



“SOFT SKILLS ARE THE NEW HARD SKILLS” for Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand

**CASE
STUDY**

Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (ANZ) has re-booted the Achiever Programme to successfully connect accounting students with employer opportunities, by introducing cutting-edge gamified assessments.

Chartered Accountants ANZ has harnessed Revelian’s Cognify and Emotify psychometric assessment tools to help run and grow its Achiever Programme with significant success.

The goal of the Achiever Programme is to attract and identify tertiary students who are looking for paid internship opportunities in accounting and finance and connect them with relevant participating employers.

Sunny Sirabas, General Manager Innovation, explains how the use of a gamified candidate experience combined with science-based assessments has helped reboot, grow and shape the Programme.

How has Emotify and Cognify contributed to the Achiever Programme?

Four years ago, we nearly pulled the plug on the Achiever Programme altogether. The manual process of going through resumes was painful and arduous.

We had hundreds of applications per region and it was significant time to wade through the applications to assess if they were a fit-for-purpose with the business or organisation we were wanting to place them with.

Even with such an intensive manual process, we were getting complaints both ways – from the students and the employers. We had to make a choice. Either we give the Programme away or we had to find a better way.

Partnering with Revelian, and implementing Cognify and Emotify psychometric assessments, has transformed the manual nature of the Achiever Programme and helped turn this into a much more streamlined and successful initiative.

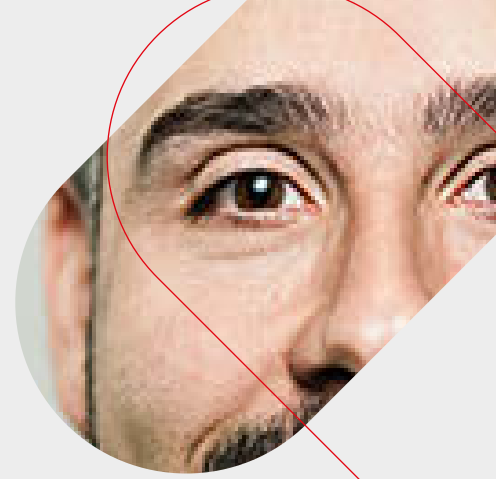
“Our role is to nurture students, help them to be job ready and secure a position in a business that they will do really well in.”

Sunny Sirabas, General Manager Innovation, Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand

How did using Revelian’s Cognify Assessment make a difference to your experience running the Achiever Programme in 2018?

We are now in the third year of running the new Achiever Programme. It is now a trans-Tasman initiative for students wanting placements and work experience over the summer break.

It has really helped us to screen and funnel down the applicants



into the right organisations and businesses as well as create benchmarking and minimum testing scores.

What we really strive for is cultural fit. We are far more interested in the right fit rather than academic results – and Cognify and Emotify has helped us achieve that.

It has also helped us to add value to employers in smaller businesses and regional partners by giving them access to information (from Cognify and Emotify) about candidates that they have never had the benefit of previously. Traditionally, that kind of insight was very expensive and only accessible to large firms with considerable resources.

You have recently added Emotify to your assessment of candidates. How do you think it has made a difference to the quality of candidates selected?

Soft skills are the new hard skills.

In modern businesses, accountants need to pitch for work, present to clients, interpret data and work effectively with teams or colleagues which may not all be located in the same office – all of which requires a high level of emotional intelligence.

In terms of the Achiever Programme, adding Emotify to the equation will give us a robust view of the candidate. It also helps to identify if candidates need to up-skill in this area.

Previously cost has been a barrier to assessing emotional intelligence whereas adding Emotify to Cognify now makes good sense to gain even more insights in to candidates.

How do you think using Revelian's Cognify made a difference in quality of talent selected for internships?

It has helped to keep the Achiever Programme as innovative as possible which has drawn students and businesses back to us and the Programme.

Cognify is a better experience for candidates than the traditional methods we had used previously and it gives employers a well-rounded view of the individual.

With the level of interest increasing year on year, we are now approaching capacity for what the Achiever Programme can handle without significant scaling up.

What made you choose to use Emotify as well as Cognify to select candidates for this year's Achiever Program?

We have been seeing the value of “soft skills” coming for some time now and wanted to build in emotional intelligence to the program.

The nature of accounting is continuing to change. New IT and software programs are able to do a lot of accounting work and the role of the accountant is changing to be able to interpret and communicate that information to clients. Interfacing with clients and building relationships requires a high level of EI.

It is also very important to match a candidate to the right employer and Emotify helps us to identify the right fit more accurately – which in turn means they are more likely to stay on with the firm if they are offered an ongoing role.

ASSESSMENTS USED

COGNIFY

Merges game-design thinking, latest technology and trusted psychometric principles to assess critical elements of cognitive ability

Cognify uses next-generation technology to offer an engaging and interactive experience for candidates, while assessing skills critical for all roles: problem-solving, numerical reasoning and verbal knowledge abilities.

EMOTIFY

An ability-based measure of Emotional Intelligence (EI) that blends interactivity with proven psychometric science

Emotify allows you to measure EI in a way that provides useful, trustworthy information. It assesses a candidate's ability to accurately perceive emotions, and to effectively understand the connections between emotions and situations that lead to specific emotional reactions.

Have the assessment tools made any other contribution to the organisation?

The war for talent in smaller firms is very much a reality.

There was a feeling previously that the firms at the smaller end of town may not have getting the same calibre of quality candidates. The assessment tools show that is not true because it takes away subjectivity.

As a result, we are seeing the number of students and employers taking part in the Achiever Programme increasing.

Resumes alone are no longer suitable to provide key insights into the skills and abilities of a 21st Century candidate. Revelian's digital candidate assessments allow Chartered Accountants ANZ to review cognitive and emotional factors that lead to candidate success and long-term employee engagement.

"Soft skills are the new hard skills. Accountants need to pitch for work, present to clients, interpret data and work effectively with teams – all of which requires a high level of emotional intelligence."

Sunny Sirabas, General Manager Innovation, Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand

BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

- Enabled the Achiever Programme to remain innovative
- Reduced tedious manual CV selection process
- Allowed for enhanced selection success via objective data
- Better decision-making processes
- Better use of team productivity
- Positive candidate experience
- Inspiring students and businesses to be part of the Achiever Programme
- Giving all students the opportunity to experience the graduate recruitment process



Discover what lies
below the surface.

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