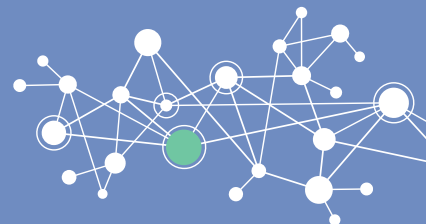
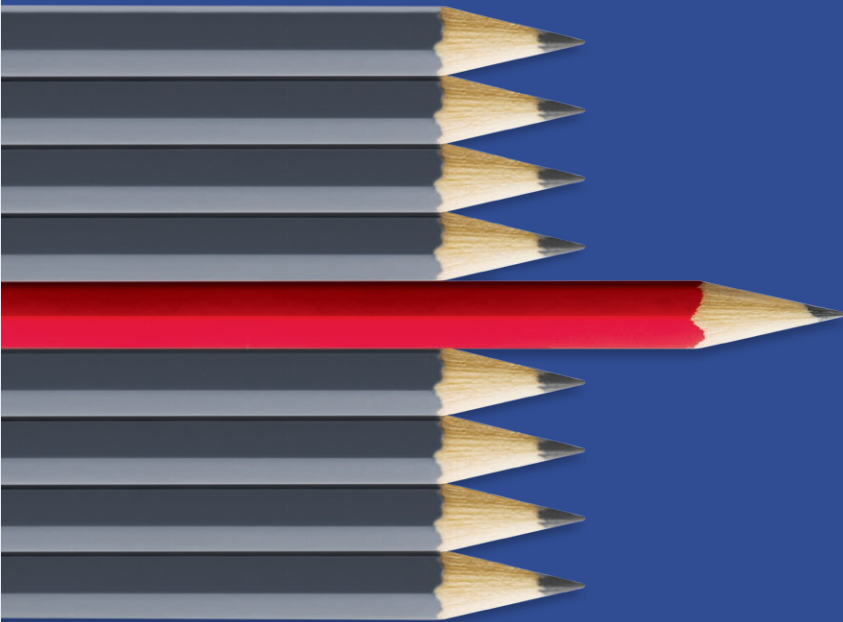




viaEDGE™

Technical Manual



viaEDGE™ Technical Manual

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INTRODUCTION

Due to extensive globalization, rapid technological disruption, and the increased adoption of social media, we now live in and work in a world of chaotic change and growing complexity. Throughout the foreseeable future, a high level of volatility and ambiguity will be the norm. Some authors refer to today's business environment as a VUCA world—one of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Companies are increasingly facing new, challenging problems that are ill-defined and with no clear guidance from the past. There is a difference between the kind of problems that organizations are able to solve today and the ones that they will need to solve in the future. To thrive, companies will need to be nimble, prepared to take risks, and be ready to change, sometimes overnight.

To effectively deal with this manic world of business, companies will have to hire people and build workforces that embrace instability, foster innovation, and adapt quickly. The success of organizations depends on having talented individuals who excel at solving novel and unstructured problems—namely, to “know what to do when you don't know what to do” (Swisher, 2012). The ever-shifting, competitive landscape creates relentless pressure on individuals to build new skills, take on new responsibilities, and be open to new work environments. Learning agility is one of the key success factors in this VUCA business environment (Orr, 2012).

Learning Agility

Learning agility refers to the ability and willingness to learn from experience, and subsequently apply that learning to perform successfully under new or first-time conditions (Lombardo & Eichinger, 2000). Many authors view it as the primary indicator, or the most important factor, in defining high-potential talent (Eichinger & Lombardo, 2004; Silzer & Church, 2009). The rationale goes something like this: Potential cannot be fully detected from what an individual has already demonstrated in a past job or current job. Rather, it requires that the individual perform something new or different. It involves learning new skills to perform in novel and, very often, first-time situations. Learning agility is an early indicator of leadership competency (McCall, 1998). It has been widely recognized in the talent management field as vital for long-term leadership success (see De Meuse, Dai, & Hallenbeck, 2010; Dries, Vantilborgh, & Pepermans, 2012).

Model of Learning Agility

Learning agility is widely posited as a multidimensional concept (De Meuse, Dai, Swisher, Eichinger, & Lombardo, 2012). Korn/Ferry International assesses learning agility through the following five factors (see Figure 1):

- **Self-Awareness** – The degree to which an individual has personal insight, clearly understands his or her strengths and weaknesses, is free of blind spots, and uses this knowledge to perform effectively.
- **Mental Agility** – The extent to which an individual embraces complexity, examines problems in unique and unusual ways, is inquisitive, and can make fresh connections between different concepts.
- **People Agility** – The degree to which one is open-minded toward others, enjoys interacting with a diversity of people, understands their unique strengths, interests, and limitations, and uses them effectively to accomplish organizational goals.
- **Change Agility** – The extent to which an individual likes change, continuously explores new options and solutions, and is interested in leading organizational change efforts.
- **Results Agility** – The degree to which an individual is motivated by challenge and can deliver results in first-time and/or tough situations through resourcefulness and by inspiring others.

FIGURE 1. FIVE FACTORS OF LEARNING AGILITY



The Case for Self-Assessment of Learning Agility

To address their long-term talent needs, organizations must have a clear concept of potential and have reliable ways of measuring and developing it. Korn/Ferry has developed several psychometric tools to assess learning agility, such as the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument and the Learning From Experience™ behaviorally based, structured interview guide. viaEDGE™ is an online self-assessment of learning agility. The objective is to provide a measure of learning agility that can be administered directly, quickly, and simply to individuals. Equipped with this new tool, talent management professionals can now choose from several options, depending upon whether the organizations' needs are internal or external selection, high-potential identification or leadership development, high touch evaluation or large-scale assessment.

This manual is designed primarily as a technical reference to help users understand the research background behind the viaEDGE™ self-assessment. Users will find information related to the development of the instrument, the psychometrical statistics such as reliability, construct validity, predictive validity, and other empirical findings.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF viaEDGE™ SELF-ASSESSMENT

The creation of the viaEDGE™ self-assessment began in early fall 2009. Multiple phases of pilot studies were conducted to develop, test, and validate the instrument. The earliest draft of the instrument had 166 items and was pilot tested on 61 participants during February 2010. Subsequently, the instrument was revised based on the results from data analysis and feedback from some of the participants. The second version of the instrument consisted of 158 items. From April to August 2010, the second version was pilot tested on MBA students and employees from several global companies. Further data analyses were conducted to refine the instrument. The final instrument contains 116 items and measures the five factors of learning agility (Self-Awareness, Mental Agility, People Agility, Change Agility, and Results Agility) and Overall Learning Agility. In total, approximately a thousand participants were involved in the original development and validation of the viaEDGE™ self-assessment.

The Structure of viaEDGE™

The viaEDGE™ self-assessment is comprised of three different methodologies, presenting questions in three different sections. Section I contains numerous personality and behaviorally oriented items using a 5-point Likert rating scale. Section II consists of various biodata questions. These items ask individuals to respond to different types of personal-life and work-related experiences (e.g., number of languages they speak, number of professional organizations or clubs they belong to). Section III of the assessment contains several situational judgment theory (SJT) questions. In this section, individuals are presented with workplace scenarios and asked to indicate what they would do in these situations.

Unique Features of viaEDGE™

There are many challenges in the development of a self-assessment of learning agility. In a selection situation, there is a concern that individuals' responses in a self-assessment may not reflect their true standing on underlying traits of interest. For example, job applicants may possess a strong desire to present themselves in a positive light and will "put their best foot forward" when answering the questions. Such candidates may conscientiously manipulate their responses to inflate their scores.

A significant effort was exercised to control response distortion when we developed the viaEDGE™ self-assessment. We carefully and judiciously worded the survey items to avoid using phrases or words that could be perceived as socially desirable (i.e., questions that obviously made the respondent look good or bad). Based on the initial pilot test, we removed items that had high mean scores. These items did not differentiate people, since most individuals scored high on them. We also incorporated several verification scales into the instrument. These verification scales enable assessment administrators to interpret the scores and evaluate the likelihood that the scores represent the respondent's true standings on learning agility. We created five verification scales in viaEDGE™. Each scale is described in the following paragraphs:

Self-Presentation

The Self-Presentation scale identifies the extent to which an individual attempts to present himself or herself in an overly positive manner (i.e., an image that is high in social desirability). Research suggests that many people have a tendency to deny socially undesirable traits and to claim socially desirable ones when they believe they are being scrutinized (Anderson, Warner, & Spencer, 1984). It reflects an intentional distortion of self-descriptions in order to be viewed favorably by others. Oftentimes, it is referred to as "social desirability." If an individual scores high on this scale, there is a good chance that this individual has intended to fake good on other scales as well. In contrast, some individuals are unassuming and tend to diminish their strengths. The viaEDGE™ self-assessment accommodates for either of these potential biases by adjusting each individual's learning agility scores accordingly.

Response Consistency

The viaEDGE™ self-assessment includes several "item pairs," in which one item is worded positively and the other worded negatively. In addition, some item pairs describe similar situations. Such a design enables us to determine the consistency of responses. When an individual responds to the paired items inconsistently, there is good reason to suspect the overall accuracy of the assessment in general. The individual might have paid little attention to the questions, been distracted or multitasking during the assessment, or tried deliberately to distort survey responses. Whatever the cause, unless there is a high level of consistency, the assessment may not be a valid indicator of learning agility.

Profile Alignment

Research indicates that high-learning-agile individuals tend to score relatively higher on some scales than others (De Meuse, Dai, Hallenbeck, & Tang, 2008). The Profile Alignment scale compares individuals with the population norms. If an individual's scores denote high learning agility, but he or she is not aligned with the typical scoring pattern for a high-learning-agile individual, it suggests the scores might not be accurate. Likewise, if the Profile Alignment scale scores denote a low-learning-agile individual, but the scoring pattern is similar to a high-learning-agile individual, it suggests a problem. In either case, the assessment administrator should interpret the findings cautiously. Additional follow-up information from the respondent could clarify the situation.

Work-Style Counter

Research reveals that high-learning-agile individuals tend to possess a certain work style and demonstrate specific behavioral patterns (Lombardo & Eichinger, 2000). Likewise, such individuals typically do not perform other behaviors; for example, high-learning-agile individuals are not generally detail oriented, planful, or methodical. Since such behaviors are frequently deemed socially desirable, the viaEDGE™ self-assessment measures how often an individual agrees with these “non-agile/socially desirable” items. We call such survey items counterintuitive because it would seem reasonable to agree with those statements. The Work-Style Counter scale serves as a check to ensure that the individual's learning agility scores are aligned with responses on this scale. When someone scores high on the learning agility scales and low on the counter scales (or vice versa), the assessment administrator should collect additional information to determine whether this individual is learning agile or distorting his or her responses.

Life-Experience Counter

This scale functions similarly to the Work-Style Counter scale. However, the Life-Experience Counter scale focuses exclusively on life experiences rather than work-style items. Again, it serves as a check to affirm that the high- or low-learning-agile individual responds to the counterintuitive items appropriately. If not, the veracity of the scores is suspect.

