SIGMA Assessment Systems
Talent Development

How to Use the LSP-R™ in HR Programs

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Over the last two years human resources (HR) services have been in demand like never before. Businesses have witnessed immense disruption as first the pandemic, then equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) movements changing the way organizations operate around the world. Throughout these changes, HR professionals have been front and center. They are the leaders who must work to address challenges surrounding remote work, digital transformation, EDI, and more. If you are a post-secondary institution offering HR programs and certifications, your job is to prepare those leaders for success. One of the ways you can do that to equip them with the tools they need. SIGMA's Leadership Skills Profile – Revised (LSP-R) is one of those tools.

About the LSP-R

The LSP-R is a personality-based assessment of leadership skills that can be used to guide leadership development efforts. The test scores individuals on 50 leadership competencies including cognitive, personal, interpersonal, and senior leadership skills. Everyone who takes the LSP-R will automatically receive a Focus Report which includes a summary of scores and analysis of results, as well as templates and activities for creating a personalized development plan. The LSP-R can be used to support leadership development, succession planning, employee training, high potential programs, and more.

How it Works

The LSP-R is administered online and takes about 25 minutes to complete. Test-takers respond to a battery of questions that are used to generate an individual score on each of the 50 leadership competencies included in SIGMA's leadership competency framework. Once the test has been completed, user friendly reports are made immediately available to the respondent. The report provides a detailed summary of each score, including definitions of each competency, feedback on the implications of the test-taker's results, and guidance on how the competency can be developed and improved (click here to see a sample report). In addition to using an online platform, the LSP-R can be administered in HR programs through two ways:

1. **Co-curricular Administration (i.e., outside of the classroom)** – The LSP-R can be administered as a part of career management services or personal/professional development opportunities. The assessment can be made available to smaller groups through optional clubs and programs, or it can be administered to an entire cohort as part of an institution-wide co-curricular development session.

2. **Curricular Administration (i.e., inside the classroom)** – The LSP-R can also be administered through a particular course or curricular activity. Credits related to group leadership, organizational management, and personal/professional development may be particularly well suited.

Why Use the LSP-R?

The LSP-R can be used for selection (i.e., hiring, placement, promotion), and development. This makes it an incredibly valuable tool for HR programs, whose primary goal is to equip leaders for attracting and retaining talented staff. Using the LSP-R in HR programs can therefore benefit both the students and the institution. Students are prepared to become strategic partners, equipped with tools that work, and familiarized with competency assessment and development. Institutions, on the other hand, are better able to accomplish their mission, and can improve their standing among the other employment relations, labor studies, organizational behavior, and human resource programs.

The LSP-R Advantage

There are thousands of personality and leadership assessments out there. What makes the LSP-R any different? First, it's development; the LSP-R was developed and revised with academic rigor, based on the latest science on leadership theory and personality measurement. Items were carefully chosen from a pool of over 4,700 personality items, drawing on content from three of SIGMA's seminal assessments: The Personality Research Form (PRF), Jackson Personality Inventory-Revised (JPIR), and Survey of Work Styles (SWS). This means you can trust the reliability and validity of your results. Second, the LSP-R is accompanied by a suite of development resources. All of SIGMA's succession planning, coaching, and training programs are built upon the same competency framework assessed by the LSP-R, and we have a variety of free tools and templates, as well as a host of development guides that can be used to align business school curriculum with leadership competencies, or work towards developing individual skills. For access to these resources, check out the links embedded below, or contact us today.

Benefits for Students

1. Prepare students for strategic partnerships

2. Equip students with tools that work

3. Teach students how to assess and develop competencies

Incorporating the LSP-R in HR programs provides students with personal and professional advantages. First, taking the LSP-R allows students themselves to grow in their self-awareness. Self-awareness is an important quality for leaders, because it allows them to understand what they bring to a role, make better choices, and be realistic in their expectations. Self-aware leaders are reflective, observant, empathetic, perceptive, responsive, humble, self-controlled, discerning, and adaptable. These are all important qualities that aspiring HR professionals should be looking to develop. Second, taking the LSP-R has professional benefits for students looking to enter the field of labor and employee relations. Learning how to use the LSP-R will prepare HR students for becoming strategic partners, and it will equip

them with talent management tools that work. Finally, using the LSP-R in HR programs can benefit students professionally because it gives them the opportunity to learn how to assess and develop competencies, something that is becoming an increasingly important part of HR professionals' jobs today.

