

SOS-0

# Step One Survey<sup>®</sup>

## User's Guide

Profiles  International  
imagine great people<sup>®</sup>

## Introduction

This User's Guide introduces the Step One Survey® (SOS-O) and how to use it effectively in your organization.

For a complete description of each SOS-O scale please consult the *SOS-O Quick Reference Guide*. Please remember that as you use the SOS-O, and questions arise, support is available to you from your Profiles International, Inc. representative.

## Understanding & Using the Step One Survey®

Employee theft and fraud are growing concerns, costing employers in excess of \$400 billion annually. The Step One Survey® helps combat this problem by giving employers an effective alternative for selecting job applicants who are honest, reliable, drug-free, and who express an appropriate work ethic.

The SOS-O is a two-part survey designed for pre-employment selection. Part One consists of direct admission questions. These are essential inquiries that could be asked during an interview but which some interviewers might be uncomfortable asking. Part Two assesses the applicant's attitudes toward integrity, substance use, reliability, and work ethic. By using the SOS-O to evaluate job applicants, you gain information essential to making effective hiring decisions.

Job applicants may use either a Step One Survey® booklet or a computer for responding to the survey. After the applicant's data has been entered into a computer (via online administration or by keyboard input after paper and pencil testing), the SOSII software evaluates the responses and provides easy to understand reports.

## Reading the Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> Reports

The Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> reports are presented clearly and require no interpretation. Each is summarized here. The use of business language helps provide a clear understanding for the reader and is designed to describe the individual in a positive manner. All reports present the results in graphic and narrative form.

Section One of the report summarizes admissions of acts with which the employer might be concerned. These might include theft, drug use, absenteeism, tardiness, etc. This section also has a Verbal Interviewing Guide consisting of suggested interview questions. The interview questions should be asked in order to clarify your understanding of the applicant. When an applicant openly admits to a particular behavior, discussing that behavior may prove valuable to the hiring process.

Section Two of the Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> report describes the applicant's significant attitudes and compares them to the attitudes of people with histories of success as employees and with the attitudes of people who have been convicted of fraud, theft, and drug abuse. In the process of constructing the SOS-O, the sample group made up of trusted, long-term employees tended to post high scores in Section Two.

By using the Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> to evaluate job candidates, you will gain information essential to making effective hiring decisions.

### Distortion Scale

The Distortion scale evaluates the consistency of the individual's responses on the assessment. Too many inconsistent or statistically unusual responses can lead to an unacceptable rating and raise concern that the results may have been distorted and may not be truly representative of the individual.

The Distortion scale refers to the reliability of the results, not the honesty of the person. Unacceptable distortion results can reflect several possible situations. Some examples include a difficulty reading the questions, an attempt to portray a picture of how they would like to be seen rather than an accurate picture of who they are, or a very casual and inconsistent approach to answering the questions. Any, or all, of

these situations could affect the individual's distortion results. The Distortion scale should not be used as a basis for disqualifying an individual.

Should the distortion results fail to meet the guidelines, the following cautionary statement will appear on the report:

*“The Distortion scale for this assessment suggests the results may not be useful in making a decision.  
Please consult the User's Guide for this product for further guidance.”*

Should this cautionary statement appear in a report, it indicates the individual answered with an unusual pattern of responses. This tells you the report may not reflect an accurate view of the individual. You should keep this in mind as you interview the candidate for a position.

## Important Information for the Step One Survey<sup>®</sup>

1. Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> is a pre-employment tool. **It must never be used with your present employees.**
2. SOS-O reports provide no more than one-third of the information required for hiring decisions. Employers must also evaluate personal and business references, educational qualifications, previous work experience, and job skills.  
  
If the safety of other employees and the public is a concern, you may want to expand your evaluation of the applicant to include drug testing and a criminal background check. After making a conditional job offer, you may also require the applicant be examined by a qualified physician.
3. To assure the validity of survey results, all applicants using the pencil/paper method must use the survey booklet. Do not use a separate answer sheet or substitute a facsimile page for an answer sheet.
4. Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> is not a pass/fail instrument. No reference to passing or failing is appropriate when discussing survey report data.
5. Never violate the privacy rights of job applicants. Federal, and many State laws, require the SOS-O reports and results be retained and protected in a confidential and proprietary manner. Survey booklets and reports for all applicants must be kept confidential. Only those directly involved in the hiring decisions may see them. Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> does not detect or measure mental disorders, mental impairment, sexual deviance, or tendencies to commit violent acts. It will not identify or predict these types of behavior or conditions.
6. SOS-O, or other integrity-type instruments<sup>®</sup>, cannot be used in Massachusetts. Although Rhode Island allows integrity testing, the results of these tests cannot be used as the sole reason for rejecting an applicant.
7. It is recommended you store test booklets, release forms and reports in your files for a minimum of one year unless your legal counsel indicates otherwise.

If you have questions about the Step One Survey<sup>®</sup>, contact your Profiles International, Inc. representative.

## Administering the Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> Face-to-Face

The following information will help you use Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> effectively. Follow these basic steps when working directly with candidates and administering the SOS-O.

1. Read this entire guide before using the SOS-O assessment.
2. Assess all candidates under similar conditions.
3. Provide candidates with a comfortable testing area that is quiet, well lit, and free from distractions.
4. Candidates should be prepared for the assessment (wearing glasses if required, etc.) and feeling well, not overly tired, or under unusual stress.
5. Candidates should be able to read at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level or higher.
6. Ask whether they have special requirements or need assistance to complete the assessment.
7. This assessment should take approximately 25 minutes. However, there is no time limit imposed.

## Administering the Step One Survey<sup>®</sup> Online

The Profiles Assessment Center is used to administer any of the Profiles assessment tools to candidates online. Please consult the Assessment Center Guide for information on scheduling and administering an assessment. Instructions are also provided for communicating with an individual who is to complete an assessment. This information can be found at <http://www.profilesinternational.com>. As always, if you have questions regarding this or any of Profiles assessment tools, please contact your Profiles International, Inc. representative.