Introduction to Pre-Employment
Testing: Assessment Centres &
Psychometric Assessment

Today's Agenda

- Assessment centres
 - What is an assessment centre?
 - Why do employers use assessment centres?
 - Assessment centres & the selection process?
 - What can I expect?
 - How can I prepare?



Today's Agenda

- Psychometric assessment
 - What is psychometric assessment
 - How are the tests administered?
 - Why do organisations use psychometric assessment?
 - How can I prepare?
 - Additional tips

What is an Assessment Centre?

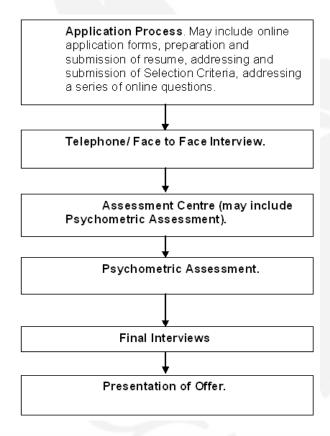
- Collection of exercises used to assess applicants on dimensions of performance under standardised conditions
- Assess a candidate's behaviour and competencies e.g., problem solving, general aptitude, team work, organisational skills etc.
- Assessment centres sessions can range from half days to two day sessions
- All applicants are usually assessed in one location

Why are Assessment Centres Used?

- Opportunity to view a candidate's reactions in an employment setting
- Allows candidates to demonstrate their skills & abilities across a variety of situations not possible across other methods of assessment
- May simulate the work required on the job, decision making, problem solving and stress employees may experience on the job
- Can also act as a realistic job preview for applicants

Assessment Centres & the Selection

Process



What Can I Expect?

- Case Studies
- Group Activities
- In-Tray Exercises
- Oral Presentations
- Psychometric Assessment
- Discussions & Role Plays
- Networking & Social Functions

Case Studies

- Individual or group
- Scenario
 - Analyse a situation
 - Make recommendations
 - May be asked to analyse the scenario from different perspectives
 - Assessed on ability to problem solve, analytical and creative skills to provide supported outcomes



Group Activities

- May be given a (contentious) topic to discuss
- May be required to discuss, analyse and negotiate ideas, problem solve and provide a solution or recommendation
- Assesses your team work skills
- Your behaviour and effectiveness within a team environment will be monitored
- Need to show you are an active listener and speaker
- Be confident in your own ideas
- Be open to discuss ideas from others

In-Try Exercises

- Full in-tray
 - phone messages
 - emails
 - memos
- Time restricted exercise
- Quickly read documents, understand the task/issue, and prioritise these in order
- May be asked to justify your decisions
- Assesses ability to organise, prioritise and time manage



Oral Presentations

- Short presentation on a topic provided
- May be able to use visual aides such as a poster, or PowerPoint
- Plan your key points, adhere to the time frame and ensure you speak clearly and concisely
- Assesses your communication and presentation skills

Discussions and Role Plays

- Fictitious work situation
- Other participants in the exercise may be other group members, assessment centre staff, or professional actors
- Placed in a situation where you may have to address a particular situation
- MAY be assessed on your communication skills, if you handle the situation with the appropriate actions, and possible team work and negotiation skills

Networking and Social Functions

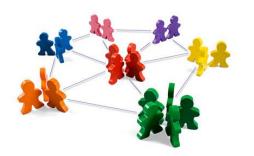
- You may be invited to attend a networking function or a social event (i.e. dinner or a cocktail party)
- Not necessarily formally assessed, however the selection panel will be watching your conduct throughout the event

Networking and Social Functions

- They may monitor
 - Networking ability
 - Capacity to mix with others
 - Behaviour in a social environment



- Suitable attire
- Limit your alcohol intake
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times



How Can I Prepare?

- Research your employer
- Read all the information provided to you
- Arrive on time familiarise yourself with the location and parking availability
- Good night sleep, eat breakfast
- Dress appropriately corporate attire

How Can I Prepare?

- You may be assessed throughout the duration of the Assessment Centre
 - During breaks and lunch
 - Conduct yourself professionally, and make an effort to network and meet other people
- Be yourself

Psychometric Assessment



Psychometric Assessment

- Series of tests that measure candidates' strengths, areas for development, values, personality, motivations and interests
- Developed & interpreted by trained psychologists
- Provide information about selection, training and development of candidates employees
- Can be used as a part of assessment centres or separately

Psychometric Assessment

- Psychometric assessment can include:
 - Cognitive ability
 - Abstract reasoning
 - Verbal reasoning
 - Numerical reasoning
 - Spatial reasoning
 - Personality
 - Interests
 - Job specific tests

Cognitive Ability

- Cognitive Ability (or aptitude testing)
 - Usually timed assessments
 - Definite right/wrong answers
- Abstract Reasoning
 - Measure innate intelligence
 - Measure a candidate's ability to learn new information and problem solve
 - E.g., identify complex patterns



Cognitive Ability

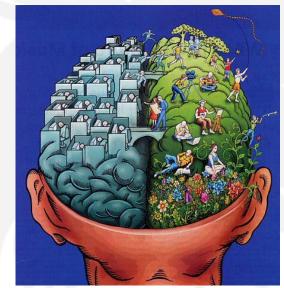
- Verbal Reasoning
 - Measure a candidate's ability to work with the English language
 - E.g., the meaning of words and proverbs
- Numerical Reasoning
 - Measure a candidate's ability to understand and interpret numerical problems
 - E.g., identifying patterns "3, 6, 9, ..., 15, 18"

Cognitive Ability

- Spatial reasoning
 - Measure a candidate's ability to mentally manipulate and rotate 2D and 3D objects

Personality

- Measure work preferences and personality style and the way we
 - typically behave
- Not typically timed
- No right or wrong answers
- Be honest



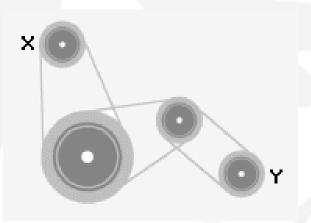
Interest Assessments

- Measure career interests
- Not typically timed
- No right or wrong answers



Job Specific Assessments

- Certain roles <u>may</u> require you to sit tests that are job specific, for example:
 - Mechanical reasoning for engineers
 - Technical skills for accountants
 - Critical reasoning



How are the Assessments Administered?

- Administered by a trained professional
- Battery of tests
- Pencil and paper or online
- Individually or in a group setting
- Controlled standardised environment



Why Are They Used?

- Provide information about :
 - Strengths and areas for development
 - A candidate's suitability for the role
 - Work style preferences
- Allows candidate to show off further skills to the employer

How Can I Prepare?

- Generally cannot study for psychometric assessment
- Good night sleep
- Eat breakfast
- Allow plenty of time to get to the testing centre – check for parking

Additional Tips

- Listen carefully to the instructions given by the test administrator. If you are unsure what you are required to do, ask.
- Read the instructions to each assessment carefully before you begin.
- If you are completing paper and pencil assessment, ensure that your answers match up with the correct question item
- During the testing, take breaks when you need them (if permitted to do so). Do NOT take breaks during timed tests

Contact Us

- Want to see what happens in a real assessment centre? Want to know how graduate employers select candidates?
 - Email the Careers & Employment Team
 (careers@usq.edu.au) to make an appointment to
 watch The Assessment Centre Video.

Next Week

Networking – How to Expand Your Contacts!

12 noon

Wednesday 1st June

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