Prepare Students for Strategic Partnership

In the past, HR positions have dealt largely with employee compliance, training, payroll, and labor relations. Today, HR is increasingly becoming a strategic partner for organization's upper management. In fact, a report by McLean & Company recently stated that "HR's role in business continuity planning could be what separates the organizations that thrive despite crises from those left behind." [1] As such, it is important that HR programs ensure graduates have "the expertise and resilience needed to contribute effectively to business continuity planning."[2] Business continuity planning (BCP), or succession planning, refers to the ongoing process whereby leaders are identified and developed, such that there is a robust succession bench ready to support vacancies when they arise. Studies show organizations who are highly effective at developing and maintaining a succession plan have greater organizational performance.[3] Research also suggests that when HR is a strategic partner, organizations are 1.7 times more likely to be highly effective at capitalizing on new ideas.[4] Consequently, 48% of organizations now report using HR as a strategic partner, an 8% increase from 2020, and higher than any rates reported over the previous five years. [5] What these trends show is that succession planning is important, and HR professionals are being increasingly involved in the process of identifying and developing leaders. As such, HR programs must equip their students to attract, develop, and retain top talent. That's where the LSP-R comes in. The LSP-R is aligned with all of SIGMA's succession planning services. Our six-step succession planning process is structured around the competencies measured by this assessment, and our coaching, training, and executive education rests upon them as well. Introducing students to the LSP-R and how it can be used to facilitate succession planning is one of the most practical things an HR program can do to prepare its graduates for the job that awaits them today. For more information, download SIGMA's PDF guide, Using the LSP-R for Succession Planning.

Equip Students with Tools That Work

One of the other benefits of taking the LSP-R at HR schools, is that it familiarizes students with a practical tool they will be able to use in their day-to-day work. Research done on the distribution of HR professional's time shows that talent acquisition and strategic HR planning are among the top three most important activities (they take up 16% and 10% of professionals' time, respectively). [6] In addition, over the last two years "recruitment" and "developing leaders" have been repeatedly selected as HR's top priorities. [7] The LSP-R has been customized to be used for both selection and development. These assessments have been customized such that they produce a different report, the Selection Report for selection, and the Focus Report for development. For a sample Selection Report, click here. For a sample Focus Report, click here. Apart from helping HR students get their job done, the LSP-R will also equip them to do it well. Studies show that having documented strategies increases HR effectiveness (in talent acquisition, employee engagement, HR analytics, EDI, learning and development).[8] Therefore, teaching students how to integrate the LSP-R into their recruitment and development process will equip them with tools that works, and improve the likelihood that they will perform well in their jobs.

Teach Students How to Assess and Develop Competencies

Last but not least, using the LSP-R in HR programs allows institutions to teach their students how competencies can be assessed and developed. This is a critical skill, given that 2021 HR trend reports emphasize a growing demand for HR professionals to be offering opportunities for continuous learning and development. 9 Today, nearly half of organizations are providing training on communication and teamwork (46%), while a quarter is analyzing employee skills gaps and investing in the development of new competencies (24%).10 The LSP-R can be used to teach students how to assess and develop competencies like this. In addition to easy, online administration, SIGMA has prepared a Leadership Skill Development Series with PDF guides on how to improve each of the 50 competencies measured in the assessment. These guides offer practical tips and tricks for skill development and will prepare your graduates for identifying their employees' strengths and development opportunities, as well as putting actionable plans for improvement in place.

In addition to the Leadership Skill Development Series, the LSP-R also comes with a Focus Report. This report will teach HR graduates how to interpret assessment results and use them for coaching, mentoring, and professional development. The Focus Report breaks test takers' results into high scores, low scores, and a MyZone area for immediate improvement. The MyZone feature identifies competencies where it will be most efficient for individuals to focus their development efforts. These competencies are the ones where an individual has shown some skill but still has significant room for growth. Over time and with intentional development, MyZone competencies are likely to become strengths. To aid in this development effort, the LSP-R's Focus Report includes an easy-to-use development guide. This can be used to support either self-directed or coaching-augmented leadership development. For more resources, take a look at SIGMA's Development Plan and Development Activities tools and templates.

SIGMA Can Help

Ready to start incorporating the LSP-R into your HR curriculum? Visit SIGMA's website to learn more about the LSP-R and how to order assessments for your course, cohort, or institution. You can also contact us directly for more information. We're always happy to speak with you!

Speak with one of our experts. We're always happy to chat!

Glen Harrison

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[1] McLean & Company. (2021). 2021 HR Trends Report. *McLean & Company.* Retrieved from https://go.mcleanco.com/2020-HR-Trends-g-t?source=google&medium=cpc&creative=489519103612&keyword=hr%20trends%202021&matchtype=b&network=g&device=c&campaign={campaign}&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=hr%20trends%202021&utm_campaign={campaign}&utm_content={adgroup}&_bt=489519103612&_bk=hr%20trends%202021&_bm=b&_bn=g&gclid=CjwKCAjwhOyJBhA4EiwAEcJdcSWMXmsisvBDmLpF30TVpwCVlTMVw8JQw08eOcrzmtyaLKN5sqyRrRoC_qQQAvD_BwE.

[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.