Overall Confidence Index Bar

Based on the above verification scales, an Overall Confidence Index Bar is computed to indicate the level of confidence we can have regarding the accuracy of the viaEDGE™ self-assessment results. To simplify interpretation, a straightforward, three-level index patterned after a traffic light is used. “Green” denotes that the verification scales affirm that an individual's scores are consistent and aligned as expected. The green portion of the bar is further divided into three sections, indicating the degree of confidence. Based on the data that we have collected thus far, it is estimated that self-assessment scores will occur in the green category approximately 80%–85% of the time. The “yellow” indicates that the verification scales, in general, reveal an accurate assessment. However, there are a couple of concerns that suggest some caution be used when interpreting the individual's scores. We estimate that this condition will occur about 10%–15% of the time. Finally, “red” means that the respondent's scores should not be used. There are a number of problems in the manner in which the individual completed the assessment that makes interpretation unwise. It would be best for the individual to retake the assessment. Based on our pilot findings, it could occur about 3%–5% of the time. Be sure to recommend that the person should complete the second assessment in a quiet setting, respond to the items at a relatively fast pace, and attempt to finish the assessment in one sitting.

Psychometric Qualities

Listed below are highlights of the key findings from the viaEDGE™ pilot studies:

- Exploratory factor analyses supported the five-factor model of learning agility.
- The assessment demonstrated sufficient internal reliability. The coefficient alpha correlations range between 0.74 and 0.88.
- The construct validity of the assessment was supported through convergent and discriminant validation analyses. For example, viaEDGE™ scores were significantly correlated with other methods of assessing learning agility (e.g., the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument and the Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide), whereas, the scores clearly were different from scales in other assessments designed to measure different constructs.

Factor Structure

As mentioned previously, the viaEDGE™ self-assessment was designed to measure five different factors of learning agility. Two steps of data analysis were taken. Initially, we conducted item analyses. Items that were not correlated with the majority of other items were deleted. Subsequently, we performed an exploratory factor analysis (Maximum Likelihood with Varimax Rotation) on the remaining items. The results revealed nine factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, but the last four factors were uninterpretable and had very few items with substantial item-factor loadings. Consequently, we conducted another factor analysis—this time forcing a five-factor solution. In general, items that were developed to measure a specific factor of learning agility had the highest loading on the factor. The five factors explained about 59% of the variance.

Internal Reliability

The “coefficient alpha” statistic provides an indication of the internal consistency of a scale. If all the items within a scale measure the agility factor similarly (i.e., reliably), they should be highly inter-correlated. An acceptable professional standard indicates that a scale is reliable when the coefficient alpha is greater than 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). As shown in Table 1, all five learning agility factor scales as well as the Overall Learning Agility scale in the viaEDGE™ self-assessment reach this level of reliability.

TABLE 1. INTERNAL CONSISTENCY OF ASSESSMENT SCALES

Scale	Cronbach Alpha
Overall Learning Agility	0.88
Self-Awareness	0.74
Mental Agility	0.74
People Agility	0.76
Change Agility	0.77
Results Agility	0.78

Note. N = 858.

Construct Validity

We investigated the construct validity of the viaEDGE™ self-assessment by correlating it with the scores on other assessments of learning agility and different psychological constructs:

1. Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide
2. Choices Architect® Multi-Rater Instrument
3. Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI)
4. Hogan Development Survey (HDS)
5. Undergraduate Grade Point Average

The Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide and the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument were designed specifically to measure learning agility. Therefore, we would expect a high correlation between viaEDGE™ and the Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide and Choices Architect®. The HPI and HDS assessments were designed to measure different psychological constructs related to general personality and leadership. We would expect certain scales would be modestly correlated to viaEDGE™ scores but an overall lower relationship between the measures (see Guilford & Fruchter, 1978).

1. viaEDGE™ and the Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide

viaEDGE™ self-assessment scores were correlated with interview guide data to investigate the relationship between the two methods of assessing learning agility. The interview data were collected from two organizations—a telecommunications company and a health care service organization. In both cases, the interviewers were blind to the viaEDGE™ scores.

The results of this cross-validation study are presented in Table 2. As can be observed, all learning agility scale scores obtained by viaEDGE™ were significantly correlated to scale scores obtained via the Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide (see shaded cells). Further, the correlation coefficients among factors of learning agility in general were highest in the diagonal (i.e., the same factors between two methods). Thus, these findings strongly support the construct validity of the viaEDGE™ self-assessment.

TABLE 2. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN viaEDGE™
AND THE LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE™ INTERVIEW GUIDE

viaEDGE™	Learning From Experience™				
	Overall Learning Agility	Mental Agility	People Agility	Change Agility	Results Agility
Overall Learning Agility	0.42**	0.19	0.42**	0.46**	0.24
Self-Awareness	0.29	0.10	0.26	0.23	0.23
Mental Agility	0.51**	0.43**	0.30	0.45**	0.35*
People Agility	0.37*	0.02	0.55**	0.33*	0.13
Change Agility	0.37*	0.19	0.29	0.56**	0.20
Results Agility	0.24	0.21	0.11	0.15	0.37*

Note. The earlier version of the Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide assesses four dimensions of learning agility. N = 39. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

2. viaEDGE™ and Choices Architect® Multi-Rater Instrument

In addition, the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument was administered concurrently with the viaEDGE™ self-assessment to employees in five different organizations. There was generally a high degree of relationship between the two instruments. All the correlations between the two methods on the same factors (in shaded cells) were statistically significant. In particular, there was a very high correlation between the two methods on Overall Learning Agility ($r = 0.73$, $p < .01$).

TABLE 3. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN viaEDGE™ AND CHOICES ARCHITECT® MULTI-RATER INSTRUMENT

viaEDGE™	Choices Architect®				
	Overall Learning Agility	Mental Agility	People Agility	Change Agility	Results Agility
Overall Learning Agility	0.73**	0.76**	0.59**	0.66**	0.70**
Self-Awareness	0.43*	0.45**	0.48**	0.31	0.30
Mental Agility	0.42**	0.47**	0.34	0.39*	0.34
People Agility	0.46**	0.46**	0.47**	0.36*	0.41*
Change Agility	0.50**	0.54**	0.40*	0.47**	0.46**
Results Agility	0.34	0.35*	0.31	0.22	0.36*

Note. The earlier version of the Choices Architect® assesses four dimensions of learning agility. N = 32. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

3. viaEDGE™ and Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI)

Based on the five-factor personality model, the HPI aims to predict job performance. Assessment data collected by the HPI can be used for selection, leadership development, succession planning, and other talent management decisions. The seven primary scales are summarized below:

- (1) **Adjustment** – Being self-confident and resilient vs. being neurotic and irritable.
- (2) **Ambition** – Being upwardly mobile and competitive vs. being anergic and unassertive.
- (3) **Sociability** – Being extraverted and socially proactive vs. being introverted and socially reactive.
- (4) **Interpersonal Sensitivity** – Being diplomatic and observant vs. being straightforward and frank.
- (5) **Prudence** – Being self-disciplined and conscientious vs. being flexible and spontaneous.
- (6) **Inquisitive** – Being curious and visionary vs. being concentrated and practical.
- (7) **Learning Approach** – Being a traditional and structured learner vs. being a hands-on and experiential learner.

In general, the relationship between the viaEDGE™ scales and the HPI scales was modest (see Table 4). The findings indicate that the degree of correlation between the two assessments is largest with the Overall Learning Agility scale. The Self-Awareness scale on viaEDGE™ had the lowest relationship with HPI; only one of the seven HPI scales was statistically related. As expected, the HPI scales on Ambition, Sociability, Interpersonal Sensitivity, and Inquisitive had the highest positive relationships with viaEDGE™, whereas, Prudence had the only negative relationship. In total, the HPI data analysis supports the construct validity of the viaEDGE™ self-assessment. The degree of redundancy between the two assessments was minimal.

TABLE 4. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN viaEDGE™ AND HOGAN PERSONALITY INVENTORY (HPI)

HPI	viaEDGE™					
	Self-Awareness	Mental Agility	People Agility	Change Agility	Results Agility	Overall Learning Agility
Adjustment	0.10	– 0.01	0.10	0.09	0.08	0.12
Ambition	0.34*	0.02	0.20*	0.10	0.29**	0.41**
Sociability	0.17	0.13	0.10	0.28**	0.21*	0.41**
Interpersonal Sensitivity	0.08	0.07	0.46**	0.16	0.17	0.29**
Prudence	0.00	– 0.19*	0.09	– 0.25**	0.12	– 0.12
Inquisitive	0.08	0.42**	0.22**	0.34**	0.07	0.48**
Learning Approach	0.13	0.26**	– 0.01	0.07	0.13	0.14

Note. N = 119 MBA students attending 29 different universities throughout the world.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

4. viaEDGE™ and Hogan Development Survey (HDS)

Subsequently, we correlated the viaEDGE™ scales with the HDS scales. The HDS identifies personality traits associated with performance risks and derailers of interpersonal behavior (Hogan, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2010). HDS scales are divided into three categories: Moving Away, Moving Against, and Moving Toward. Each categorization and its corresponding scales are briefly summarized below:

Moving Away:

- (1) **Excitable** – Describing individuals who envision disappointments in relationships and are always looking to see if they are ill-treated.
- (2) **Skeptical** – Describing individuals who are conspiracy theorists and are guarded and mistrustful.
- (3) **Cautious** – Describing individuals who are hypersensitive to criticism. Individuals with high scores on this scale are constantly worried about making a mistake or being discredited.
- (4) **Reserved** – Describing individuals who have no particular interest in or concern about others and prefer working alone. They enjoy working with data rather than people.
- (5) **Leisurely** – Describing individuals who are skeptical of the intents of others. Individuals with high scores on this scale may perceptibly be agreeable and cooperative, but privately imagine being treated badly and undervalued.

Moving Against:

- (6) **Arrogant** – Describing individuals who have a desire for attention and admiration from others and expect to be obeyed by others. Highly confident about themselves, they are aspiring and attract followers.
- (7) **Mischievous** – Describing individuals who expect other people will find them charismatic, bright, and appealing. They may be perceived as abusive and manipulative.
- (8) **Colorful** – Describing individuals who desire the attention of others. Having a desire to elevate their self-concept, they are good at managing their impression.
- (9) **Imaginative** – Describing individuals who are intrigued by observing and thinking about things in new ways. They appear to be smart and original, but others may be confused by their unconventional perception and expression.

Moving Toward:

- (10) **Diligent** – Describing individuals who set high performance standards. They tend to be traditional, detail oriented, risk averse, stable, reliable, planful, and foreseeable.
- (11) **Dutiful** – Describing individuals who desire being acknowledged or being liked by powerful people. Because they like to conform to the rules and please others, they may have problems being decisive and standing alone.

