



Validation Report

# Success of Leader Appointments 2022-2023

By Emma Jonsson, 2025

# Evaluation of the predictive validity of Mercuri Urval assessments in leader selection

## Introduction

The success of every leader appointment that is made based on Mercuri Urval (MU) assessments is followed-up by MU Research Institute. The success is assessed independently by the hiring managers. The results of these follow-ups are regularly analysed and presented publicly. This report presents the evaluation results for leader appointments (Executives and Managers) assessed during the period January 2022 to June 2023.

## Description of Sample and Method

The success follow-up study is conducted on a full sample of 668 individuals, in 19 countries, appointed to Executive and Manager positions, after being assessed and recommended for employment by MU Experts delivering the MU Assessment Service based on the MU Expert Judgement Method™ (Hagafors, 2020), during the period January 2022 to June 2023. Data was collected through questionnaires to hiring managers evaluating the success of the leader that was appointed. This kind of manager evaluations has been found to give reliable data for evaluation of performance and success at work (e.g., Alessandri et al., 2015; Speer et al., 2024; Viswesvaran et al., 1996; Zhou et al., 2024).

Responses on the questionnaires have been received for 249 of the total 668 individuals in Executive and Manager positions, giving a response rate of 37 percent. An analysis of the non-responses indicates no systematic pattern, and it is concluded that the missing responses are random and have no significant impact on the result of this study. The response rate of 37 percent matches expectations for digitally distributed questionnaires (see e.g., Ebert et al., 2018; Sammut et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2022).

The data for this follow-up study was collected after a period exceeding 6 months after the appointment. The most frequent research on success of leader appointments commonly refers to the success of leader less than 18 months after start date in the position (e.g., Kiefer et al. 2022; Schmidt & Hunter, 1992).

## Evaluation of success

In the success follow-up questionnaire, the hiring manager (i.e., the manager the leader is reporting to) evaluate the appointed leader's overall performance in three steps:

- The leader does not meet expectations.
- The leader meets the expectations.
- The leader exceeds expectations.

In addition it is reported if the leader is not in the position due to: exit initiated by the employee or exit initiated by the company.

The result of this follow-up study is summarised below.

## Results of Evaluation

Table 1 and 2 presents the outcome of the results of the assignments made by MU Experts during 2022-2023.

**Table 1.** *Rated success for Executives and Managers, valid percentages.*

No longer appointed		Does not meet expectations	Meet expectations	Exceeds expectations
Exit initiated by the employee	Exit initiated by the company			
1.2%	2.4%	3.2%	69.5%	23.7%

The ratings show that the appointments were evaluated as successful by the hiring managers. **93.2 percent of the evaluated individuals were rated as meet or exceed expectations on performance**, while 3.2 percent were evaluated as not meeting expectations.

Among the Executives and Managers who no longer are appointed two-thirds of the exits (2.4% of total) were initiated by the company and one-third by the employee (1.2% of total).

In table 2 the follow-up result is presented by gender. Among the responses received 107 of the assessed leaders were men (43%), 54 were women (22%), and 88 (35%) had no information on gender.

**Table 2.** *Follow-up results presented by gender.*

Gender	No longer appointed		Does not meet expectations	Meet expectations	Exceeds expectations
	Exit initiated by the employee	Exit initiated by the company			
Male	1.9%	2.8%	2.8%	69.2%	23.4%
Female	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%	57.4%	38.9%
No information on gender	0.0%	3.4%	4.5%	77.3%	14.8%

It should be noted that these differences between men, women, and the group lacking information on gender, are not statistically significant.

## Conclusions

The analysis of the evaluations of the performance of leader appointments supported by MU assessments are in line with previous studies and shows a **success rate above 90 percent**; 93.2% meet or exceed expectations on achievement. This study thus replicates previously reported MU results. No statistically significant gender differences were observed, a result in line with previous findings (see Carlstedt, Hagafors, & Jonsson, 2020; Jonsson, 2022, 2023).

The results also show that 96 percent of the appointed leaders remain in the position after a period exceeding 6 months. The reasons for reported exits are unknown. Exits initiated by the employee may not necessarily relate to performance but to other circumstances.

A strict evaluation of the effectiveness of the MU Assessments necessitates consideration of the expected base rate, which is the percentage of candidates predicted to succeed if all candidates were appointed. Although this report does not include specific expected base rate estimations, other studies indicate a 50-60% success rate for leader appointments (see e.g., Kiefer et al., 2022). Given this context, we confidently conclude that MU Experts delivering the MU Assessment Service provide accurate predictions and recommendations, thereby providing substantial value to organisations.

## References

- Alessandri, G., Borgogni, L., & Truxillo, D. M. (2015). Tracking job performance trajectories over time: A six-year longitudinal study. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 24(4), pp. 560–577.
- Carlstedt, L., Hagafors, R., & Jonsson, E. (2020). *The Mercuri Urval Assessment Method*. Technical Report.
- Ebert, J. F., Huibers, L., Christensen, B., & Christensen, M. B. (2018). Paper- or Web-Based Questionnaire Invitations as a Method for Data Collection: Cross-Sectional Comparative Study of Differences in Response Rate, Completeness of Data, and Financial Cost. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 20(1), e24.
- Hagafors, R. (2020). *The Mercuri Urval Leadership Assessment Method: Fundamentals of Judgements and Forecasting*. Mercuri Urval Research Institute.
- Jonsson, E. (2022). *Validation report – Success rate for leader appointments 2020*. Mercuri Urval Research Institute.
- Jonsson, E. (2023). *Validation report – Success rate for leader appointments 2021*. Mercuri Urval Research Institute.
- Kiefer, K., Martin, J. A., & Hunt, R. A. (2022). Multi-Level Considerations in Executive Organizational Transfer. *Human Resource Management Review*, 32(1), 100779.
- Sammut, R., Griscti, O., & Norman, I. J. (2021). Strategies to improve response rates to web surveys: A literature review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 123, 104058.
- Schmidt, F. L., & Hunter, J. E. (1992). Development of a causal model of processes determining job performance. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 1(3), pp. 89–92.
- Speer, A. B., Delacruz, A. Y., Wegmeyer, L. J., & Perrotta, J. (2024). Meta-analytical estimates of interrater reliability for direct supervisor performance ratings: Optimism under optimal measurement designs. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 109(3), p. 456.
- Viswesvaran, C., Ones, D. S., & Schmidt, F. L. (1996). Comparative analysis of the reliability of job performance ratings. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81(5), pp. 557-574.
- Wu, M. J., Zhao, K., & Fils-Aime, F. (2022). Response rates of online surveys in published research: A meta-analysis. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 7, 100206.
- Zhou, Y., Sackett, P. R., Shen, W., & Beatty, A. S. (2024). An updated meta-analysis of the interrater reliability of supervisory performance ratings. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 109(6), pp. 949–970.

