The Criteria Attention Skills Test (CAST) is a short (9-12 minute) test that measures a person’s concentration, attention skills, and ability to sustain focus on one or more tasks while avoiding distractions. The CAST is a shorter version of the Minicog Rapid Assessment Battery (MRAB), an innovative cognitive aptitude assessment designed by Dr. Stephen Kosslyn, leading cognitive neuroscientist and former chair of the Harvard psychology department. The CAST consists of four of the subtests of the MRAB:

**Divided Attention:** The Divided Attention test measures a person’s ability to “multi-task” or concentrate on two or more things simultaneously. The test assesses how well a subject shifts back and forth between two sources of information, represented in this case by four shapes in four different shades of color.

**Selective Attention – Vigilance:** The Vigilance task measures a person’s ability to maintain concentration on a task for a sustained period of time. During this task, users are presented with a sequence of shapes that contains both “target” shapes and “distractor” shapes, and are asked to press one of two keys on a keyboard based on whether or not the shape is the target shape.

**Selective Attention – Filtering:** The Filtering Task measures an individual’s ability to focus on important information and ignore irrelevant distractions. The test subject will see the numbers 4, 5, or 6, appearing on the screen either 4, 5, or 6 times; users are required to respond based on the number of figures that appear.

**Perceptual Reaction Time:** The perceptual reaction time task measures one of the most basic cognitive processes: perceptual reaction time, or the speed at which a person recognizes and responds to a stimulus.

Because of its ability to measure concentration skills, the CAST helps predict employee success in a wide variety of positions — ranging from skilled manufacturing jobs to casino gaming dealers to video surveillance workers. For vehicle (and heavy equipment) operators, there’s a strong correlation between high attention and concentration levels and a low percentage of operator error — so the CAST is also used to help predict job performance for pilots, delivery drivers, and truck and bus drivers.
DETAILED SCORE REPORTS

The CAST gives each individual an overall percentile ranking based on others who have taken the same test. For example, a percentile ranking of 72% means that the individual scored higher than 72% of the people who have taken the test. The ranking is based on the abilities of “divided attention,” “selective attention: vigilance,” “selective attention: filtering,” and “perceptual reaction time.”

VALIDITY INFORMATION

Criterion Validity: The CAST has been validated as a selection mechanism for positions that require heightened concentration, focus, and divided attention (“multi-tasking”) skills.

Statistical Significance of CAST Scores Related to Job Performance

CAST scores have been shown to correlate with job performance across a wide variety of positions that require high levels of attention and concentration. In one example, the CAST was administered to a sample of bus routers employed by a regional transportation company. The bus routers’ job consisted of utilizing software that required them to process and interpret real-time data points on the movement of the company’s buses in order to ensure the buses ran on time. The job required elevated concentration and multi-tasking skills. A group of 59 routers took the CAST, and their test performance was compared to job performance rankings provided by management. There was a strong, statistically significant correlation (.42) between job performance and CAST score. The graph indicates that individuals who scored in the top 50th percentile (high scorers) performed 24% better than those who scored in the lower 50th percentile (low scorers).

TOP JOBS FOR THE CAST

- Truck Drivers — Light or Delivery Services
- Security Guards
- Gaming Dealers
- Video Surveillance Workers
- Air Traffic Controllers