In general, the results indicate that viaEDGE™ and HDS are not highly correlated. Of the 25 statistically significant inter-scale correlation coefficients (out of a possible 66), only 9 correlations were 0.30 or greater—suggesting that on most of the scales, there is substantially less than 9% of common variance between the two instruments. Further, where there was a statistically significant relationship between scales, it made conceptual sense. For example, nearly all of the inter-scale correlations in the “Moving Away” category were negative. This pattern of results indicates that learning agility (as measured by viaEDGE™) is inversely related to “succeeding through intimidation and avoidance.” Likewise, the Diligent scale and Dutiful scale in “Moving Toward”—suggesting detail orientation, risk aversion, steadiness, and planfulness—were negatively related to learning agility. On the other hand, HDS scales such as Arrogant, Mischievous, Colorful, and Imaginative in the “Moving Against” category were positively related to learning agility. Overall, the findings reveal the two assessments are clearly measuring different constructs. Yet, the scales between viaEDGE™ and HDS were positively or negatively related where it made logical sense (see Table 5).

TABLE 5. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN viaEDGE™ AND HOGAN DEVELOPMENT SURVEY (HDS)

HDS		viaEDGE™					
		Self-Awareness	Mental Agility	People Agility	Change Agility	Results Agility	Overall Learning Agility
Moving Away	Excitable	– 0.16	0.04	– 0.20*	– 0.15	– 0.09	– 0.16
	Skeptical	0.06	– 0.12	– 0.08	– 0.11	– 0.03	– 0.01
	Cautious	– 0.29**	– 0.13	– 0.19*	– 0.16	– 0.25**	– 0.43**
	Reserved	– 0.19*	– 0.14	– 0.46**	– 0.20*	– 0.10	– 0.32**
	Leisurely	– 0.21*	– 0.13	– 0.17	– 0.15	– 0.16	– 0.21**
Moving Against	Arrogant	0.31**	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.21*	0.30**
	Mischievous	0.16	0.11	0.23*	0.32**	0.20*	0.40**
	Colorful	0.27**	0.18	0.13	0.21	0.14	0.44**
	Imaginative	0.16	0.26**	0.12	0.15	0.16	0.29**
Moving Toward	Diligent	0.07	– 0.22*	0.06	– 0.31**	0.23*	– 0.04
	Dutiful	– 0.06	– 0.04	0.13	– 0.27**	– 0.12	– 0.14

Note. N = 114 MBA students attending 29 different universities throughout the world.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

5. viaEDGE™ and Undergraduate Grade Point Average (GPA)

A total of 375 MBA students self-reported their undergraduate GPAs in our study. It was found that undergraduate GPA was unrelated to learning agility as assessed by the viaEDGE™ self-assessment. Thus, this assessment will likely provide incremental validity over ability tests in predicting performance outcome (see Table 6).

TABLE 6. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN viaEDGE™
AND UNDERGRADUATE GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Scale	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Overall Learning Agility	– 0.03	<i>ns</i>
Self-Awareness	– 0.07	<i>ns</i>
Mental Agility	– 0.01	<i>ns</i>
People Agility	– 0.03	<i>ns</i>
Change Agility	0.00	<i>ns</i>
Results Agility	0.03	<i>ns</i>

Note. *N* = 375 MBA students from 29 universities across the globe.

Summary of the Evidence of Construct Validity

The two assessments that were administered to demonstrate convergent validity—the Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide and the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument—established strong support for viaEDGE™. The Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide and viaEDGE™ self-assessment found same-scale correlation coefficients in the 0.37–0.56 range. Overall Learning Agility as measured by these two assessments had an $r = 0.42$. Researchers generally state that a correlation coefficient above 0.40 for two different assessments of a construct suggest much similarity in measurement (cf. Wall et al., 2004). Likewise, the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument was highly correlated with viaEDGE™ in same-scales. The Overall Learning Agility scale had an $r = 0.73$ between the two assessments.

Discriminant validity was examined by the Hogan Personality Inventory and Hogan Development Survey assessments. In addition, viaEDGE™ score is not correlated to undergraduate GPA. Overall, these assessments correlated with viaEDGE™ scales as expected. Based on the entirety of data collected, we can conclude that viaEDGE™ demonstrates construct validity.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The viaEDGE™ self-assessment was formally introduced to client organizations in February 2011. Since that time, companies from around the globe have used it as a talent management tool for identifying and developing their high-potential employees. In addition, many companies have employed viaEDGE™ to select job candidates for positions requiring learning agility. viaEDGE™ has become one of the most frequently used assessments.

The purpose of this section of the technical manual is to highlight the many research studies that have been conducted since February 2011 when the viaEDGE™ self-assessment was introduced to the market. We have also updated the global norms by which viaEDGE™ percentile scores are computed.

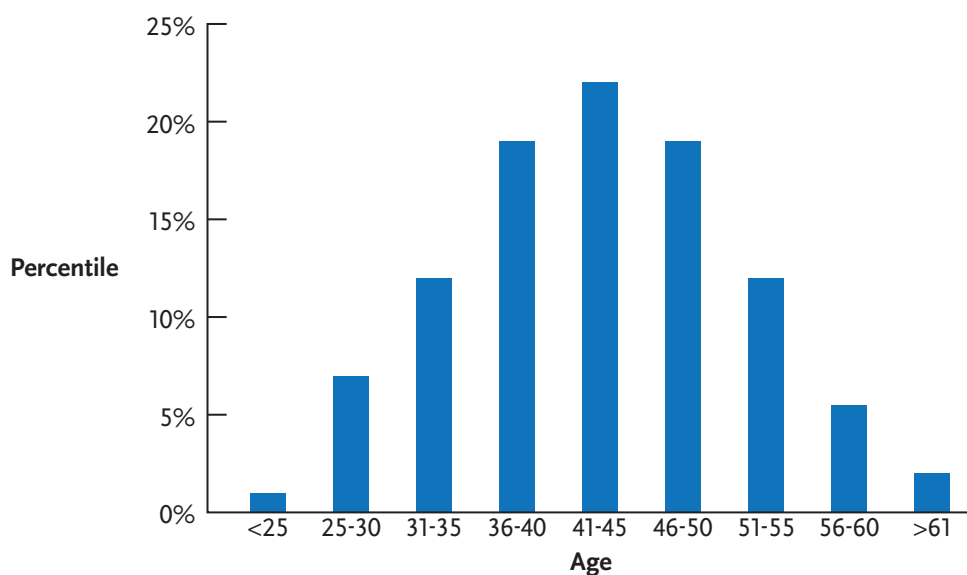
Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To ensure that the data support the five-factor model of learning agility that viaEDGE™ posits, a random sample of participants ($N = 1,080$) was selected from the database. A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using the LISREL program. The analysis of the measurement model indicated that the data fit the model well, $\chi^2(730) = 2775.03$, $p < .01$, $\chi^2/df = 3.8$, CFI = 0.93, IFI = 0.93, NNFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.05. Consequently, the relevance of a model assessing Self-Awareness, Mental Agility, People Agility, Change Agility, and Results Agility was supported by the confirmatory factor analysis.

viaEDGE™ Global Norms

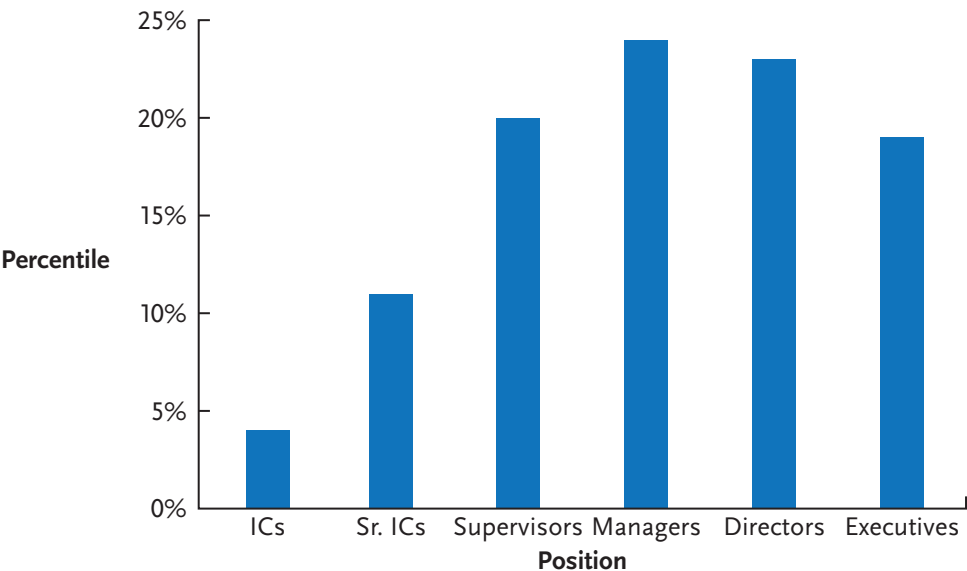
The current viaEDGE™ self-assessment employs global norms that were derived from a large sample of roughly 3,000 leaders and professionals in organizations worldwide. These participants worked in companies from 65 different countries or regions. About 42.5% of participants were employed in the United States. Slightly more than 60% (61.9%) of the participants were male. As can be seen in Figure 2, the participant ages form a normal distribution, with those at age 41–45 being the largest group.

FIGURE 2. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NORMATIVE SAMPLE



The majority of the participants who have taken the viaEDGE™ self-assessment have managerial responsibilities. Approximately 41% were at the director level or higher (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF POSITION LEVELS OF THE NORMATIVE SAMPLE



Inter-Scale Correlations

Table 7 reports the correlation coefficients among the five learning agility scales as well as for Overall Learning Agility. In general, the findings indicate some common variance among the five learning agility scales (albeit generally accounting for less than 10% of the variance). Thus, each factor assesses a unique perspective of learning agility. Not surprising, the five factors are more related to Overall Learning Agility than to each other.

TABLE 7. CORRELATIONS AMONG LEARNING AGILITY SCALES

Scale	Overall Learning Agility	Self-Awareness	Mental Agility	People Agility	Change Agility
Self-Awareness	0.65**				
Mental Agility	0.74**	0.35**			
People Agility	0.67**	0.52**	0.33**		
Change Agility	0.56**	0.05*	0.43**	0.14**	
Results Agility	0.75**	0.47**	0.46**	0.39**	0.30**

Note. N = 4,017. *p < .01, **p < .001.

Distribution of Confidence Indices

A composite confidence index is computed from the verification scales for each assessment. Based on a large sample of assessment data ($N = 4,017$), we calculated the frequencies for different categories of confidence indices (red, yellow, and green color coding). Table 8 reports the frequency distribution. As can be seen in the table, only a small portion (3.1%) of the assessments are in the red category. The majority (83%) of the assessments are in the green category.

TABLE 8. FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION
OF CONFIDENCE INDICES

Color Code	Frequency (in %)
Red	3.1%
Yellow	13.9%
First Level Green	27.3%
Second Level Green	30.5%
Third Level Green	25.2%

Correlations Between Learning Agility and Two Counter Scales

As indicated above, several scales were developed to assist determining the confidence level of the assessment result. The two counter scales—Work-Style Counter and Life-Experience Counter—assess behaviors that high-learning-agile individuals rarely perform. Table 9 reports the correlations between learning agility scales and the two counter scales. The results demonstrate that Overall Learning Agility tends to be negatively correlated with the two counter scales. Among the five learning agility factors, the correlations between Change Agility and the counter scales are consistent. It appears that individuals who are highly change-agile are least likely to perform those behaviors described by the two counter scales.

