
METHODOLOGY HANDBOOK · FIRST EDITION

Silk Clarity™

What Silk measures, and how.

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PART I

Introduction

This handbook is not a marketing document. It is an account of what Silk Clarity measures, how it measures it, and what it deliberately does not claim to do.

Communication influences professional decisions, yet it is often assessed inconsistently. Hiring, promotion, leadership selection and trust between colleagues all turn, in part, on how people speak, structure their thinking, respond under pressure and adapt to those around them. These judgements are made every day in every organisation; they are rarely made with the same evidence twice.

Silk Clarity exists to give that judgement a more reliable foundation. It is a Communication and Behavioural Assessment System that observes how individuals communicate, reason, explain, influence, adapt and respond to professional scenarios — and organises what is observed into a structure that can be discussed, compared and developed.

The purpose of this handbook is to make that structure visible. It sets out the methodology in full: what is measured, how it is measured, the research that informs it, the limits of what it claims, and the principles that govern its use. It is written for the recruiters, leaders, assessors and candidates whose decisions and careers Silk is intended to support.

PART II

Methodology

What Silk Clarity is

Silk Clarity is a structured framework for observing, organising, discussing and developing communication and behavioural evidence. It evaluates observable indicators demonstrated during a structured professional conversation, against a consistent six-dimension rubric, so that the resulting profiles can be read on the same basis and discussed in shared language.

The framework is grounded in established research from communication science, leadership studies, trust research, cultural intelligence and behavioural assessment methodology. It does not, however, borrow any single instrument from those traditions. The synthesis — and the way the six dimensions are organised, scored and evidenced — is original to Silk Clarity.

What Silk Clarity measures

Silk evaluates how individuals communicate, how they reason, how they explain, how they influence, how they adapt, and how they respond to professional scenarios. These are observable behaviours, demonstrated in a defined context, and read against the same criteria for every candidate.

Each observation is tied to specific evidence — behaviours, examples and patterns demonstrated during the conversation — rather than to standalone scores or trait labels.

What Silk Clarity does not measure

Silk does not assess personality, diagnose psychological conditions, measure intelligence, or imply cultural superiority. It does not predict future job performance, and it does not infer personal worth or character. Results should be interpreted as evidence of observed communication performance within the assessment itself — not as definitive judgements about an individual.

Silk produces evidence. It does not produce verdicts.

PART III

Research Positioning

Three statements sit above everything else in this handbook. They define what the framework is for, what it observes, and what it is careful not to claim.

Communication competence is observable behaviour

Silk assesses observable communication and behavioural indicators demonstrated in structured professional conversations. It does not assess personality, psychological traits or future potential.

Executive Presence is an emergent perception

Executive Presence is not a fixed trait. It is a perception formed through observable behaviours such as Clarity, Credibility, Composure and Influence. It remains a derived analysis, never a standalone score.

Structured evidence improves professional judgement

Professional decisions often rely on communication, yet communication is frequently assessed informally. Silk is a structured methodology for observing, organising and evaluating communication evidence in a transparent, consistent and explainable manner. It is designed to support professional judgement rather than replace it.

Research-informed, not research-validated

Silk Clarity is research-informed: its categories, language and design choices are grounded in established findings from communication competence, organisational trust, cultural intelligence, leadership communication, behavioural assessment and language assessment. The methodology itself has not yet undergone independent psychometric validation or peer-reviewed validation studies.

Unlike traditional psychometric instruments that seek to infer underlying personality traits, Silk Clarity focuses on observable communication behaviours demonstrated in context. It does not claim predictive validity, diagnostic authority, or status as a

psychometric instrument. It is a structured framework for observing, organising and discussing communication and behavioural evidence — built to be transparent about what it is and what it is not.

PART IV

Observable Behaviour

The distinction between behaviour and personality is the foundation on which the rest of the framework rests. Personality is inferred; behaviour is observed. Silk Clarity is built entirely on the second.

The framework does not attempt to measure personality, diagnose psychological characteristics or predict future success. Instead, it provides a structured approach to observing communication behaviours that research consistently associates with trust, credibility, influence and professional effectiveness.

That decision has practical consequences. It means every observation can be pointed at — a moment, a sentence, a pattern of response — rather than asserted as an inner trait. It means candidates can see, in their own words, what was read and why. And it means the framework can be discussed, challenged and refined in the same evidential terms in which it is produced.

Behaviour can be observed, evidenced, discussed and developed. Personality cannot.

PART V

The Six Dimensions

Research across leadership, communication, organisational psychology and cross-cultural leadership consistently identifies recurring themes associated with professional effectiveness. Silk organises those themes into six observable dimensions: Clarity, Credibility, Integrity, Composure, Influence and Adaptability.

These dimensions are practical behavioural categories rather than psychological traits. Each is evaluated from observable evidence drawn from the conversation itself, and every score is supported by behaviours, examples, strength indicators and development indicators.

Clarity

The ability to communicate ideas clearly, logically and effectively. Silk reads message structure, precision of language, logical reasoning, coherence, the ability to explain complexity, and conciseness. Clear communication is consistently associated with professional effectiveness, leadership credibility and stakeholder confidence.

Credibility

The degree to which communication demonstrates competence and expertise. Silk reads evidence-based reasoning, subject knowledge, strategic thinking, decision quality and analytical capability. Credibility is a foundational component of professional trust and influence.

Integrity

The consistency, accountability and ethical reasoning demonstrated through communication. Silk reads accountability, ownership of outcomes, consistency of reasoning, transparency and ethical judgement. Research consistently identifies integrity as a core driver of trust and leadership effectiveness.

