, depending on whether the person's responses to the GCI survey questions reflect reality. For any number of reasons, a person's self-perception can be skewed, willingly or subconsciously, and his or her responses to the survey questions would be skewed as a result. This self-induced factor is not something that can be controlled, and all surveys are subject to this problem.

However, in general this self-perception bias almost always works to inflate a person's results, rather than lower them. As a result, lower profile results on the GCI can be trusted with a very high degree of confidence. In addition, a social desirability scale has been embedded in the GCI, and the feedback report indicates whether a person may have been more positive or negative than expected. This result is indicated in parentheses on the cover page of the GCI Feedback Report Test Form: Version: 3.2 (#). The # in the parentheses is between 1 and 10. A result between 8-10 would indicate that the person may have responded much more positively about him- or herself than would be expected relative to how most people answer the social desirability questions (e.g., "I have never lied"). A result between 1-3, conversely, indicates that the person may have been much harder on him- or herself in answering these questions than the general population. A result between 4-7 indicates that the person's responses are as expected and not overly influenced either negatively or positively by social desirability. By themselves, high or low social desirability results do not explicitly indicate that a person has been untruthful, just that their response pattern is outside the norm for most people on average.

Is the GCI really valid?

Yes. In response to the questions of whether the GCI actually measures what it purports to measure, whether the questions that were asked, and the way the composite scale results were computed all relate to the given dimensions in the GCI feedback report, the answer is a very straightforward "yes." Furthermore, research shows that the GCI also has predictive validity, which means that people with higher results tend to perform at a higher level in terms of global management skills learning and transfer.

How can a test like this accurately capture all the complexity of human behavior?

It can't and no inventory ever will. That's not the goal of the GCI, which focuses only on global competence. To capture the complexity of our human behavior would require someone with absolute knowledge about how to understand human behavior (and this person does not exist) as well as the time required to observe to determine consistencies, exceptions, and so on (and no one has a lifetime to devote to this). So any assessment is a compromise between quality and efficiency. Observation of actual behavior over time by an expert is going to result in higher quality information; however, we live in a practical world where resources are limited and so efficiency becomes a valued commodity. In 30-45

minutes, if a person is responding conscientiously, we can gather some highly reliable, accurate information. This information, as with all information, needs to be examined in the context of the larger picture—the individual's self-perception, feedback from others (family, friends, coworkers, etc.), and other similar psychological assessments.

IF THESE ARE STABLE PREDISPOSITIONS, WHAT'S THE USE OF WORKING ON THEM? JUST HOW MUCH CAN I IMPROVE?

Most of the competencies assessed by the GCI are what we call "stable" traits rather than "dynamic" traits. Stable traits are those that seem to be a combination of whatever tendencies we have at birth and those that are shaped and reinforced over many years. They are more difficult to develop than dynamic traits. Nonetheless, even stable traits can be modified and/or managed more effectively. With an effective personal development plan and consistent efforts, stable traits may be incrementally altered over time. For example, "John" might be low in Tolerance of Ambiguity but develops a workable plan to put himself in ambiguous situations where he can examine his reaction and fears to better understand why the uncertainty affects him that way. He can also devise a plan that helps him effectively manage that ambiguity better. For instance, one step in his plan could be taking action to acquire more information to better understand the context and issues. As a result of this action to better manage the ambiguity, over time, "John's" actual tolerance of uncertainty could improve so that his "baseline" reaction will have moved.

With Interpersonal Engagement, "John" might have a lot of anxiety around approaching people, especially about asking them to do things. If "John" develops an action plan that helps him create scripts of how to approach people, this could reduce his anxiety about not knowing what to say. Such efforts toward skill building can be very effective. Again, over time, "John" might not have to rely on essentially memorized scripts but might have internalized the words and principles enough to feel comfortable approaching a variety of people in a variety of situations.

KOZAI GROUP KG Aperian GLOBAL