TABLE 9. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LEARNING AGILITY
AND TWO COUNTER SCALES

Scale	Work-Style Counter	Life-Experience Counter
Overall Learning Agility	– 0.11**	– 0.42**
Self-Awareness	0.18**	– 0.12**
Mental Agility	– 0.17**	– 0.43**
People Agility	0.06**	– 0.14**
Change Agility	– 0.51**	– 0.41**
Results Agility	0.11**	– 0.22**

Note. $N = 4,017$. ** $p < .01$

Test-Retest Reliability

A sample of participants were recruited through a social network. In early March 2011, 198 individuals who had volunteered to take the viaEDGE™ self-assessment were sent an invitation link. Approximately 45 days later, an invitation to take viaEDGE™ again was sent to the 156 individuals who had completed the assessment in Time 1. No feedback report was provided at the completion of the Time 1 administration to avoid individuals changing their responses due to this feedback.

A total of 96 of these individuals took the assessment a second time. Among this sample, 95 participants provided demographic information. Seventy-three (76.8%) of the respondents were female and 22 (23.2%) were male. Educationally, 7.4% of the participants ($n = 7$) had completed high school or secondary school, 41.0% ($n = 39$) were college or university graduates, and 51.6% ($n = 49$) had advanced degrees. The majority of the respondents (76.8%) were between 25 and 50 years old. Table 10 presents the test-retest reliability for each of the five learning agility scales of the viaEDGE™ self-assessment. As can be observed, all the scales demonstrated very high test-retest reliability. The professional standard for demonstrating satisfactory test-retest reliability is 0.70 (Litwin, 2002).

TABLE 10. TEST-RETEST RELIABILITY

Scale	Correlation Coefficient
Overall Learning Agility	0.90**
Self-Awareness	0.79**
Mental Agility	0.85**
People Agility	0.80**
Change Agility	0.87**
Results Agility	0.84**

Note. $N = 95$. ** $p < .01$.

Sub-Group Differences

The statistics reported in the following paragraphs were based on the analyses of a very large sample of assessment data ($N = 5,666$). Due to occasional missing demographic information, the actual sample sizes vary from analysis to analysis.

Gender Analysis

Table 11 presents the mean percentiles for male and female participants. Although gender differences are statistically significant on some of the scales due to the very large sample sizes, the effect sizes are very small. Based on Cohen (1977), the professional standard for meaningful effect sizes is as follows:

- Small: $d = 0.20$
- Moderate: $d = 0.50$
- Large: $d = 0.80$

Furthermore, the gender differences observed in these scales are within the typical range of gender differences reported by other self-report assessments (see Ones & Anderson, 2002). Most importantly, the gender difference on Overall Learning Agility is not statistically significant ($p > .05$) and the effect size is trivial ($d = 0.04$). Therefore, if the viaEDGE™ self-assessment is used for selection purposes, the data reveals that there would be no gender-related adverse impact.

TABLE 11. GENDER DIFFERENCES ON LEARNING AGILITY

Scale	Male ($N = 3,997$)		Female ($N = 1,660$)		p	d
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev		
Overall Learning Agility	51.40	24.94	50.32	24.87	<i>ns</i>	0.04
Self-Awareness	50.26	24.72	53.06	23.97	$p < .01$	– 0.11
Mental Agility	47.25	26.22	42.73	26.25	$p < .01$	0.17
People Agility	51.16	25.23	56.23	24.44	$p < .01$	– 0.20
Change Agility	49.12	28.22	47.37	27.95	$p < .05$	0.06
Results Agility	54.33	23.86	52.10	24.50	$p < .01$	0.09

A different way to look at the gender difference is to compare the frequency distribution (based on Overall Learning Agility) of those who can be identified by organizations for high-potential talent pools. For example, if an organization employs a cutoff score at the 67th percentile for identifying high-potential talent, individuals higher than this cutoff score would be placed in the talent pool. Using this criterion, it was found that roughly 32% of male participants and 30% of female participants were higher than this cutoff score. Once again, the observed gender difference is very small.

Age Analysis

It is important to statistically control for organizational position level when examining the relationship between learning agility and age. Several authors have observed that learning agility is related to managerial success (e.g., McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988). It would seem likely that higher-level managers would be more learning agile than lower-level managers. On the other hand, position level itself may also be related with age. Therefore, it was necessary to control for this influence of position levels by running a partial correlation between age and learning agility while controlling for the participant's position level. Table 12 represents the partial correlation coefficients between learning agility and age, adjusted for the position level of the respondent. As you will notice, all of the correlations are statistically significant; however, we hypothesize that this is very likely due to the large sample size. The effect sizes are trivial (Cohen, 1977), accounting for less than 3% of the variance in the most significant instances (i.e., when $r = 0.05$).

TABLE 12. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN
LEARNING AGILITY AND AGE

Scale	Partial Correlation Coefficients
Overall Learning Agility	– 0.03*
Self-Awareness	– 0.05**
Mental Agility	– 0.03*
People Agility	– 0.03*
Change Agility	0.04**
Results Agility	– 0.05**

Note. $N = 5,617$. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Education Analysis

As one would expect, the sample of viaEDGE™ participants is disproportionately highly educated. From the participants who reported their educational level, the sample indicated that 3.8% had less than a college education, 45.2% were college graduates, and 51.0% had advanced degrees. Table 13 presents the mean percentile scores for the three education levels. Although most of the ANOVA analyses yielded significant differences ($ps < .01$), most of the differences were small in effect size. It was found that the largest statistical difference between participants with advanced degrees and those individuals who received less than a college degree was on Mental Agility. The results suggest that the highly educated participants are slightly more mentally agile than those individuals who received less, formal education. The standardized difference between the two is about $d = 0.28$, which is considered small.

TABLE 13. EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCES ON LEARNING AGILITY

Scale	H.S. or Less ($N = 213$)		College Level ($N = 2,563$)		Advanced Degree ($N = 2,890$)		ANOVA
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev	
Overall Learning Agility	48.33	25.11	48.82	25.08	53.33	24.59	$p < .01$
Self-Awareness	47.46	24.29	49.88	24.63	52.37	24.37	$p < .01$
Mental Agility	41.46	26.00	43.00	25.73	48.96	26.54	$p < .01$
People Agility	52.46	24.21	52.26	25.10	53.02	25.18	<i>ns</i>
Change Agility	51.25	26.67	46.73	28.49	50.12	27.88	$p < .01$
Results Agility	50.41	24.59	51.82	24.06	55.59	23.92	$p < .01$

Another way of examining the relationship between learning agility and educational level is to compute correlation coefficients. We coded less than a college degree as 1, a college degree as 2, and an advanced degree as 3 (see Table 14). Due to the large sample size, some of the correlation coefficients are statistically significant. However, all of the correlations have small effect sizes.

**TABLE 14. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN
LEARNING AGILITY AND EDUCATION LEVEL**

Scale	Correlation Coefficient
Overall Learning Agility	0.09**
Self-Awareness	0.06**
Mental Agility	0.11**
People Agility	0.01
Change Agility	0.04**
Results Agility	0.08**

Note. $N = 5,666$. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Ethnicity Analysis

We compared different ethnic groups with Caucasian participants to examine whether the differences between groups were statistically significant. First, we contrasted Black/African American participants with Caucasian participants (see Table 15). Although some scales have significant differences between the two groups, we can see the differences are fairly small. Most importantly, the directions of the differences are different across the five factors of learning agility. The end result is that the two groups do not statistically differ on Overall Learning Agility.

**TABLE 15. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CAUCASIANS AND BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICANS
ON LEARNING AGILITY**

Scale	White/Caucasian ($N = 1,525$)		Black/African American ($N = 118$)		p	d
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev		
Overall Learning Agility	54.08	24.87	52.73	24.71	<i>ns</i>	0.05
Self-Awareness	48.00	24.80	55.51	23.78	$p < .01$	– 0.30
Mental Agility	49.31	26.84	41.27	24.72	$p < .01$	0.30
People Agility	52.52	26.03	59.35	25.10	$p < .01$	– 0.26
Change Agility	54.75	26.95	44.90	28.64	$p < .01$	0.37
Results Agility	55.99	23.54	54.21	25.12	<i>ns</i>	0.08

We also contrasted the frequency distribution (based on Overall Learning Agility). If we use the 67th percentile as the criterion for high-potential identification, approximately 36% of Caucasian participants and 34% of Black/African American participants would be classified as high potentials. This difference is very small, suggesting little difference in the distribution of scores between the two groups.

Table 16 compares Caucasians and Hispanics. Scores were significantly different on People Agility, Results Agility, and Self-Awareness. All of these differences favored Hispanics over Caucasians. Once more, the direction of the differences is not consistent across the five learning agility scales. Consequently, the difference on Overall Learning Agility between the two groups is small and not statistically significant. We further compared the frequency distribution (based on Overall Learning Agility). Roughly 41% of Hispanic participants are higher than the 67th percentile cutoff score mentioned above (as opposed to 36% for Caucasians). Therefore, if there is a difference, the Hispanic participants are slightly favored over the Caucasian participants.

TABLE 16. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CAUCASIANS AND HISPANICS ON LEARNING AGILITY

Scale	White/Caucasian (N = 1,525)		Latino/Hispanic (N = 111)		<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	Mean	Std Dev	Mean	Std Dev		
Overall Learning Agility	54.08	24.87	57.47	24.32	<i>ns</i>	– 0.14
Self-Awareness	48.00	24.80	54.67	24.37	<i>p</i> < .01	– 0.27
Mental Agility	49.31	26.84	47.52	24.94	<i>ns</i>	0.07
People Agility	52.52	26.03	58.84	25.43	<i>p</i> < .05	– 0.24
Change Agility	54.75	26.95	49.76	25.49	<i>ns</i>	0.19
Results Agility	55.99	23.54	60.73	22.66	<i>p</i> < .05	– 0.20

Position Level Analysis

Table 17 shows the partial correlations between learning agility and organizational position level (after the influence of age is statistically accounted for). Due to the large sample size, most of the correlations are statistically significant. The positive correlations suggest that higher-level managers, in general, are more learning agile than lower-level managers. This pattern of relationships is consistent with leadership research. Individuals who are learning agile are able and willing to learn from their past experiences and are more likely to develop leadership skills more effectively than their lower-learning-agile counterparts. Consequently, they are more likely to ascend the organizational hierarchy than those individuals who are less learning agile. However, it should be noted that the correlations (albeit statistically significant) are very small. An individual's promotion is likely to be influenced by many other organizational factors.

TABLE 17. PARTIAL CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LEARNING AGILITY AND POSITION LEVEL

Scale	Partial Correlations
Overall Learning Agility	0.16**
Self-Awareness	0.02
Mental Agility	0.10**
People Agility	0.02
Change Agility	0.16**
Results Agility	0.13**

Note. N = 5,666. **p* < .05, ***p* < .01.

