

Civil Service 101 Assessment Centers How They Work

Bruce Ure

Ure Consulting Group

Ret. Deputy Chief of Police

What is an Assessment Center?

- ✓ **An assessment center consists of a standardized evaluation of multiple behaviors based on multiple inputs.**
- ✓ **Multiple behavioral simulation exercises.**
- ✓ **Multiple trained outside assessors.**
- ✓ **Scoring – Statistical aggregation or consensus meeting.**

Best Industry Reference

**Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment
Center Operations**

International Taskforce on Assessment Center Guidelines

Training

Candidate Training

- ✓ *Usually the afternoon before*

Assessor Training

- ✓ *Mandatory*
- ✓ *Usually the evening before*
- ✓ *Working dinner works well*

Dimensions

Examples of dimensions you could measure:

- ✓ **Leadership**
- ✓ **Problem Solving and Analysis**
- ✓ **Oral Communications**
- ✓ **Written Communications**
- ✓ **Interpersonal Dynamics**

Candidate Feedback Forms

Candidate Feedback Form

Instructions to Assessors: Please list four (4) positive and four (4) negative behaviors that the candidate displayed during performance in this exercise. It will provide the candidate more information if you elaborate as much as possible.

Candidate _____

Exercise _____

POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Leaderless Group Exercise

Measured Dimensions

- ✓ *Leadership*
- ✓ *Problem Solving and Analysis*
- ✓ *Interpersonal Dynamics*

Sample Exercise

In this exercise, you will participate in a group discussion. Your current position within the Anywhere Police Department is Corporal. You will have a maximum of **30 minutes** to discuss the topics and prepare the required proposal. No one on this committee has been placed in charge.

The Chief of Police is in the process of reviewing and revising the attached Anywhere Police Department's Social Networking Policy (2.01). He is requesting this group review his specific thoughts and ideas on revising the policy, and provide specific feedback. He is looking for absolute group consensus.

Again, your final goal is to:

- ✓ Discuss and come to a consensus on what this group's position on the proposed revisions and "thoughts" provided by the Chief.
- ✓ Discuss and come to a consensus on any additional policy areas of concern that this group identifies.
- ✓ EACH member of this ad hoc group is required to maintain their notes on the group's decision. In other words, the selection of a group "scribe" or note taker for the group as a whole is not acceptable. Each member must record the group's decisions/input individually.

Professional Interview Exercise

Measured Dimensions

- ✓ *Leadership*
- ✓ *Problem Solving and Analysis*
- ✓ *Oral Communications*

Sample Questions

Leadership Dimension

- ✓ What have you done in the position of patrol officer that shows initiative?
- ✓ What have you done to prepare yourself for the position of Corporal?
- ✓ Is it your job to motivate employees? If so, how will you specifically motivate your officers?
- ✓ What have been the most memorable accomplishments in your career?
- ✓ What have you done in your position of Police Officer to demonstrate your understanding and ability to competently perform the duties of Corporal?
- ✓ What is the first thing you would do as a Patrol Corporal? Why?

Problem Solving/Analysis Dimension

- ✓ What was the most difficult work situation you have ever faced as a Police Officer? Why?
- ✓ How do you stay current with Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice issues?
- ✓ What has been your most important work-related idea?
- ✓ How would you handle an officer who has a poor attitude?

Role Play Exercise

Measured Dimensions

- ✓ *Leadership*
- ✓ *Problem Solving and Analysis*
- ✓ *Oral Communication*

Sample Scenario

In this exercise, you will participate in a role play exercise. Your position is Sergeant in the Anywhere Police Department, assigned to the Patrol Division.

You were assigned to the day shift. It is Tuesday, September 16 at 3:45 p.m.

You have been informed by several officers assigned to day shift that Sergeant Crystal O’Kane constantly complains and berates the Anywhere Police Department Administration. You have been told that she “always has a better idea than the brass.” Another sergeant has recently come to you and told you that she even openly gripes about some of your personal decisions. Though her work performance and productivity is (barely) acceptable, she is accurately described as “a day head that is no ball of fire.” You have decided to confront and counsel her on this issue. She has just checked out at the PD and will be at your office in a moment. Note that this is not intended to be a disciplinary session.

Sergeant Crystal O’Kane Background:

14 years tenure at Anywhere PD.
Considered to be a “acceptable” worker by her previous Lieutenant.
No complaints on Sergeant O’Kane to the best of your knowledge.
Divorced (2 years ago) with two small children.

Written Exercise

Measured Dimensions

- ✓ *Problem Solving and Analysis*
- ✓ *Written Communications*

Sample Scenario

The Chief of Police and Deputy Chief have been observing agency traffic stops. They believe that there is a lack of officer consistency regarding moving vehicle traffic stops. They have requested that you, as the newly promoted Corporal, prepare a comprehensive essay regarding this topic that will be forwarded to all current and future Patrol Division police officers.

Your goal is to write a comprehensive, detailed essay that provides direction on the proper way for patrol officers to initiate and complete a proper, safe vehicle stop. Include as many different aspects as possible, such as officer safety considerations, etc. Remember to elaborate as much as possible, as the Chief and Deputy Chief are not looking for a “checklist guide.”

Remember that this is a paper which should include an opening paragraph, a body, and a conclusion paragraph.

Graphic Biography Exercise

Measured Dimensions

- ✓ *Leadership*
- ✓ *Oral Communications*

You are being asked to provide the assessors with a 5 minute presentation. The topic of the presentation is a graphic biography on yourself. This biography should include visual aids and is designed to allow you to “sell” yourself to the assessor panel. Use good judgment in determining what material you should use while making your presentation. Remember, you are competing against other candidates for the position of Police Corporal, Sergeant, or Lieutenant with the Anywhere Police Department.

You will be furnished with index cards, poster board, and magic markers to assist you in your presentation.

YOU ARE TO TURN IN ALL OF YOUR NOTES, INDEX CARDS, POSTER, ETC AT THE END OF THE PREPARATION PERIOD. THESE WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO YOUR PRESENTATION

You will have **approximately 1 hour** to prepare yourself for the presentation.

Sample Score Sheet

Sergeant Mike Smith				FINAL SCORE		70.09
	Leadership	Oral Comm	Written Comm	Problem Solving	Interpersonal Dynamics	
Leaderless Group	5			4	7	
Role Play		8		6	7	
Professional Interview	8	6		5		
Written Exercise			8	3		
Graphic Presentation	7	8				
Total Points	20	22	8	18	14	
Possible Points	117					
Raw Score	82					
Scored By:				Verified By:		

Example of Final Scores

Sergeant Candidate	Education Points	Experience Points	Examination Score	Assessment Center Score	Final Score
Bennett	5	5.0	77.00	0.00	48.50
Jones	5	1.5	64.00	0.00	38.50
Carroll	5	2.0	86.00	0.00	50.00
Smith	5	5.0	74.00	0.00	47.00
Hammond	2	3.5	80.00	0.00	45.50
Mitchell	5	5.0	69.00	0.00	44.50
Roberts	5	5.0	85.00	0.00	52.50
Thompson	5	3.5	65.00	0.00	41.00
Brown	0	4.0	80.00	0.00	44.00
Berman	5	2.0	66.00	0.00	40.00

Contact Information

Bruce Ure

President ~ Ure Consulting Group

(214) 878-4584

Bruce_Ure@yahoo.com

UreConsultingGroup.com

