

CASE STUDY

The Heinz Endowments

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Background

The Heinz Endowments is a Pittsburgh-based organization focused on providing grants to help communities in the Pittsburgh area grow economically, ecologically, educationally, and culturally. Heinz's funding is prioritized into three categories: creativity, learning, and sustainability. The foundation averages \$70 million annually in grantmaking, making it one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the United States.

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Wayne Jones Senior Impact Officer

The Opportunity

The Heinz Summer Youth Philanthropy Internship Program offers high school seniors a unique opportunity to develop and implement a philanthropic project to better their communities. But participants were expected to work harmoniously in a team, so recruiting based on diversity alone didn't necessarily translate to a successful experience.

"We were looking for students who had lived experiences that would be helpful in the program, and to have diversity of ethnicity, faith, gender, or sexual orientation," said Wayne Jones, Senior Impact Officer with The Heinz Endowments. "In one particular year, it happened that everybody I put on a team had a very dominant personality. They clashed with everyone, including me."

Jones recalled giving the team deadlines that went unmet simply because the interns refused to acknowledge each other's ideas. The lack of communication hindered their project's progress and resulted in participants' dissatisfaction with the internship experience. The following year, a team of opposite personalities—all were informal and passive—faced the same roadblocks.

The negativity also trickled down to Jones's team—the increased supervision the interns required distracted them from daily tasks and impeded productivity. The team needed a better way of assessing applicants to determine how to create effective teams.

The Solution

Having reached an impasse, Wayne turned to his HR director for advice. The director suggested using The Predictive Index®.

To help get interns on the right teams and working together productively, the team used the PI Behavioral Assessment™, an effective, easy-to-use, science-based assessment that provides an accurate depiction of a person's core drives and insight into their needs and behaviors. The assessment gave Jones just what he needed—an objective analysis of on-the-job behaviors that would help accurately predict how internship candidates would work together.

The Results

When interns arrived for orientation, Jones incorporated their behavioral profiles results into the introduction.

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Wayne Jones Senior Impact Officer

"For most of the students, it was the first time they'd ever done something like this," Jones explained. "The feedback from the assessment was really helpful because it gave the interns language to describe themselves and help them be more aware of the tendencies they have. It gave them a realization as to how they might need to behave differently in a team setting and understand how their other team members interact."

Jones noticed the interns were better equipped to recognize and handle conflicts, which led to more harmonious teamwork. "The assessment data gave them language and a framework for addressing different team members and their varying personalities and behaviors," he said.

Seeing PI's positive impact on the interns' experience inspired Jones to implement it on his own team. He used behavioral profiles to ensure a balanced mix of employees that were better suited to work together to drive results.

"What pleased me most after introducing the PI Behavioral Assessment was that the teams were more productive. They weren't fighting, they weren't arguing, and they stayed on task more easily," Jones said. "But the main takeaway from my experience with The Predictive Index is that it helped these students to learn. It gave them an opportunity to understand themselves and their behaviors—as well as the people around them—and that's pretty powerful."

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Company details, roles and results reflect the original case study.

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