Predictive Validity

Several studies were conducted to investigate how the viaEDGE™ self-assessment score predicts outcome variables.

Learning Agility and Career Growth

In this study, viaEDGE™ was administered to 83 district sales managers at a Fortune Global 500 pharmaceutical company. Of the 83 participants, 74% were male. The average age was 43.06, with a standard deviation of 7.27. In addition to the viaEDGE™ self-assessment, participants completed an emotional intelligence survey. Emotional intelligence, or EQ (emotional quotient), has been a frequently assessed characteristic of leadership during the past decade or so (Goleman, 1995). Consequently, this study enabled us to compare the relative strength of the relationship of learning agility and EQ to the performance outcomes we examined.

The study employed a longitudinal design to investigate how learning agility contributed to career growth during a period of roughly 10 years—2002 to 2011. Two types of data were collected: (1) promotion rate, and (2) average annual salary increase. These two criteria outcomes reflect an employee's long-term performance. It is based on the assumption that when individuals deliver superior performance consistently over a long period of time, they will be rewarded by the company in terms of career ascendance and increases in compensation.

Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to test the influence of learning agility on career growth. In these analyses, gender, education, and emotional intelligence were entered into the regression equation first (Model 1). Subsequently, learning agility was entered into the regression in the second step (Model 2). Table 18 presents the results.

**TABLE 18. HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSES
IN PREDICTING CAREER GROWTH**

	Independent Variables	Promotion Rate	Average Salary Growth
		β	β
Model 1	Gender	.04	.27*
	Education	.22	.06
	Emotional Intelligence	– .07	– .12
Model 2	Learning Agility	.49**	.33*
	ΔR	.10**	.05*

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

The findings suggest that Overall Learning Agility significantly predicted long-term performance, reflected in both promotion rates and salary changes over a period of 10 years. Higher-learning-agile individuals advanced their careers faster than relatively lower-learning-agile individuals. Further, learning agility accounted for significant variance in these outcomes even after the influence of gender, education, and emotional intelligence were accounted for.

Learning Agility and Objective Career Success

A group of managers and executives in a Fortune Global 500 company participated in a leadership development program during the spring of 2011. As part of the executive assessment, viaEDGE™ was administered. Complete data were collected from 101 participants. The majority of the managers and executives were male – 62%. The age distribution was as follows: age 31–35: 4%; age 36–40: 31%; age 41–50: 59%; and age 51–60: 6%.

The research objective was to investigate how learning agility was related to skill development and eventual executive career success. Therefore, participating managers and executives were assessed on a set of leadership competencies. The majority of competencies were derived from the Leadership Architect® Competency Library. In addition, the company used several custom leadership competencies.

The study used the following two quantifiable career success variables: (1) total compensation, and (2) CEO proximity. Human capital theory posits that individuals who invest in skill development can be expected to show higher levels of work performance and add increased value to their organizations (see Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005). In turn, such individuals will be rewarded by their organizations in the form of promotions and enhanced compensation.

CEO proximity was assessed by asking participants to report the number of job levels below the CEO they were positioned in their current organization. Participants were also asked to report their income ranges. The scales were in \$25,000 increments. The lowest income was coded as 1; the next lowest income was coded as 2. This process continued until all of the reported income ranges were coded. Total compensation was the sum of annual salary and bonus.

Hierarchical regression analyses were performed to test the influence of learning agility on leadership competency and objective career success. In these analyses, gender, age, and education were entered into the regression equation first (Model 1). Learning agility then was entered into the regression in the second step (Model 2). Table 19 presents the results.

TABLE 19. HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSIS IN PREDICTING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY AND CAREER SUCCESS

	Independent Variables	Leadership Competence	CEO Proximity	Compensation
		β	β	β
Model 1	Gender	– .04	– .08	– .26*
	Age	.06	.05	.10
	Education	– .14	– .14	.02
Model 2	Learning Agility	.28**	.24*	.35**
	ΔR^2	.08**	.06*	.12**

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

The results suggest that self-assessment of Overall Learning Agility as measured by viaEDGE™ was significantly related to boss ratings of leadership competence, suggesting learning agility contributes to the development of leadership skills. In addition, viaEDGE™ scores of learning agility predicted executive career success. High-learning-agile individuals were more likely to ascend the corporate ladder and be compensated more highly than their low-learning-agile counterparts.

Learning Agility and Job Performance in an Engineering Company

All jobs are not created equal. Some jobs require much deeper expertise, specialization, focus, conscientiousness, and structured efforts. Problems to be solved in this working environment tend to be routine and analyzable.

In contrast, other jobs require individuals to have broad experience, flexibility, and quick reactions to a wide array of environmental stimuli. Problems to be solved in these jobs tend to be nonroutine, uncertain, and less analyzable. To be effective, individuals need to feel comfortable moving out of their comfort zones. They need to continuously take on new responsibilities and build new job skills. Consequently, learning agility is likely much more important for these jobs than others.

This differential relationship between learning agility and job performance was tested on a sample of employees from a large global engineering company. Two different types of employees were sampled: (1) engineers, and (2) project managers. Table 20 presents the correlation coefficients of learning agility with job performance for the two samples. Due to the relatively small sample sizes, most of the correlations are not statistically significant. However, consistent with our expectations, learning agility was consistently more related to job performance for project managers than engineers. See De Meuse, Dai, and Marshall (2012) for a copy of the technical report.

TABLE 20. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LEARNING AGILITY AND JOB PERFORMANCE FOR ENGINEERS AND PROJECT MANAGERS

Scale	Correlations with Job Performance	
	Engineers ($n = 30$)	Project Managers ($n = 27$)
Overall Learning Agility	0.12	0.35 ^a
Self-Awareness	0.06	0.24
Mental Agility	0.04	0.38 ^b
People Agility	0.02	0.19
Change Agility	0.16	0.02
Results Agility	0.19	0.22

Note. ^a $p < .10$, ^b $p = .05$.

Conclusion

Several analyses were conducted to ascertain whether the viaEDGE™ self-assessment exhibited any adverse impact. In sum, the assessment does not demonstrate practical differences in Overall Learning Agility pertaining to gender, age, and ethnicity. Confirmatory factor analysis supported the factor structure. The assessment has very high test-retest reliability. Finally, empirical studies found that the assessment predicts some outcome variables such as leadership competence, objective career success, and job performance for project managers. Continuous research effort will be carried out to update the global norms and investigate the validity of the instrument in predicting different types of performance criteria for different roles or job functions.

The Purpose of Assessing Learning Agility

Organizations measure learning agility for different purposes: external selection, internal promotion, high-potential identification, leadership development, and job assignment deployment (e.g., cross-cultural assignment). When used for selection purposes, it is critical that organizations make sure that learning agility is an important success factor for the targeted job or role. As discussed previously, all jobs are not created equal in this regard. Research indicates that organizational positions possessing the following characteristics usually require high learning agility (cf. McCauley, Ruderman, Ohlott, & Morrow, 1994):

- Roles that involve job transitions, such as assuming unfamiliar or new responsibilities, duties, and assignments.
- Roles that involve innovation or creating change, such as developing new directions, solving inherited problems, or start-up activities.
- Roles that have a high level of responsibility, such as being under the pressure of deadlines and being responsible for key and high-stake, visible decisions.
- Roles that involve influencing others without authority or rank, such as gaining cooperation from peers or higher-level management, and/or managing and responding to pressures from external stakeholders.
- Roles that involve dealing with obstacles or difficulties, such as adverse business conditions, lack of organizational support, or confronting difficult people.

Korn/Ferry has developed a checklist that can assist in evaluating whether a job requires high learning agility (Orr & Hallenbeck, in press). Organizations can survey individuals who are familiar with the specific job in question, such as bosses, experienced job incumbents, and/or high performers. The lower the survey score, the less likely the job or role requires much learning agility. However, this quick assessment is not meant to replace validity evidence. It only provides some initial counsel in determining when learning agility can be considered as an important factor in job success.

A Choice Between Several Different Assessments

Korn/Ferry offers three very different approaches to measuring an individual's learning agility. Depending on the purpose of the assessment and various organizational situations, companies can choose to administer the Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide, the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument, or the viaEDGE™ self-assessment. No one assessment tool is best. Rather, each has advantages and disadvantages. Figure 4 provides some guidelines for helping organizations select the most appropriate assessment, given its purpose.

FIGURE 4. OVERVIEW OF THREE LEARNING AGILITY ASSESSMENTS

LEARNING AGILITY LEGACY ASSESSMENTS			
	Choices Architect® Multi-Rater Instrument	Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide	viaEDGE™ Self-Assessment
Assessment Content	- Assesses five factors and 27 dimensions of Learning Agility - Five factors are Self-Awareness, Mental Agility, People Agility, Change Agility, and Results Agility	- Assesses five factors of Learning Agility - Five factors are Self-Awareness, Mental Agility, People Agility, Change Agility, and Results Agility	- Assesses five factors of Learning Agility - Five factors are Self-Awareness, Mental Agility, People Agility, Change Agility, and Results Agility - Includes several verification scales, such as a self-presentation scale and a response consistency scale
Assessment Methodology	A multi-rater assessment tool that can be administered through several methods, such as online survey or paper questionnaire	A structured interview using a standardized interview protocol	A self-assessment that can be administered through online survey
Assessment for Selection	Requires raters to know the learner well; best for assessing internal candidates	Can be used to interview both internal and external candidates	Ideal for selection: can be used to assess internal and external candidates
Assessment for Development	Ideal for development: assessment at the dimension level provides greater insight into an individual's relative strengths and developmental needs	Provides rich examples of how an individual extracts and applies learning from experiences	A factor-level assessment of Learning Agility that identifies strengths or weaknesses in general terms
Languages	- English - French - Italian - German - Spanish (International) - Portuguese (Brazil) - Japanese - Simplified Chinese - Polish - Swedish - Finnish - Russian (survey only)	English	- English - French - Italian - German - Spanish (International) - Portuguese (Brazil) - Japanese - Simplified Chinese
Available Resources	<i>FYI® for Learning Agility</i>	<i>Selecting an Agile Leader</i>	<i>Becoming an Agile Leader: Know What to Do... When You Don't Know What to Do</i> <i>Becoming an Agile Leader: A Guide to Learning From Your Experiences</i>

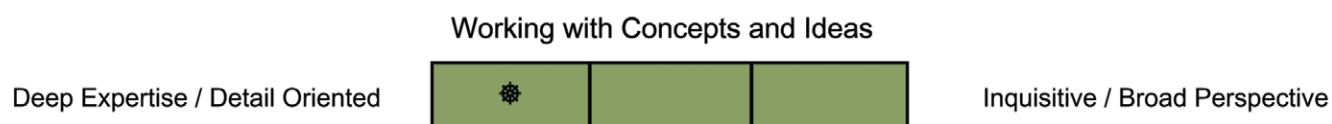
viaEDGE™ Self-Assessment Reports

Several assessment reports were developed for viaEDGE™. Each of the reports is briefly described below.

