

**Advocate**

TRAINING AND  
CONSULTANCY

# Advocate Training and Consultancy Ltd

## Assessment Centres

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## Assessment Centres

As part of your recruitment process Advocate is able to provide Assessment Centres. Assessment Centres are a process not a place. Generally, it comprises of a number of exercises or simulations which are designed to replicate the tasks and demands of the job for which a candidate is being considered. The exercises or simulations are designed for the candidate to undertake them either on their own or in a group. During the exercises they are observed by assessors.

We provide a complete process for conducting an Assessment Centre, from design and delivery services, competency matrix design, assessor training, exercise design and testing. Even if an organisation has no prior experience of this most effective assessment method we can design and manage the whole process from scratch using either our own established procedures and assessment tools, or designing entirely new and highly organisationally relevant systems and exercises.

Our assessment centres stress the developmental aspect of assessment. This means we use a collaborative approach; this involves the individual actively participating in the process rather than being a passive recipient. A lot of the assessment work done is carried out by the participants themselves and the major function of the centre is to provide the participants with feedback that is as much developmental as judgmental in nature

Assessment centres:

- Have a pass/fail criteria and are geared towards filling a job vacancy
- Address an organisational need and are geared to meet that need
- Have fewer assessors and more participants
- Involve line managers as assessors
- Have less emphasis placed on self-assessment
- Focus on what the candidate can do now
- Involve analysis and feedback is given at a later date
- involve the organisation having control over the information obtained

## The Process

Before an assessment centre takes place there is usually a first round of interviews. They are used to select and eliminate candidates who do and do not match the criteria. The candidates who match the criteria then attend the Assessment Centre. This enables a number of different recruiters to see the candidates over a longer period of time. The assessors then have the chance to see what a candidate can do, rather than what they say they can do, in a variety of situations.

It is worth noting that the assessment centre is probably one of the most valid predictors of performance in a job and, if correctly structured, is probably one of the fairest and most objective means of gathering information upon which a selection decision can be based. There is no substitute for objectively observing and systematically measuring how people actually perform "on the ground". A well designed Assessment Centre is the most effective tool available for assessing individuals in both individual and group based environments for selection or development.

Assessment Centres typically include a number of elements:

- Social/informal events.

This is an opportunity for the candidates to find out about the organisation and to ask questions in a more casual setting. It gives the opportunity for the recruiters to observe how candidates interact with others. These events may appear informal and not part of the true assessment procedure but it is a good opportunity to view the candidates in a more relaxed environment. The assessor has to remember that they are representing the organisation.

- Tests and exercises



Designed to reveal potential. Measuring candidates against a set of competencies. The exercises are designed to assess one or more of the competencies.

- Group Discussions

Candidates are brought together as a committee or project team, where they have to make a recommendation. Candidates may be assigned specific roles to play in

the group or it may be structured so that all the candidates have the same basic information.

- In Tray.

This type of exercise is undertaken by candidates individually. The activity comprises a number of tasks, the candidate is placed in the job role and is asked to deal with the tasks.

- Interview Simulations / Role Plays

Candidates meet individually with a role player. Their brief is either to gather information to form a view and make a decision, or alternatively, to engage in discussion with the person to come to a resolution.

- Case Studies / Analysis Exercises

In this type of exercise the candidate is presented with the task of making a decision about a particular business case. They are provided with a large amount of information. Their recommendation or decision is usually communicated in the form of a brief written report and/or a presentation.



- Psychometric testing

Candidates complete test to assess their personality and to explore traits. This helps identify whether someone is suitable for the role, as well their eligibility for the task.

The elements above are to demonstrate the types of exercises that may be encountered in an assessment centre.

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There is no such thing as a 'standard' Assessment Centre, however, all demand considerable commitment from the host organisation. If you consider that an Assessment Centre may be appropriate for your needs, please contact us directly for advice.

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