

Retaining the  
**competitive edge**  
at easyJet

Identifying the right candidates, speeding up the process, offering realistic job previews and obtaining strong metrics combine to produce a refined process

**easyJet**

# Retaining the competitive edge at easyJet

## Retaining the competitive edge at easyJet has a number of important components: identifying the right candidates, optimising the speed of the process, offering realistic job previews and obtaining strong metrics built into a refined process

easyJet is Britain's biggest airline and Europe's fourth biggest with over 700 routes and 9,000 employees. The airline has further plans for growth in order to establish a stronger European base. More than 7% of passengers chose to fly with easyJet in 2012, compared to 2011.

With 'on-time performance' being the best in its class and with strong referrals from its customers, there is a great need to recruit, retain and develop the best people.

### The challenge: identifying and engaging with the right candidates early on in the process

Ruth Spalding, resourcing manager at easyJet, explains: "Our success is dependent on the people we employ and we are fortunate to have both a good reputation and employer brand as well as having great people already working with us. This means that we attract large numbers of applicants for all of what we call our 'volume' roles. However, we know there are more great people that we need to reach and encourage to join us.

Our challenges are four-fold:

- ➔ To attract more high-quality applicants
- ➔ To create a consistent, sustainable and repeatable recruitment process
- ➔ To identify, engage with and recruit as early as possible those who will grow with our business
- ➔ To remove unsuccessful applicants promptly from the process without adversely impacting the brand."

### The solution: screening online ensures that only the best applicants are invited for face-to-face assessment

With a high volume of applications, understandably there is variation in quality. The challenge for easyJet is to screen efficiently so that time is spent only with applicants most likely to succeed and that unsuccessful applicants still have a positive experience of the process.

With this in mind, easyJet introduced an online questionnaire, a realistic job profile, for those who have an interest in becoming cabin crew. Offering a realistic insight into the role of cabin crew within easyJet helps prospective candidates take themselves out of the process if they do not feel the role is right for them. It means that applications from those more suited and enthusiastic about the role are received and progressed.



**"Our success is dependent on the people we employ."**

*Ruth Spalding,  
resourcing manager at easyJet*

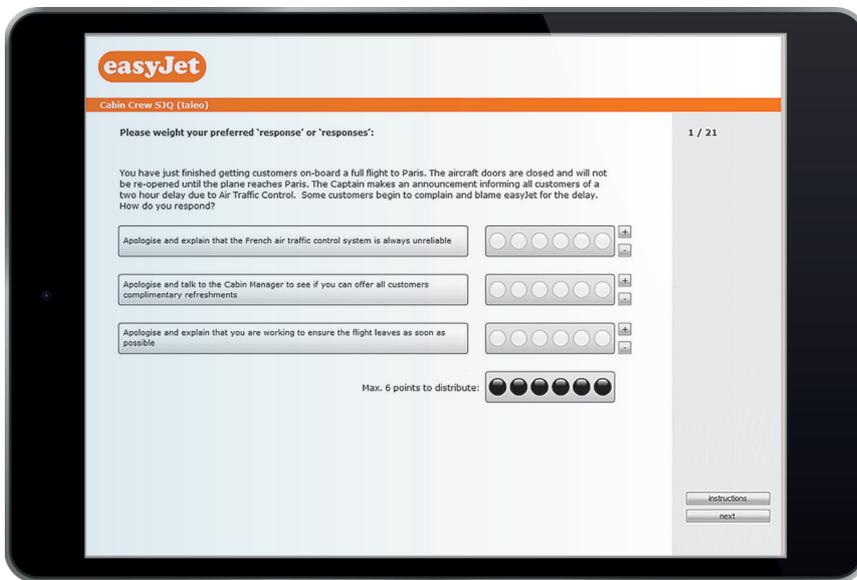


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As part of the first stage of the application process all candidates are invited to complete an online verbal ability test and a specifically designed and validated Situational Judgement Questionnaire, delivered through easyJet's ATS. At this early stage, easyJet is able to assess and remove those who are unable to meet minimum standards from the process. The company is also able to move those more suited to the role through to CV screening.