Individual Summary Report

Also referred to as the “iReport,” the Individual Summary Report provides respondents with high level and immediate feedback of their assessment results. Respondents do not see their specific learning agility scores. Instead, the scale divides scores into three categories—left, middle, and right. An asterisk denotes which category the respondent falls within on a specific factor of learning agility. A short narrative summary describing the behavioral characteristics of individuals in this specific category is also provided. Figure 5 depicts an example of the iReport for Mental Agility. Note that the factor name, Mental Agility, is not given. Rather, a brief description of each learning agility factor is provided so the respondent can understand what the factor represents. The Individual Summary Report is optional, in that organizations can elect to not provide respondents this report in certain situations (e.g., job candidates).

FIGURE 5. INDIVIDUAL SUMMARY REPORT



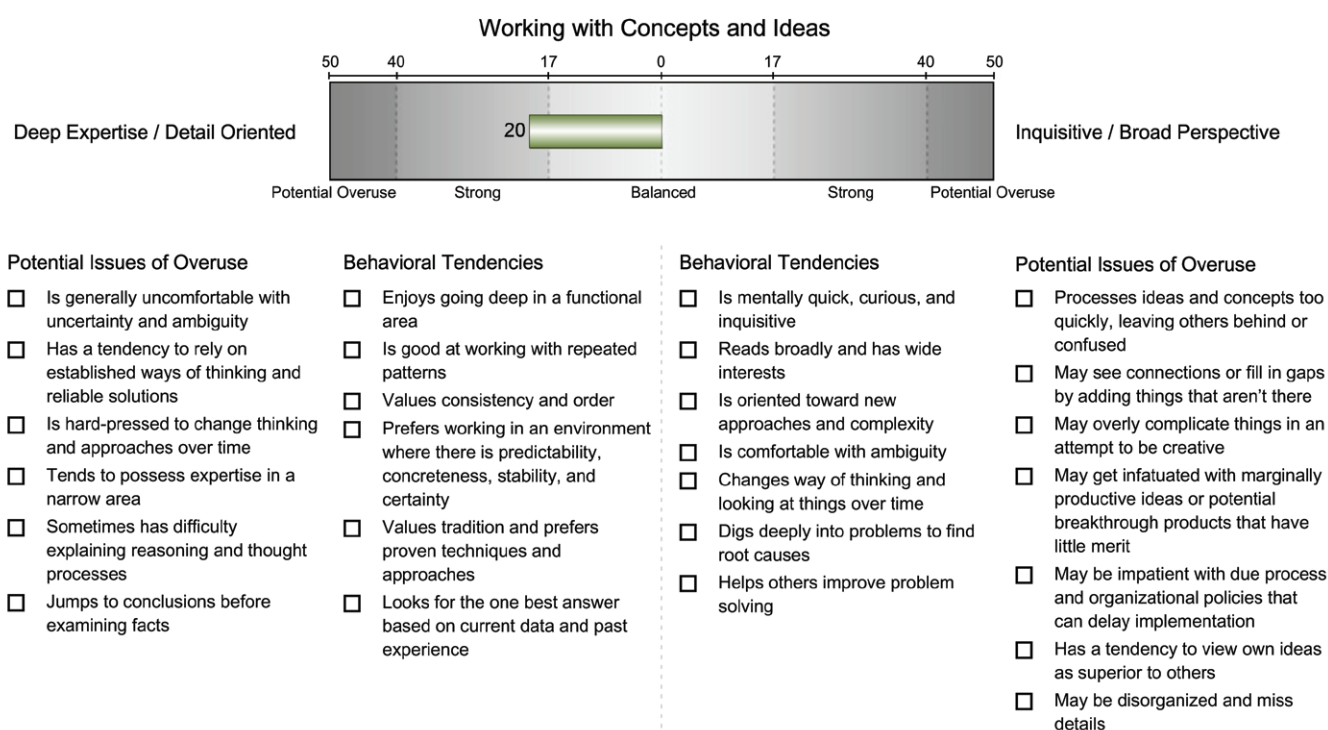
The results suggest that you likely have deep functional expertise. You tend to be fact based and data driven, and favor a rational and reliable approach. You are comfortable with certainty and predictability. You prefer performing sufficient analysis before making a decision.

Feedback Report

This report is provided to individuals by a viaEDGE™ certified coach. Compared to the iReport, the Feedback Report provides many more details about the assessment results. For example, respondents will now see specific learning agility scores. All scores have been converted into percentiles. The percentiles are based on norms from a global sample of nearly 3,000 organizational leaders and professionals. The scale in the Feedback Report is referred to as the Learner Feedback scale, and it is centered on the population mean. Therefore, a percentile score of 20 indicates that the respondent deviates from the population mean by a distance of 20 percentile points on a specific factor of learning agility.

If the score is on the right side of the scale, the individual is likely to display behaviors associated with descriptive words on the right. In contrast, if the score is on the left side of the scale, the individual is likely to display behaviors associated with those characteristics on the left. Scores between 17 percentile points to the left and 17 percentile points to the right are called “balanced” because they depict individuals who possess midrange tendencies of learning agility—not too much and not too little. Scores between 17 and 40 represent a “Strong” tendency to exhibit these learning agility behaviors, either to the left or right of center (i.e., “0”). The report also provides descriptions of “Potential Overuse” if the score is higher than 40 percentile points. Figure 6 depicts an example of the Mental Agility factor in the Feedback Report.

FIGURE 6. FEEDBACK REPORT



Coaching Report

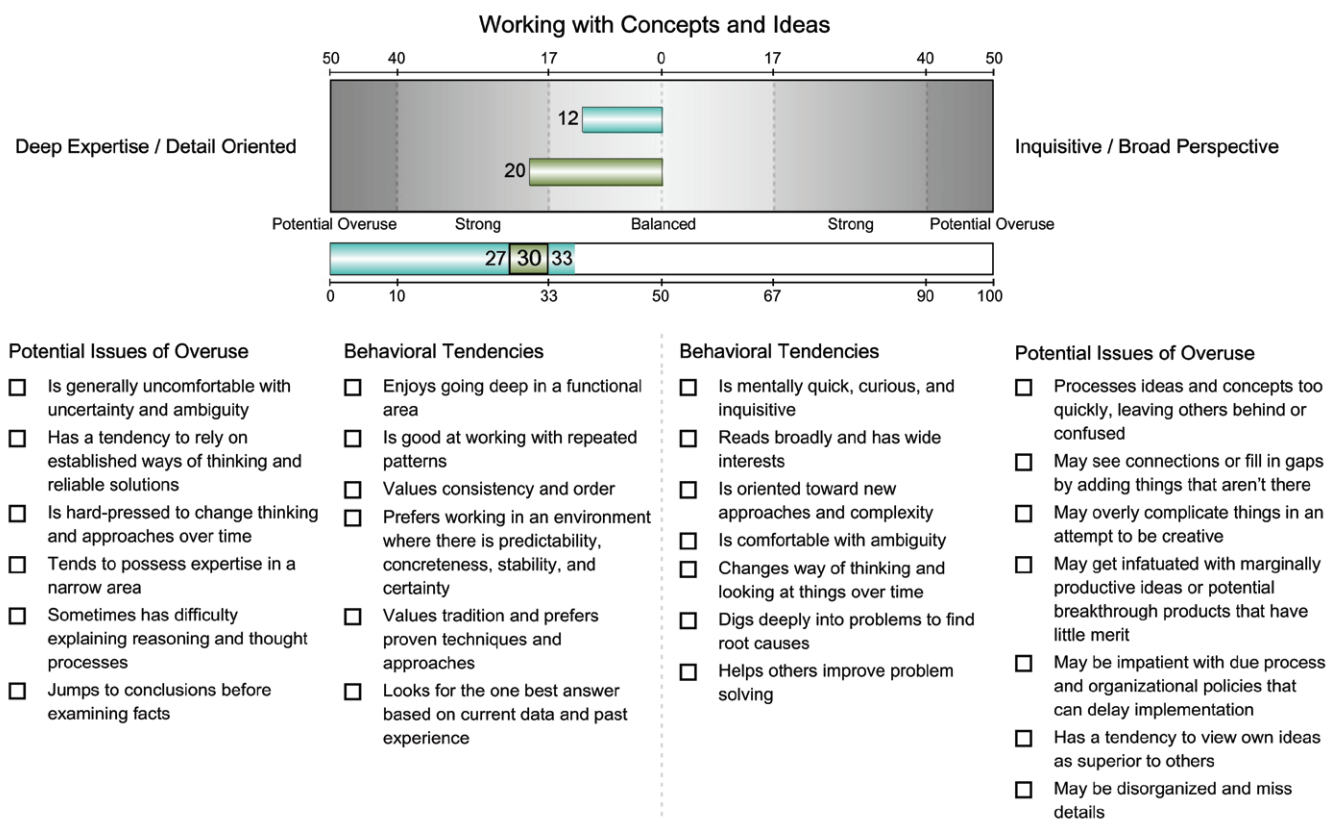
This report is provided only to certified viaEDGE™ coaches. The Coaching Report resembles the Feedback Report in many ways. However, it contains several pieces of detailed and psychometric information that are only provided to coaches.

First, the Coaching Report includes an additional learning agility scale—the Talent Review scale. Only the Coaching Report depicts the Talent Review scale scores. The Talent Review scale is illustrated at the bottom of each learning agility graph and ranges from 0 to 100. This scale provides the traditional learning agility percentile scores in the form of a continuum. (The percentiles are based on norms from a global sample of nearly 3,000 organizational leaders and professionals.) A score of 60, for example, denotes that this individual is higher on this specific factor of learning agility than 60% of other individuals who have taken the assessment. Similarly, a score of 40 would indicate that the individual is higher on this factor of learning agility than 40% of other individuals who have taken the assessment.

Second, the Coaching Report presents *both* observed (i.e., unadjusted) and adjusted percentile scores. The scores are adjusted based on the respondent's answers on the Self-Presentation scale. The Self-Presentation scale measures the extent to which an individual presents himself or herself in an unrealistically positive or negative manner while answering the questions on the viaEDGE™ self-assessment. Learning agility scores are adjusted downward (or upward) based on the level of faking good (or bad) the respondent exhibits. Such adjustments based on an individual's "social desirability" are common for self-assessments (Mueller-Hanson, Heggstad, & Thornton, 2003).

Third, a Range of Certainty is provided for the Talent Review scale score on Overall Learning Agility and for each of the five factors of learning agility. Whenever a psychological construct such as learning agility is assessed, there is some measurement error. The Range of Certainty reminds us that an individual's score is not a perfect measure of his or her learning agility. Rather, the score an individual receives is our best estimate of his or her learning agility level. Figure 7 depicts an example that shows the two scales, adjusted scores, and Range of Certainty.

