

Fire Assessment Center Prep Introduction

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PROMOTIONAL EXCELLENCE
FOR ALL RANKS

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Course Objectives

- Introduction to public speaking
- Purpose & history of Assessments Centers
- Describe a job task analysis
- Define dimensions
- Demonstrate a problem solving model
- Understand assessors and ratings
- Implement timing strategies
- Explain key word and phrase list
- Identify assessment center exercises
- Explain the Assessment Center triangle
- Preparation techniques and suggestions

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Purpose of the Assessment Center

- Valid, fair and legally defensible
- No adverse impact
- To choose the best person for the position
- Think of the best officers in your department...this is what the Assessment Center process identifies
- How would your elite officers handle the situations encountered in the Assessment Center

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History of the Assessment Center

- Around for over 100 years
- Organizational psychology based
- Used by:
 - Germany for military officers WW-I
 - CIA to select spies in WW-II
 - 1950's ATT Management
 - 1970's public safety promotions
 - Presently used by 1,000's of organizations

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Job Task Analysis

Why is Necessary

How is it Done

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| ◦ Test validation | ◦ Interviews |
| ◦ Identify <u>KSAPC's</u> | ◦ Surveys |
| ◦ Identify tasks | ◦ Job descriptions |
| ◦ Assign weights | ◦ Observations |
| ◦ Identify dimensions | ◦ Random sampling |

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Sample JTA Tasks

- Preparing for tour
- Responding to alarms
- Commanding incidents
- Monitoring, evaluating and counseling
- Training and coaching
- Information gathering
- Report writing and documentation
- Record keeping
- Policy enforcement
- Community relations
- Conducting investigations

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DIMENSIONS

- Used by raters to measure the Knowledge/Skills/Abilities/Personal Characteristics needed to carry out tasks identified in the Job Task Analysis
- Contain a title and definition
- Reproduced in the Assessment Center
- Raters measure dimensions demonstrated by the candidates
- Raters don't compare candidates
- Average is 5 dimensions per exercise

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Possible Dimensions

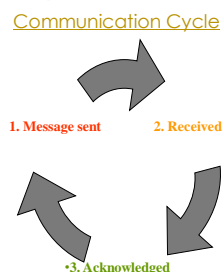
- Behavior flexibility
- Composure & stress tolerance
- Conflict resolution
- Community sensitivity
- Decision-making
- Decisiveness
- Ethics & integrity
- Interpersonal skills
- Judgment
- Leadership
- Management & supervision skills
- Oral communication & presentation skills
- Organizational sensitivity
- Planning & organization
- Problem-analysis
- Problem-solving
- Public relations
- Supervisory knowledge
- Tactical knowledge
- Written communication

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Communication Verbal/Non-Verbal/Written

- Ability to communicate accurately and clearly
- To convey information, ideas, tasks, directives to groups or individuals
- Clear, concise, proper grammar, displays self-assurance, command presence
- Appropriate pace, avoid distracting mannerisms, proper volume, appropriate vocabulary and sentence structure



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Communication Recommendations

- | <u>Do's</u> | <u>Don'ts</u> |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Logical flow | • Unorganized |
| • Proper grammar | • Rambling |
| • Clear pronunciation | • Distracting mannerisms |
| • Remain calm | • Ums, uhs, you knows |
| • Maintain eye contact | • Too fast or too slow |
| • Listen attentively | • Poor grammar |
| • Non-verbal messages | • Being Inattentive |
| • Command presence | • Poor posture |
| • Display enthusiasm | • Inappropriate gestures |

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Problem/Information Analysis

- Ability to understand, interpret and compare information from various sources
- Ability to identify related items and issues
- Ability to assimilate new information
- Conducts appropriate investigations
- Reviews all relevant information
- Apply information from all sources to determine best course of action

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Problem/Info Analysis Recommendations

- What is given vs. what you seek
 - Must be 100% correct
 - Must use and prioritize 100% of information given
 - Gather information and fact find
 - Seek all sides to issues
 - Refer to policies, SOG's, standards

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Problem/Info Analysis *Recommendations*

- Utilize all sources of information
- Obtain additional information
- Assimilate new info into existing framework
- Identify related issues
- Recall details & track events in time
- Use names and dates as presented
- Determine underlying causes vs. symptoms
- **Do not make mistakes**

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Interpersonal Skills

- Show awareness, sensitivity, tact, empathy
- Respect the ideas of others
- Relates to people of varied backgrounds
- Discipline as necessary while maintaining relationships
- Interact with others to gain trust, respect and mutual understanding
- Establish & maintain cooperative working relationships
- Manage & resolve conflicts in a constructive manner

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Interpersonal Skills *Recommendations*

- Establish rapport and maintain trust
- Provide constructive feedback
- Put self in others place
- Follow rules of courtesy
- Listen attentively & avoid interruptions
- Show awareness of personal differences
- Lead subordinates & provide development
- Demonstrate sensitivity
- Honor confidentiality

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Judgment & Decision Making

- Determines when a decision must be made
- Willing to make decisions
- Evaluates situations to determine best plan
- Generates alternative approaches to situations
- Makes appropriate inferences
- States "Why" i.e. policy, SOG or standard
- Considers consequences for courses of action
- Evaluates decisions and follows up to assure compliance

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Judgment & Decision Making *Recommendations*

- Interpret data & identify causes of problems
- Develop & evaluate alternative solutions
- Identify consequences; short & long term
- Identify obstacles and contingencies
- Conduct Risk vs. Benefit analysis
- Determines best course of action
- Explains **why** decisions are made
- **Validates** decisions by identifying policy, SOG's or standards

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Planning & Organizing

- Defines objectives
- Identifies appropriate solutions
- Establishes timelines
- Develops a strategy
- Uses common sense and available resources
- Anticipates obstacles
- Develops contingencies
- Structures priorities and manages time

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S.M.A.R.T.C.O.

