



GRAPHOLOGY INS AND OUTS

“Graphology Supposedly the most effective tool Human Resources use to sneak behind jobseekers’ backs.,”

When employers are looking for the most suitable person to occupy the vacancy, in addition to the required education, work experience and required knowledge of the particular field of work, they also put a lot of importance on the personal characteristics and skills that a future employee needs to possess. These are not obvious at first glance therefore Human Resources are increasingly turning to analysis of jobseekers’ handwriting.

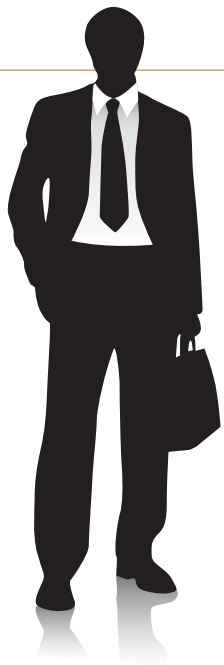
Tina Berlec is a Human Resources Management graduate. She is working in HR agency Naton in Ljubljana as a human resources specialist –

graphologist. After completing university studies, she specialized in jobseekers’ handwriting analysis officially known as graphology. The starting point of this method is the recognition that "different jobs require different personality characteristics and skills, and graphology enables us to verify their presence or absence in job candidates" explains Mrs. Berlec. She affirms that there is basically no personal characteristic that could not be expressed in handwriting.

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Therefore the analysis of handwriting does not only disclose those personal characteristics that a

jobseeker would gladly point out by herself, but also discloses her dark side so to speak, because "we can be 95 per cent certain that during the process also come out those characteristics that would rather stay hidden or are usually denied by a jobseeker if asked directly".



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In order to do the handwriting analysis, an individual needs to fill two pages of A4 format. "The paper must be unlined and the candidate must not use a liner or some other tool to help her write more straightly", explains Mrs. Berlec the instructions for writing. "The candi

date must not worry about the esthetics of letters, because it is completely irrelevant. She has to write in a language that she knows best, usually this is native language. Also the written content is entirely irrelevant." Does that mean, I ask, that a poor thing needs to invent the topic of the text by herself? "Yes", answers Mrs. Berlec. "Usually the candidates start with one topic, and then they continue with another, but on the half way they run out of ideas for the second topic so they start with the third one and so on".

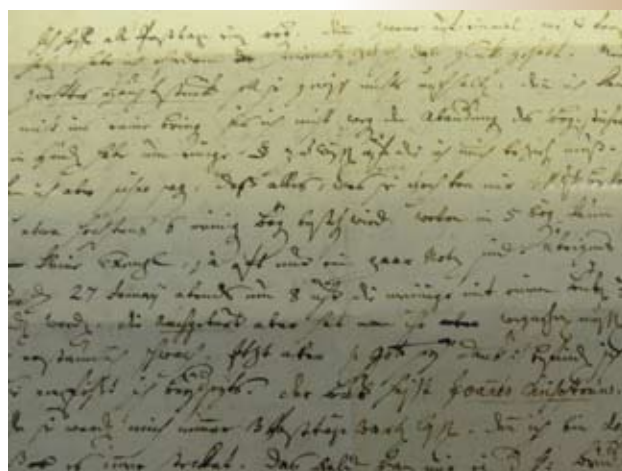


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Revealing **TWO PAGES** of A4 format

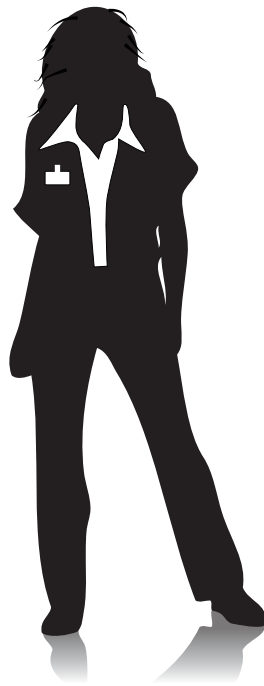
And what is normally the first topic they use? "In general, they start writing how they spent their holidays or what they did the previous day". So something like primary school essays we had to write after the summer holidays on the first day of school, I conclude.