FIGURE 7. COACHING REPORT



Finally, the Coaching Report also presents the respondent’s scores on the five verification scales. These results are employed to derive the individual’s classification on the Overall Confidence Index Bar. A marker in the red indicates that the pattern of scores on the verification scales suggests that we have little confidence that the learning agility scores are accurate and that the individual should re-take the assessment. A marker in the yellow denotes that we should use caution when interpreting the learning agility scores. Coaches should seek corroborating evidence that the scores are accurate. There are three categories of green, ranging from G1 to G2 to G3 (highest) level of confidence. In all instances, a green classification reveals that the scores are accurate and useable. Coaches should always check the Overall Confidence Index Bar before providing feedback. Figure 8 depicts an example of the Overall Confidence Index Bar.

FIGURE 8. OVERALL CONFIDENCE INDEX BAR

The display below indicates the overall confidence in the results of this assessment derived from the scores of the different verification scales.



Group Report

The Group Report has three sections. Section 1 presents to the assessing organization each individual respondent’s scores (in percentiles) on Overall Learning Agility and the five learning agility factors. For Overall Learning Agility, the Range of Certainty is provided (see Coaching Report above for the description).The final column in the table shown in this section presents the Overall Confidence Index Bar (in color coding) for each individual. Group Reports are available with respondent names in alphabetical order or by respondent identification number. Figure 9 depicts an example of Section 1 of the Group Report by respondent identification number.

FIGURE 9. INDIVIDUAL SCORES IN THE GROUP REPORT

Individual	Overall Learning Agility			Mental Agility	People Agility	Change Agility	Results Agility	Self-Awareness	Overall Confidence Index Bar
148819906	54	56	58	36	51	83	61	10	Yellow
149029825	56	58	60	27	72	53	66	53	Green
148839836	56	58	60	59	67	49	45	56	Green
148911177	12	14	16	6	18	11	30	68	Green
148803100	30	32	34	3	35	19	47	50	Green
148849371	52	54	56	51	39	57	43	33	Green

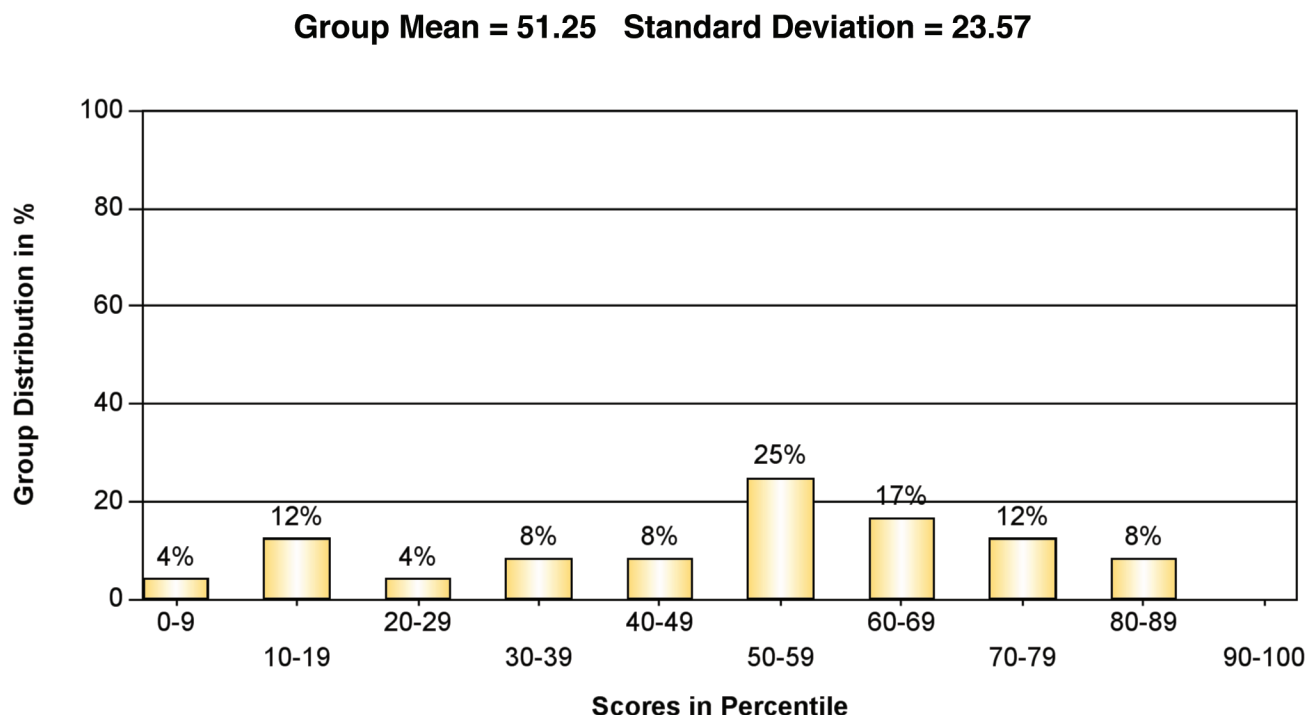
Section 2 of the Group Report provides group means for Overall Learning Agility and for the five learning agility factors. Both the arithmetic mean scores and graphic bars are presented. The benefit of viewing all the learning agility scores on one page is that it enables one to quickly judge where the group is high and low on the various factors of learning agility (see Figure 10).

FIGURE 10. MEAN SCORES ON THE FIVE LEARNING AGILITY FACTORS



Finally, Section 3 of the Group Report gives the mean, standard deviation, and the distribution of scores for Overall Learning Agility and each of the five learning agility factors. Distributions are reported in categories of 10 percentiles (e.g., 0–9, 10–19, 20–29) to provide an overall perspective of where the group lies on the continuum of learning agility. Figure 11 depicts an example of the group distribution.

FIGURE 11. DISTRIBUTION OF ASSESSMENT SCORES IN THE GROUP REPORT



Developmental Resources

Upon receiving the feedback, motivated learners can identify their development needs, craft individual development plans, and take action for personal improvement. The objective is to further enhance the fit between their particular capabilities and their current job functions or future role responsibilities. In addition to the feedback and coaching, Korn/Ferry International provides some developmental resources. In particular, the *Becoming an Agile Leader* series of learning agility products includes versatile and complementary tools to help individuals learn more consciously from experiences.

The book *Becoming an Agile Leader: Know What to Do...When You Don't Know What to Do* (Swisher, 2012) explores the five key characteristics, or factors, of learning agility. Spotlighting well-known leaders from business and the world stage, the book is filled with more than 70 practical development tips you can start using today to increase your own learning agility and help ensure success in those new, challenging assignments. So you will know what to do...when you don't know what to do.

The *Becoming an Agile Leader* app can help you achieve greater self-awareness through capturing on-the-spot insights and reflections. It provides inspiring, thought-provoking quotes related to the learning agility factors which will help you easily reflect, document, and transfer learning from your experiences.

With *Becoming an Agile Leader: A Guide to Learning From Your Experiences* (Orr, 2012), you can explore the formative experiences that shaped the learning agile leaders profiled in the book *Becoming an Agile Leader: Know What to Do...When You Don't Know What to Do* (Swisher, 2012). This practical guide lets you reflect on your own experiences, past and present, and includes a comprehensive listing of on- and off-the-job experiences that will help you plan for assignments that build learning agility.

APPENDIX: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *How large was the sample used to determine the norms? Did the normative sample include global participants?*

A sample of nearly 3,000 organizational leaders and professionals from around the world was used to calculate the viaEDGE™ norms. Less than one-half (42.5%) of the sample's participants originated from the United States. More than 65 countries and regions of the world are represented in the sample. As the database grows, we will continue updating the viaEDGE™ norms to ensure that they are current and globally representative.

2. *Is there any adverse impact for the viaEDGE™ learning agility scores?*

Several studies with different sample sizes were conducted to investigate whether the instrument had gender-, race-, and age-related adverse impact.

The findings are consistent regarding gender differences. Consistent with the findings of our psychological assessments, females usually score slightly higher than males on People Agility and Self-Awareness. On the other hand, males score slightly higher than females on Mental Agility and Change Agility. The differences are very small in effect size. Most importantly, the difference on Overall Learning Agility is very trivial. Therefore, there is no evidence of adverse impact related to gender.

Similar findings have been found with regard to racial differences. The directions of the differences are inconsistent across different factors of learning agility. A minority group may score slightly higher on some factors, but at the same time score slightly lower on some other factors than the majority group. When computing Overall Learning Agility score, the differences cancel out each other. Thus, the difference on Overall Learning Agility is also trivial.

Our analyses found that age is unrelated to learning agility scores when the effect of organizational position level is statistically removed.

3. *Does the viaEDGE™ self-assessment have construct validity? How are the scores related to other assessments of learning agility?*

There are several approaches to establishing the construct validity of an instrument. The most obvious one is to correlate viaEDGE™ scores with other established methods of measuring learning agility. High correlation coefficients would support the inference that viaEDGE™ is a valid instrument measuring learning agility. Based on a sample of 32 participants, Overall Learning Agility from the viaEDGE™ self-assessment was found to be statistically correlated with Overall Learning Agility from the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument ($r = 0.73$, $p < .01$). In another study involving 39 participants, Overall Learning Agility from viaEDGE™ was significantly correlated with the Learning From Experience™ Interview Guide score ($r = 0.42$, $p < .01$). This relatively smaller correlation was anticipated, since the interview guide scores were reported by different interviewers.

Another approach to investigate the construct validity was to correlate the viaEDGE™ self-assessment with other instruments measuring different psychological constructs (i.e., through convergent and discriminant validity). The construct validity is established when viaEDGE™ correlates with other constructs in a meaningful way. It was found that viaEDGE™ scores had insignificant correlations with an ability test. It had positive correlations with some personality traits such as sociability and being inquisitive (convergent validity), but had negative correlations with some other personality traits such as prudence (conscientiousness) and being cautious (discriminant). Overall, these correlations fit the expected patterns that support the construct validity of viaEDGE™.

4. *Does viaEDGE™ have criterion-related validity? Is there any evidence showing that the assessment scores predict outcome measures?*

In psychometrics, criterion-related validity is the extent to which a score on a test or instrument is related to scores on some outcome measures. Several studies supported the criterion-related validity of viaEDGE™. In a large pharmaceutical company, it was found that viaEDGE™ scores were significantly correlated with the promotion rates ($r = 0.36$, $p < .01$) and annual salary increases ($r = 0.32$, $p < .01$) a sample of sales managers ($N = 83$) had received during a period of 10 years. In a different study involving about 100 managers and executives from a large consumer products company, viaEDGE™ scores were found to be significantly correlated with boss competency

ratings ($r = 0.29$, $p < .01$), total compensation ($r = 0.38$, $p < .01$), and proximity to CEO position ($r = 0.25$, $p < .05$). According to the human capital theory, individuals who deliver superior performance consistently over a long period of time will be rewarded by organizations in terms of career ascendance and increase in compensation. These correlations suggest that viaEDGE™ predicts long-term performance and career success.