Composure

The ability to communicate effectively under pressure and uncertainty. Silk reads emotional regulation, confidence calibration, stability during challenge, response quality under pressure and tolerance for ambiguity. Composure contributes significantly to executive presence and professional confidence.

Influence

The ability to create understanding, alignment and engagement. Silk reads persuasive communication, stakeholder awareness, decision framing, communication impact and the ability to build alignment. Influence reflects how effectively communication creates movement and understanding among others.

Adaptability

The ability to adjust communication appropriately to different audiences, contexts and situations. Silk reads audience awareness, context sensitivity, communication flexibility, cultural intelligence indicators and behavioural adaptability. Adaptability is particularly important in modern global and cross-functional workplaces.

PART VI

Executive Presence

Executive Presence is not assessed as a standalone dimension. It is treated, throughout the framework, as an emergent perception — a quality that observers attribute to communication when specific behaviours appear together.

Silk derives that analysis from evidence already gathered across four of the six dimensions: Clarity, Credibility, Composure and Influence. Research suggests that executive presence is commonly associated with these four qualities — competence, communication effectiveness, composure and influence — although cultures differ in how they are expressed.

Because the analysis is derived, Executive Presence is never reported as an independent score. It appears in a profile only as a synthesis of behaviours that have already been observed and evidenced elsewhere.

PART VII

Evidence

Every dimension in a Silk profile is linked to supporting evidence: observed behaviours, supporting examples, strength indicators and development indicators. Scores do not appear in isolation, and they are not intended to be read in isolation.

The language of the report reflects this discipline. Silk speaks in evidential terms: the candidate demonstrated, the candidate showed behavioural indicators associated with, evidence of X was consistent, mixed, or limited. These are the words of an assessment system. They are not the words of a personality test.

Every score is anchored in something that was said, structured or done in the conversation itself.

PART VIII

The Assessment Process

Each assessment is a structured professional conversation designed to elicit observable communication behaviour. The same prompts are read against the same six-dimension framework for every candidate, so that resulting profiles are comparable on a consistent basis.

Responses are analysed across the six dimensions and the indicators sitting beneath them. The system identifies behavioural patterns associated with effective professional communication and ties each observation to specific moments in the conversation. Results are generated using consistent assessment criteria and are supported by explanatory observations rather than standalone scores.

Human judgement remains the decision-maker. The framework exists to make that judgement visible, explainable and defensible — not to replace it.

PART IX

Research Foundations

Silk Clarity is informed by established research across six adjacent fields. The six observable dimensions — Clarity, Credibility, Integrity, Composure, Influence and Adaptability — were developed by synthesising recurring themes found across these bodies of research. The resulting framework represents Silk Clarity's original organisation of these concepts into a practical methodology for assessing observable communication performance.

The researchers, theories and frameworks referenced below have informed the development of Silk Clarity. Their inclusion does not imply endorsement, collaboration, review or validation of the Silk Clarity methodology.

- **Communication competence** — Brian H. Spitzberg, William R. Cupach, John C. Wiemann.
- **Trust in organisations** — Roger C. Mayer, James H. Davis, F. David Schoorman.
- **Cultural intelligence** — Christopher Earley, Soon Ang.
- **Leadership communication** — Representative research from organisational communication and leadership studies.
- **Language assessment** — Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).
- **Behavioural assessment methodology** — Established approaches to structured professional assessment.

PART X

Validation Roadmap

A formal validation programme is in development. It is structured around construct validation, pilot studies with recruiter and corporate partners, and an evidence register that tracks how the framework performs over time.

The intent is to move from research-informed to research-validated through transparent, independently reviewable work — not through marketing language. Until that work is complete, Silk Clarity will continue to describe itself accurately: an original framework grounded in established research, supporting structured human judgement.

PART XI

Ethical Principles

Silk is designed to support better communication assessment, not to replace human judgement. The platform provides structured insight into how individuals communicate within a specific assessment environment; it does not replace any element of an organisation's wider decision.

Assessment results should be considered alongside interviews, experience, qualifications, references and other relevant information when making professional decisions. They are one input among several — never the only one.

Human judgement remains essential.

PART XII

Applications

Silk Clarity is intended for contexts in which communication evidence helps a professional decision be made more carefully. Three applications are now in active use.

Recruiters and executive search

Silk provides structured behavioural evidence to sit alongside CVs, interviews and references. It surfaces the communication texture that paper credentials do not reveal: how a candidate structures argument, extends accountability, modulates pace under pressure and shifts register across audiences.

Organisations and leadership development

Silk gives leaders, teams and individuals a shared vocabulary for discussing communication performance. Profiles are designed to be read alongside coaching, feedback and development conversations rather than used as standalone judgements.

Individual professionals

For individuals, Silk produces an evidence-based view of their own communication patterns. The goal is awareness: helping each person understand their patterns and develop greater flexibility and effectiveness. The goal is not to create identical communicators; it is to help each person become the most effective version of themselves.

PART XIII

Limitations

A handbook of this kind is only as useful as the boundaries it draws around itself. A Silk profile describes observed communication behaviour within the assessment itself. It does not describe the whole person, it does not anticipate how they will behave in every future context, and it does not stand in for the wider evidence — references, experience, qualifications, panel interviews and professional judgement — that a serious decision requires.

Silk Clarity does not predict performance, diagnose personality or recommend appointments. It provides structured behavioural evidence to inform — not replace — the appointing judgement.

What the framework does not claim

- Predict future performance.
- Predict leadership success.
- Identify top performers.
- Diagnose personality.
- Diagnose psychological traits.
- Make hiring decisions.

What the framework does not measure

- Personality types.
- Psychological conditions.
- Intelligence or IQ.
- Cultural superiority.
- Future job performance.
- Personal worth or character.