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"My work starts, when two pages are written," Tina Berlec explains the work of a graphologist. "With sixteen measurement tools, I measure at least 220 graphic characters in the manuscript. It takes between 12 and 15 working hours only to do the measures." Graphologist measures the width of the upper and lower edge of the text (page margins), line spacing, spacing between words and letters, the size of the letters and ovals (ovals are letters a, o, d, g), then the upper and lower zone (lower zone are the extensions of the letters that go under a line if

the line would exist), the initial and final moves in words and so on and so forth. "Just a bar at the letter 't'," explains Mrs. Berlec, "has over 20 different forms: it can be overtaking, climbing, curved, thinning, bolding, etc." Measured graphical indicators are the basis for calculations of personality characteristics and skills of the author of the manuscript. "Certain competence requires the presence of specifically defined indicators," explains Mrs. Berlec. "The more there are, thus the higher the percentage of the indicator, the more pronounced the skill." Graphologist classifies the presence of a certain skill in five different levels, the first level means that a certain competence is strongly



expressed and the fifth that it is expressed very weakly or that it is almost not present.

Previously described measurement and quantifying part of the analysis is followed by an interpretation, which deals with four levels of the candidate's personality: cognitive, emotional, social and behavioral. Graphology report consists of a summary of the most strongly expressed strengths and weaknesses of the candidate. Analysis of the handwriting requires three days of work. A copy of the analysis, which we saw, consisted of 11 densely typed pages of text and different tables.



COMMERCIALISTS and MANAGERS

Graphology is used not only in the selection process but also comes in handy in the reorganization of the company (as a method of identifying potentials of existing employees and subsequently as a method of distributing employees to the most appropriate job positions), in the formation of working groups and for establishing better relations in the company. According to Mrs. Berlec graphology is most widely used in France, where it is used by three quarters of all companies.

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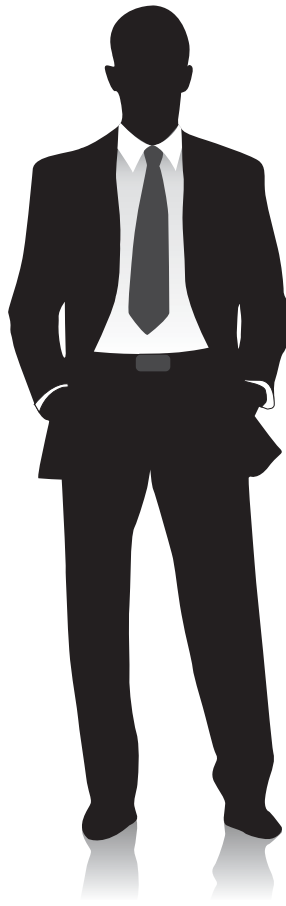
“There are about 70 thousand registered graphologists in France and there is practically no candidate who is to be employed and has not been tested by a graphologist. Large companies even have their own graphologists. According to the frequency of

usage of graphology among companies, France is followed by Italy, where this method is used by a half of all the companies, and a slightly smaller proportion of companies in Austria, Germany and Scandinavian countries.”

“According to Mrs. Berlec graphology is most widely used in France, where it is used by three quarters of all companies. France is followed by Italy, where this method is used by a half of all the companies, and a slightly smaller proportion of companies in Austria, Germany and Scandinavian countries.”

According to Mrs. Berlec, in Slovenia graphology has been in use professionally

for only a few years now and it is most often used by pharmaceutical, retail, telecommunications and manufacturing companies. Since it is not cheap (analysis costs 890 Euros plus VAT), it is mainly used for high profile positions such as managers, sales and marketing professionals. In these cases they do not test all applied jobseekers, but it is only brought to the table in the last stage of the selection if they cannot make a final decision between two or three candidates.



optimally. Much of the answers can also be false – all that so the candidate could seem the best fit for the vacancy. Moreover, tests are more or less known so the candidates can copy them or practice the answers at home before taking the test.”

But also graphology has its limits: “Its limit is a facade handwriting, which can be printed handwriting or excessively decorated, but in any case belongs to a person who does not wish to reveal her personality. Another limitation is the school handwriting font. This is the font of persons who never develop their own handwriting, but they are writing in a school font all their lives. In such cases I tell the client that I can deliver very little information and that the analysis of such handwriting is useless,” explains Mrs. Berlec.

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According to Mrs. Berlec even though graphology is not cheap, represents the best balance between provided information about the candidate and the resources spent in the process. Mrs. Berlec says its advantage lies in “no possibility that the candidate could influence the results of the analysis, since the candidate cannot change her own handwriting. The candidate might try to write few lines with different handwriting, but sooner or later the automatism takes over and the writing becomes spontaneous.” “It is actually a measurement of the unconscious,” she adds.

Compared with graphology, psychological tests build on the information from a second hand so to speak, because the candidate is giving the answers by themselves and the problem is “that she or he knows too little about themselves and their feelings in order to answer



Graphology is characterized by yet another peculiarity: graphologist does not give recommendations as competencies required for each job differ from the client to the client. With my expertise in the field of human resources I help the client to come up with the right set of competencies and that is crucial for the final decision who is the right candidate, explains graphologist Tina Berlec.