5. *Why are my viaEDGE™ scores different from my Choices Architect® scores? Which one is more accurate?*

Although the viaEDGE™ self-assessment is highly correlated with the Choices Architect® multi-rater instrument, it is possible for some individuals to have observable differences between scores on the two assessments. Fundamentally, the two assessments involve different methods—self-ratings versus others' ratings. In addition, the two assessments are usually administered at different times and in different situations. These contextual factors may impact the assessment results, rendering the two scores not always consistent. We find that investigating the contextual situation often leads to more constructive discovery than concern about the accuracy of the assessment. For instance, we discovered that in one situation, a manager's viaEDGE™ scores were different from her Choices Architect® scores. In this case, the manager was rated by her direct boss and several virtual team members. The boss's ratings were very consistent with the viaEDGE™ scores. The discrepancy largely was due to the fact that the peers had limited direct observation of the manager's workplace behaviors. By examining the context, we typically can help individuals to become more insightful about themselves and their working environment.

6. *Is learning agility a stable individual attribute? Can people develop learning agility? What is the test-retest reliability of the viaEDGE™ self-assessment?*

viaEDGE™ has a very high test-retest reliability ($r = 0.90$ for Overall Learning Agility). This finding suggests that learning agility is a relatively stable attribute. It is unlikely for individuals to change it significantly in a short time (within six months to a year). However, with dedication and deliberate practice, we believe individuals can and do make meaningful improvement. It usually starts with individuals' attitudes and values. If individuals believe that they can learn and grow, improvement is more likely to occur. Further, learning agility is associated with and manifested in certain behaviors (i.e., behaviors that express various levels of the attribute). Individuals can learn these behaviors. Over time, these learned behavior patterns can be internalized to form a sustainable personal trait.

We conducted a longitudinal study examining changes in learning agility. In that study, we observed that some individuals enhanced their learning agility one-half of one standard deviation (i.e., about 12 percentile points) from 2010 to 2011. Interestingly, those individuals originally in the lower third of learning agility improved their learning agility scores more than individuals in the upper third. Nevertheless, we need to use caution before reaching any firm conclusions, since this improvement could be attributed to regression to the mean for the lower one-third.

In general, we believe three sources contribute to the extent of growth in an individual's learning agility over time. First, the individual himself or herself (i.e., his or her commitment, effort, discipline, and focus on development). Second, the boss (i.e., the boss's support, encouragement, feedback, and level to which mistakes are permitted). And third, the organization (i.e., its culture, structure, leadership philosophy, and amount of tools, such as mentoring and coaching, made available to employees).

7. *Is learning agility required for all jobs? Have there been any mappings of learning agility "benchmarks" by roles/job functions?*

All jobs are not created equal. Some jobs require deep expertise, specialization, focus, attention to detail, and structured efforts. Problems to be solved in this working environment tend to be routine and analyzable. In contrast, other jobs require individuals to have broad experiences, flexibility, and the ability to adjust quickly. Problems to be solved tend to be nonroutine, uncertain, and less analyzable. Learning agility is more important for jobs that involve a relatively high level of uncertainty, novelty, volatility, adversity, difficulty, accountability, and nonauthority.

Jobs can be different in many ways. Thus, it is difficult to benchmark all the possible job functions or roles. Instead, we developed a checklist to facilitate a quick assessment of the demand for learning agility. Companies are able to compare different jobs within their organization. Jobs scoring high on this checklist likely require job incumbents to be more learning agile than jobs scoring low on the checklist.

8. Explain why Self-Awareness is part of viaEDGE™. What is Self-Awareness?

Self-Awareness refers to the degree to which an individual has personal insight, clearly understands his or her own strengths and weaknesses, is free of blind spots, and uses that knowledge to perform effectively. Highly self-aware individuals are conscious of various aspects of self and have self-perceptions that are congruent with the way others perceive them.

Self-awareness is important. Lack of self-awareness can create problems for individuals as well as organizations. For example, if an individual does not perceive weaknesses, he or she will not be aware that changes in behavior are needed. Individuals with accurate self-perceptions can tailor their behaviors as required. Self-awareness is a critical component of learning agility. Learning without self-awareness translates into mindless reactions to the environment, with no self-direction. On the other hand, individuals who are mindful are continuously matching their behaviors to their environment and their learning goals. Individuals do three things to bring their behavior in-line with learning goals. First, they have a learning goal they are trying to achieve, and they adjust the learning goal based on individual and environmental requirements. Second, they possess accurate self-perceptions and recognize the discrepancy between the current situation and the target. Third, they enact behavior in an attempt to bridge the gap and meet the learning goal.

In the earlier four-factor model of learning agility, Self-Awareness was embedded in the People Agility factor. It was interpreted largely within the social interactive context, such as being candid to a fault about self and seeking and responding positively to feedback. However, recent developments in the literature have expanded this concept to a variety of topics about self, such as mindfulness, authenticity, leadership identity, self-regulation, self-leadership, self-knowledge, self-management, and core self-evaluation. This rich literature enhances our understanding of self-awareness, enables better assessment of this construct, and supports the development of leadership programs that target self-awareness.

9. What is the relationship between self-awareness and faking? Are highly self-aware individuals less likely to distort their responses to the viaEDGE™ self-assessment?

By definition, self-awareness means accurate self-perception. Therefore, highly self-aware individuals are less likely to distort their ratings. In 360° feedback, Self-Awareness actually is operationalized as the degree of self-other agreement. Highly self-aware individuals tend to have self-ratings in agreement with others' ratings. In contrast, less self-aware individuals demonstrate self-other disagreement. In the viaEDGE™ self-assessment, we found that Self-Awareness is negatively correlated with scores on the Self-Presentation scale. Faking is one of the components determining the confidence index. Particular caution should be exercised when the Overall Confidence Index Bar is red, the Self-Presentation score is very high, and the Self-Awareness score is low.

10. Are all of the factors equally weighted in terms of importance to Overall Learning Agility? Do we want to see people score higher on some of the factors?

Mathematically, the five factors contribute equally to the Overall Learning Agility score. Given that skill requirements are not necessarily the same across job functions and position levels, some factors may become more important than other factors at certain career stages or in specific employment situations. For instance, People Agility might be more important than Mental Agility for sales managers. The opposite might be true for managers with the responsibility for innovation. For international assignment situations, Self-Awareness becomes critically important because cross-cultural adjustment requires the transition of one's mind-set from ethnocentric orientation to polycentric thinking. On the other hand, individuals are likely facing different business situations and taking different job responsibilities throughout their careers. In the long run, individuals would benefit from developing all the factors of learning agility.

11. What are the antecedents of learning agility? What are the factors influencing it? Could people become less learning agile because of the organization's culture?

Broadly speaking, two sets of elements influence people's learning agility. The first set is related to individual differences. Learning agility is a meta-competency, an integrative construct that subsumes a number of more narrowly defined and specific behavioral elements. Learning agility has connections to various degrees with other individual attributes such as goal orientation, openness to experience, cognitive complexity, intellectual flexibility, proactivity, risk tolerance, resilience, and emotional intelligence.

The second set is related to environmental elements. The learning agility score that one is likely to receive from the assessment at a specific moment reflects not only the central tendency of individuals, but also environmental influences. A psychological theory called “trait activation theory” explains this process. According to this theory, individual attributes such as learning agility can be “activated” by situations that provide opportunities for trait expression. If others in the workplace (e.g., supervisors, peers, and subordinates) value this expression, behaviors that express learning agility are subsequently rewarded and reinforced. Executive leadership research has demonstrated that experiences rich in developmental challenge promote learning by breaking routines and forcing people to think about and process experiences in different ways. Learning from experience requires one to be wrong (at least) part of the time. A culture that is supportive, entrepreneurial, and nurturing fosters learning and learning agility. In contrast, a punitive, risk-averse culture inhibits motivation for learning. Consequently, people could exhibit less learning agility because of a stifling organizational culture.

- 12. *With viaEDGE™, organizations can now assess learning agility and identify high potentials early on. How early can we assess someone’s learning agility? Could it be used in career counseling, such as helping individuals to better understand what type of career paths they are suitable for?***

After statistically controlling for organizational position-level differences, we found no relationship between viaEDGE™ learning agility scores and a respondent’s age. Therefore, viaEDGE™ can be used to assess and identify early career talents. However, many of the assessment items in viaEDGE™ describe workplace behavior. For valid assessment, it requires individuals to have a minimum level of job experiences. This job experience could be either formal employment or informal project involvement. viaEDGE™ can be administered as early as such a requirement is met.

Since learning agility is related to career success, the viaEDGE™ self-assessment does provide insights into career decisions and career management. However, career counseling should be practiced with at least two additional considerations: First, career success relies on a set of individual as well as environmental elements. One should not make career decisions based solely on the learning agility assessment. Second, with deliberate practice and proper experience, one can develop learning agility. Therefore, individuals’ career paths in relation to learning agility are dynamic. One’s career aspiration could be hindered by an inhibitive employment environment. One can also achieve well beyond expectation if the job experience constantly provides stretching and developmental opportunities.

- 13. *Explain how the confidence index is calculated? Are all five of the verification scales equally weighted in determining the Overall Confidence Index Bar?***

All five of the verification scales contribute (but not equally) to the calculation of the Overall Confidence Index Bar. For example, the Response Consistency scale has the highest weight. The Overall Confidence Index Bar will be at least yellow when the Response Consistency scale score is less than 10.

- 14. *What is the best way to explain a marker in the red Overall Confidence Index Bar to an executive who has taken the viaEDGE™ self-assessment? What are some effective and practical ways of positioning a re-administration with the executive?***

Whenever a red occurs on the Overall Confidence Index Bar, the primary goal for the coach should always be to ensure the validity of the tool. Hence, the respondent should be asked to re-take the assessment (otherwise, the learning agility scores on viaEDGE™ should not be used in the personnel decision). Nevertheless, it should be made outwardly apparent to the executive—or any respondent—that the low confidence could have happened for several reasons and is no one’s fault.

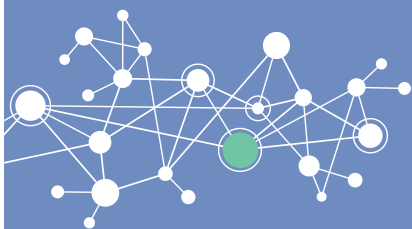
There are many different reasons that could have caused a red bar. The viaEDGE™ self-assessment has built-in verification scales that are used to detect when respondents might overthink the questions, answer inconsistently, respond in a socially desirable manner, or simply have taken the assessment in a language other than their native one. One should not assume the executive deliberately attempted to manipulate the answers. The red confidence bar suggests that any of these factors may have occurred while taking the assessment.

Consequently, when positioning a re-take with the executive, it is best to offer ideas to eliminate any potential distractions that might have caused an inaccurate assessment. Perhaps environmental factors, stress, inattentiveness, hurriedness, or even a lack of adequate sleep could have distracted the executive while taking the assessment. Inform the executive that this occurs sometimes. Suggest for the re-take that the executive should devote a full 30 minutes to complete viaEDGE™ and to take it in a quiet, distraction-free setting. In addition, it would be helpful to recommend that he or she not multitask.

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viaEDGE™ Technical Manual

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