

iWAM Standard Groups

“There is no such thing as a problem without a gift for you in its hands. You seek problems because you need their gifts.”

Richard Bach

The iWAM Standard Groups

Because motivational and attitudinal patterns translate into behavior and the behavior is viewed, interpreted, and/or judged by others relative to the behavior within a culture, jobEQ created “Standard Groups: for the iWAM. *A standard or reference group is a statistical indication of how a population segment with the same selected, defining, criteria or demographics/ characteristics will typically score on respective iWAM test items.*

In the iWAM, Standard Group represents the middle two-thirds (+/- one standard deviation from the average or mean) of the sample who took the iWAM for a given country or as part of a defined subgroup. For a list of the standard groups currently available with the iWAM, visit www.jobeq.com.

Standard groups were created from all the people who completed the iWAM as citizens of or while working in a given country. In North America, for example, the Standard Group research documents how the North American iWAM population is similar to and different from the United States Department of Labor employment statistics. An explanation of the demographics of another country’s standard group is available from jobEQ¹.

The Standard Group (or customized reference group) can be incorporated into any iWAM report. As a result, it is possible to analyze how an organization compares with what jobEQ calls the “country culture.” In this case, the culture is represented by the iWAM Standard Group.

The real value of a standard group is the ability to estimate how the average person in the Standard Group would view another person or group based on similarities and differences in the behaviors resulting from motivational and attitudinal patterns.

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Since the iWAM is a global tool, “Standard Groups” have been developed for several countries. Here is a listing of the current countries for which there is a Standard Group:

Australia	Belgium
Canada	Denmark
France	Germany
Kuwait*	South Africa*
Poland*	Russia*
United Kingdom	United States

Countries marked with an asterisk have standard groups, but the report containing the analysis of the group is not complete at this time. There are efforts underway to create new standard groups for additional countries (China and Korea are in progress) and to update some other existing standard groups. The U.S. Standard Group was updated in 2007.

Custom Standard Groups

The jobEQ iWAM system allows users, through advanced system subscriptions, to create custom standard groups. A custom standard group can be created for an organization, a team (e.g. leadership), or a certain function (e.g. sales).

Once created, the custom standard group can be incorporated into iWAM reports (it replaces the country standard group at the top of the report), can be used for statistical analysis (e.g. comparing a group within the organization to the standard group for the entire corporation), and can provide additional input to a model of excellence (e.g. to identify the “culture factors” in the model).

A Note on the iWAM Standard Group Versus Other Tests

To paraphrase the quote at the beginning, we seek standard groups because we need them.

The score on an iWAM scale is just a score. Psychometrists would call it an “absolute score.” The absolute score is the value based on the range of possibilities on the scale or test. For example, if a given scale in a test had a range of possible scores from 0 – 10 and you scored “6,” then your absolute score is 6. If one were interpreting an absolute score, in this case we might say: “your score is one point above the midpoint of this scale.”

The absolute score tells you something about where you fall on the scale. It does not tell you how you compare to others who have taken this test. That comparison would be called “relative.” That is, the interpretation of your score as high, average, or low would be on the basis of how you compare to a standardized group who completed the test.

Tests are called *standardized* because they measure performance against a normed group. A norm is an average score on a test determined by administering the test to a sample the characteristics of which are well-defined. Scores on a test will have different meanings depending upon the norm to which they are compared. For example, if one were interpreting a score for the Initiation pattern in the iWAM, it makes a difference whether one is using the “absolute” scale score or the “relative” scale score.

So what? In the case of motivational and attitudinal patterns, the relative score is extremely important in the process of interpretation. Why? The answer is because MAPs translate to behavior and behavior is evaluated or judged on the basis of how it compares either to what is required (as in a job) or to the norms of the culture or reference group (as in a society). So, an Initiation score in one culture or country may be fairly low compared to the standard group for the country. On the other hand, if one compared the score to the standard group for another country, the score might seem fairly high.

Because the iWAM is a qualitative measure and because the requirements of different situations or contexts require different patterns, it is not particularly useful for the Inventory for Work Attitude and Motivation to develop “national norms” or “norms for executives in corporations” because what is required or expected may be very different when one shifts the context against which it is measured.

This is an apples-and-oranges issue when comparing the iWAM to some other kinds of tests.