In order to identify the most suitable candidates, the easyJet team worked with cut-e to develop a 'fit' status which combined the scores from the ability test and the Situational Judgement Questionnaire. Those with a 'low fit' were not taken further and those with 'mid' or 'high fit' scores progressed to the CV screening stage, followed by an assessment centre. The benefit of this approach is its consistency across all locations, the minimum input needed from the easyJet team and the sustainability of the process.



Screenshots easyJet Situational Judgement Questionnaire by cut-e

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## The outcome: metrics highlight conversion rate improvement and performance improvement – across a range of positions

In 2013, the cut-e conference highlighted the growth in use of HR analytics and metrics across organisations and this is reflected at easyJet. Ms Spalding, who presented during the conference, explains: “A key objective for us is to improve the quality and ‘fit’ of candidates who join us at assessment centres. Bringing only the best people to these events means that we improve our speed of hire as well as cost, spending valuable assessment centre time and resources with candidates who are likely to succeed and accept an offer.”

As refinements to the online testing process have taken shape, easyJet has seen an uplift in conversion rates of those attending the face-to-face assessment centres. When candidates were tested at the assessment centre itself with no prior online activity, the conversion rate of those attending to successful hire was 41%. By moving assessment online and earlier in the process, this conversion rose to 48%. By adding in the realistic job preview, the conversion is now 55%. This means that there now need to be fewer costly assessment centres organised to meet target recruitment figures. In terms of cost savings, this equates to over £10,000 over three years.

However, the impact of recruiting higher-quality candidates is seen also in the reduction of training course failures, an increase in role performance and an improvement in base feedback.



**With this introduction, conversion rate at the assessment centre stage has increased to over 70% – saving over £10,000 in 2012/2013.**

## Taking online assessment into other job positions to achieve further benefits

With the success of the cabin crew approach, easyJet introduced a refined process for the promotion of crew to cabin manager. Its co-pilot recruitment process has also undergone revision, with online testing benchmarked against peer group being used early in the process. With this introduction, conversion rate at the assessment centre stage has increased to over 70% – saving over £10,000 in 2012/2013.

In addition, easyJet has seen a growth of over 350% in applications to join its graduate programme in the past two years. With a new process, including online verbal, numerical and inductive capability tests early in the application route, easyJet has been able to complete their graduate recruitment in the fastest time for three years. The company has also run a fewer number of assessment centres than in previous years and yet delivered the number of graduates required.

*“The Situational Judgement Questionnaire has been developed for us by cut-e and takes into account how we, at easyJet, want our cabin crew to act – and react – in their role. It has been designed in conjunction with our current high-performing cabin crew members and those who we see as ‘experts’ within our business for this role. This means that it makes a great assessment of success within our easyJet cabin crew culture.”*

*Ruth Spalding,  
resourcing manager at easyJet*

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## Critical success factors for easyJet

It is clear that easyJet has been able to transform its application and selection processes for some of its key job roles, speeding up time-to-hire, reducing costs and yet maintaining an employer brand position.

This is due to its:

- ➔ Understanding of what great performance looks like for its employees
- ➔ Commitment to validity in ensuring the tests and questionnaires used to predict success in the role
- ➔ Creation of seamless processes for the applicant ensuring that the ATS provider and cut-e data are integrated into a single applicant record
- ➔ Need for a repeatable, sustainable recruitment process model capable for use across Europe
- ➔ Dedication to engaging with all applicants fairly, transparently and honestly
- ➔ Access to, and measurement of, key success metrics: they know how they have improved and the impact this has had on their recruitment
- ➔ Continued process improvement always with a view to getting better applicants through the pipeline and into the assessment centres



**easyJet has been able to transform its application and selection processes for some of its key job roles, speeding up time-to-hire, reducing costs and yet maintaining an employer brand position.**

### **About cut-e**

Founded in 2002, cut-e (pronounced 'cute') provides online tests, questionnaires and gamified assessments for attraction, selection, talent management and development. The company's smart, valid and innovative psychometrics have made it the preferred partner of multinational organisations.

In May 2017, cut-e was acquired by Aon plc, a leading global professional services firm providing a broad range of risk, retirement and health solutions. cut-e now operates as part of Aon's global offering in talent solutions, helping clients achieve sustainable growth by driving business performance through people performance. cut-e and Aon, as Aon's Assessment Solutions, undertake 30 million assessments each year in 90 countries and 40 languages.