

Criterion Validity of ACT Tessaera Workforce

Melissa A. Albert, PhD Candidate, Jason D. Way, PhD, Cristina Anguiano-Carrasco, PhD, Kate E. Walton, PhD, Jeremy Burrus, PhD, and Dana Murano, PhD

As workplaces begin to focus on essential (or “soft”) skills to meet the demands of increasingly adaptive and collaborative work environments, it is important to consider what types of skills can best predict important work outcomes. ACT® Tessaera® Workforce™ is an assessment of essential skills, which are skills outside of cognitive ability that predict important work outcomes such as job performance (Barrick & Mount,

1991; Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001; Hurtz & Donovan, 2000; Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein, 1991), organizational citizenship behaviors (Chiaburu, Oh, Berry, Li, & Gardner, 2011), counterproductive work behaviors (Salgado, 2002), and turnover (Zimmerman, 2008). Descriptions of the essential skills assessed by ACT Tessaera Workforce can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. ACT Tessaera Workforce Skill Descriptions

ACT Tessaera Workforce Skill	ACT Tessaera Workforce Skill Description
Work Ethic	persistence, goal striving, reliability, dependability, and attention to detail
Collaboration	empathy, helpfulness, trust, trustworthiness, and the ability to work on teams
Resilience	stress management, emotional regulation, positive response to setbacks, and poise
Creativity	creative thinking, inquisitiveness, flexibility, open mindedness, and embracing diversity
Leadership	assertiveness, influence, optimism, and enthusiasm
Integrity	honesty, sincerity, fairness towards others, and modesty

Validity is defined as the degree to which the interpretation of test scores in a specific context is supported by theory and empirical evidence (AERA, APA, & NCME, 2014). When there is strong validity evidence, we can be more confident that we are drawing the correct conclusions from an assessment.

Criterion-related validity involves an examination of evidence regarding the relationship of the predictor (ACT Tessaera Workforce) with a criterion (job performance). A statistical relationship between the assessment, ACT Tessaera Workforce, and the criterion measure, job performance, would be evidence of criterion-related validity (SIOP, 2018).



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A pilot study using ACT Tessaera Workforce was conducted to provide evidence of the assessment’s ability to predict job performance. The job performance measure in this study was developed by ACT for criterion validity research with its workforce line of assessments (ACT, 2015).

The sample collected for the study included 284 participants with a mean age of 42.65 years (*SD* = 13.15). The majority of the sample identified themselves as female (68.7%), followed by male (30.6%), while two participants declined to respond or

identified as other (.7%). Correlations between a five-item measure of manager-rated overall job performance developed by ACT Research (ACT, 2015) and the six ACT Tessaera Workforce scale scores were examined in a subset of 173 supervisor-employee pairs. These correlations can be found in Table 2. Work Ethic had the strongest significant relationship with job performance among all the ACT Tessaera Workforce scales. Collaboration also had a statistically significant relationship with job performance, as did Integrity.

Table 2. Correlations Between ACT Tessaera Workforce and Job Performance

	Work Ethic	Collaboration	Resilience	Creativity	Leadership	Integrity
Overall Job Performance	.20*	.18*	.05	.14	.08	.17*

Note. **p* < .05

These results generally align with previous meta-analytic research (see Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001; Johnson, Rowatt, & Petrini, 2011) and provide preliminary support for the utility of ACT Tessaera Workforce in predicting job performance outcomes. One main difference between the current results and previous meta-analytic findings is the lack of significance for the Resilience scale; however, it is possible this was due to range

restriction and a small sample size. Other scales may also be significant predictors of performance in individual organizations depending on the job (e.g., sales) or criterion (e.g., training performance) in question (Barrick et al., 2001), and organizations should therefore evaluate the predictive validity of each ACT Tessaera Workforce scale within the context of their workplace.

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