

# Assessment Methodology

Sentinel Field LLC · [sparkyfield.com/methodology](https://sparkyfield.com/methodology)

## ***"A workforce personality assessment built from the trades — not a boardroom."***

Most personality assessments were designed by organizational psychologists for white-collar corporate environments. The language, the scenarios, and the framework reflect that origin. The Sentinel Field assessment was designed from the ground up for the skilled trades — by a journeyman electrician who has worked alongside every type on a real job site.

This page explains the principles the assessment is built on, why those principles were chosen, and what the assessment is — and is not — designed to do.

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## **How the Assessment Works**

The Sentinel Field assessment uses a situational judgment format. You are presented with realistic workplace scenarios and asked to select the response that most naturally reflects how you would actually behave — not how you think you should behave. There are no right or wrong answers.

This format was chosen deliberately. Research consistently shows that scenario-based assessments produce more accurate behavioral profiles than abstract self-report questions because respondents are anchored to concrete situations rather than idealized self-perception. When someone answers 'how would you handle a conflict with a foreman,' the answer reveals far more than 'rate yourself on assertiveness from 1 to 5.'

*Motowidlo, Dunnette & Carter (1990) · Journal of Applied Psychology*

*McDaniel et al. (2001) · Journal of Applied Psychology — meta-analysis of 102 SJT studies*

Responses use a forced-choice format — you must choose between options without a neutral fallback. This design reduces the tendency to answer in socially desirable ways and produces cleaner differentiation between types.

*Wetzel, Frick & Brown (2021) · Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*

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## **The Five Types**

The assessment identifies five workforce personality types: Challenger, Anchor, Doer, Builder, and Thinker. These are not boxes — most people are a blend of two or three, with one dominant. The framework describes how people are wired to work, communicate, and respond under pressure.

Type-based personality frameworks have a long track record in applied psychology. DISC, introduced in the 1920s and refined through decades of commercial application, demonstrated that behavioral type models are usable, actionable, and meaningful to people who are not psychologists. Gallup's CliftonStrengths, used by over 26 million people, demonstrated that strengths-based type frameworks produce development insights that trait-score models do not.

*Marston, W. M. (1928). Emotions of Normal People.*

*Rath, T. (2007). StrengthsFinder 2.0. Gallup Press.*

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The Sentinel Field type taxonomy is original. The five types were derived from direct field observation of how different people behave on job sites, in crew dynamics, and under the specific pressures of trades work — not adapted from an existing framework.

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## The Interest Profile

After the scored questions, the assessment asks about your interests — things you care about outside of work. This is not scored. It is used by the report generation system to make the report specific to you rather than a description of your type in general.

Research on vocational interests, pioneered by John Holland's RIASEC model, established that what people are drawn to outside of work reveals cognitive style and values in ways that scored questions alone do not capture. A Challenger who rebuilds engines thinks differently than a Challenger who reads military history — same type, meaningfully different person. The interest profile is how the report makes that distinction.

*Holland, J. L. (1997). Making Vocational Choices (3rd ed.). Psychological Assessment Resources.*

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## The Context Intake

Before your report is generated, you answer five brief unscored questions about your current work situation: your role, your experience level, your crew context, a recent frustration, and how others would describe you. These responses feed directly into the report.

Research on feedback effectiveness consistently shows that people act on feedback that feels personally relevant. Generic type descriptions produce interest. Specific observations produce change. The context intake is what makes the difference between a report someone reads once and a report someone returns to.

*Kluger & DeNisi (1996). Psychological Bulletin — meta-analysis on feedback intervention effectiveness.*

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## The Report

Your report is generated by Claude Opus, Anthropic's most capable AI model, using your type scores, interest profile, and context intake as inputs. A second AI pass structures the output into consistent sections. The result is a report written in plain language, directly to you, without corporate jargon or HR softening.

The report covers six areas: who you are, how you communicate, where you'll face friction, how you work with other types, where you're built to go, and a practical guide others can use to work with you effectively.

***"Most personality tools are bought by employers and read by HR. This one is written to the person taking it — because honest answers require honest intentions."***

## What This Assessment Is and Is Not

The Sentinel Field assessment is a self-awareness and workforce development tool. It is designed to help individuals understand how they are wired, communicate more effectively with people who are wired differently, and make better decisions about where they put their energy.

It is not a clinical instrument. It is not a hiring filter. It should not be used as the sole basis for employment decisions. It has not undergone formal psychometric validation studies. We are honest about that because the people this tool is built for — tradespeople who deal in real things that either work or don't — deserve straight talk about what they are buying.

The assessment is built on validated psychometric principles. The instrument itself is proprietary and in active development. Formal validation research is part of the product roadmap as the platform scales.

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## Why We Built This

DISC assessments run \$50 to \$150 per seat through corporate providers. The language in those reports was written for people who work in offices. A journeyman electrician reading about 'collaborative stakeholder alignment' is not going to find it useful.

The Sentinel Field assessment is \$25. The report is written in the same language you use on a job site. The scenarios in the assessment reflect situations you have actually been in. The five types were named for what they actually do — not for what sounds good in a corporate training presentation.

That is the whole idea. A tool built from the trades, priced for the trades, written for the trades.

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