- **S-SPECIFIC**
- **M-MEASURABLE**
- **A-ATTAINABLE**
- **R-ROLES/RESOURCES**
- **T-TIMELINE** (S,S,D) (R,R,R)
- **C-CONSEQUENCES** (of action or lack of action)
- **C-CONTINGENCIES** i.e. back up plan
- **O-OBSTACLES** (anticipated & unanticipated)

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Planning & Organizing *Recommendations*

- **SMARTCO**
- Define objectives
- Prioritize steps
- Develop a timeline
- Monitor & follow-up
- Ensure compliance
- Keep others informed

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Leadership

- Effectively supervise others, i.e.
 - Directing
 - Coaching
 - Supporting
 - Delegating
- Demonstrate thorough knowledge of policies, SOG's and standards
- Motivate, challenge & mentor subordinates
- Provide constructive feedback
- Take responsibility for the work product

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Leadership *Recommendations*

- Recognize multiple roles of a leader
- Demonstrate knowledge and consistent application of policies, SOG's & standards
- Challenge subordinates
- Effectively delegate
- Identify employee development opportunities

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Problem Solving Model

1. Identify the main Point
 - a. Differentiate signs and symptoms from underlying causes
2. Gather facts, conduct research, analyze data, (information analysis)
 - a. Who, what, when, where, why, how
 - b. Policies-SOG's-standards, employee files, run reports, interviews etc...
3. Identify/evaluate Options & available resources
4. Implement action Plan (**SMARTCO**)
5. Follow-up to ensure success

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Sample Scenario *Problem Solving Model*

- The response times at station xx are below average for the entire battalion. You have just been assigned to this station as a new Officer. The Battalion chief is concerned about the response times and wants improvement.

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Who Are the Assessors



- Same rank or above
- From outside departments
- Limited training
- Limited knowledge of your SOP's
- Look for common ground, i.e. NIMS
- Award points based on **dimensions**
- Halo vs. Horn

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Sample Grading Format

- Sample Rating on 1 to 7 scale
 - 1 Poor
 - 2 Clearly needs improvement
 - 3 Competent but needs improvement
 - 4 Competent
 - 5 Good
 - 6 Very Good
 - 7 Superior



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Timing Critical for Success

- Time is a limiting factor
- Time constraints for each exercise
- Use every second
- Preparation time vs. delivery time
- Going under or going over on time
 - which is worse and why



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Words Words Words

verbalize, verbalize, verbalize

- Raters score only on what is said and how the words relate to dimensions
- Use adjectives and action verbs
- Speak in terms of position being tested for
- Develop a key word list (CROP)
- Develop a key phrase list for each exercise
- Practice using your key words and phrases

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Suggested Words "CROP"

Key Words	Key Words	Key Words	Key Words
Commitment	Roles & Responsibility	Organization	Performance
Confidence	Review	Obstacles	Planning
Consequences	Revise	Outcomes	Plan of Action
Chain of Command	Reward	Opportunity	Praise

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Key Phrases

- Develop key words into phrases
- Develop phrase list for each exercise
- Presentation phrases:
 - Opening, credentialing, summary, closing
- SCRIP phrases:
 - EAP, resources, underlying issue, commitment
- Tactical phrases:
 - command, resources, incident priorities, strategic goals
- Transitional phrases:
 - "my next point is"
 - "to summarize"

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Assessment Center Exercises

- Tactical or Emergency scenario
- Subordinate counseling
- Presentations
- In-Basket
- Interviews
- Situational responses

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Rules of Engagement

- Follow the rules of each exercise
- TIMING for all events
 - Preparation time and presentation time
- Responses may be verbal or written
- Static events or role players
- Combination of static & modified static
- Live assessors vs. video tape
- Proper Practice Prevents Poor Performance

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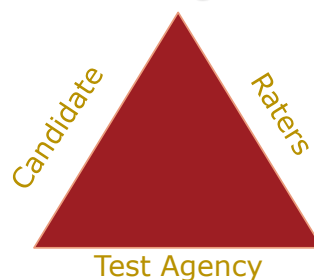
Practical Application *Recommendations*

- Identify current issues in your agency
- Practice the problem solving model
- Video yourself, hone your skills
- If every step doesn't fit, leave it out
- Preparation reduces anxiety
 - competence increase confidence
- Proper Practice Prevents Poor Performance

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Assessment Center Triangle



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Summary

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SMARTCO *Practice Scenarios*

- Bob Merit a 12-year veteran Lieutenant was given orders on a fire last shift to ventilate the windows on side Delta. However, he also ventilated the windows on sides Bravo and Charlie. When he was asked about this he stated that he had a new rookie and was showing him how to ventilate.

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SMARTCO

Practice Scenarios

- You arrive as a Captain at a fire alarm with a rescue unit already on scene. You notice the Rescue Lieutenant is not wearing his bunker gear and neither is his crew, you say something to him and he tells you that is the way his old Lieutenant did it.

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Discipline

- **"It is not the will to win that matters- everyone has that. It's the will to prepare to win that matters." -Coach Paul 'Bear' Bryant.**



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