ASSESSMENT CENTRES

An Introduction

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TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- Assessment Centres Defined

- Differences between Assessment and Development Centres

- The Design Model

- Activities associated with Assessment Centres

DEFINING ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- The following are the essential elements for a process to be considered an assessment centre:

    - Job Analysis
        - A job analysis of relevant behaviors must be conducted to determine the dimensions, competencies, attributes, and job performance indices important to job success in order to identify what should be evaluated by the assessment centre.

    - Behavioural Classification
        - Behaviours displayed by participants must be classified into meaningful and relevant categories such as dimensions, attributes, characteristics, aptitudes, qualities, skills, abilities, competencies, and knowledge.

    - Informed Consent of Participant

DEFINING ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- The following are the essential elements for a process to be considered an assessment centre:

  - Assessment Techniques
    - The techniques used in the assessment centre must be designed to provide information for evaluating the dimensions previously determined by the job analysis.

  - Multiple Assessments
    - Multiple assessment techniques must be used. These can include tests, interviews, questionnaires, sociometric devices, and simulations.

DEFINING ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- The following are the essential elements for a process to be considered an assessment centre:

  - Simulations
    - The assessment techniques must include a sufficient number of job related simulations to allow opportunities to observe the candidate's behavior related to each competency/dimension being assessed. At least one—and usually several—job related simulations must be included in each assessment centre.

  - Assessors
    - Multiple assessors must be used to observe and evaluate each assessee.

DEFINING ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- The following are the essential elements for a process to be considered an assessment centre:

  - Assessment Matrix
    - A matrix should be drawn up to indicate which competencies are measured by which simulation exercises and by which psychometric instruments.
    - As a rule of thumb, each competency should be measured by more than one AC component.

	Structured Interview	Group Exercise	Role Play	Case Study	Verbal Ability	Numerical Ability
Analytical thinking				X	X	X
Business and commercial awareness		X		X		
Forward thinking	X			X		
Influencing and persuading		X	X	X		
Motivating others		X	X			
Customer focus	X			X		
Developing others	X		X			
Driving results through others	X		X			
Self control	X	X	X	X		

DEFINING ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- The following are the essential elements for a process to be considered an assessment centre:

  - Assessor Training
    - Assessors must receive thorough training and demonstrate performance.

  - Recording Behaviour
    - A systematic procedure must be used by assessors to record specific behavioural observations accurately at the time of observation.

DEFINING ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- The following are the essential elements for a process to be considered an assessment centre:

  - Reports
    - Assessors must prepare a report of the observations made during each exercise before the integration discussion or statistical integration.

  - Data Integration
    - The integration of behaviours must be based on a pooling of information from assessors or through a statistical integration process validated in accordance with professionally accepted standards.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- Characteristics:
  - Standardised evaluation of behaviour based on multiple inputs

  - Several trained observers and techniques are used

  - Judgments about behvaiour are made from specifically developed assessment simulations

  - Judgments are pooled in a meeting among the assessors or by a statistical integration process

  - Discussion of results in evaluations of performance of the assessees on the dimensions/competencies or other variables that the assessment centre is designed to measure

ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- have a pass/fail criteria
- are geared towards filing a job vacancy
- address an immediate organisational 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
- are geared to meet the needs of the organisation
- assign the role of judge to assessors
- place emphasis on selection with little or no developmental feedback and low up
- give feedback at a later date
- involve the organisation having control over the information obtained
- have very little pre-centre briefing
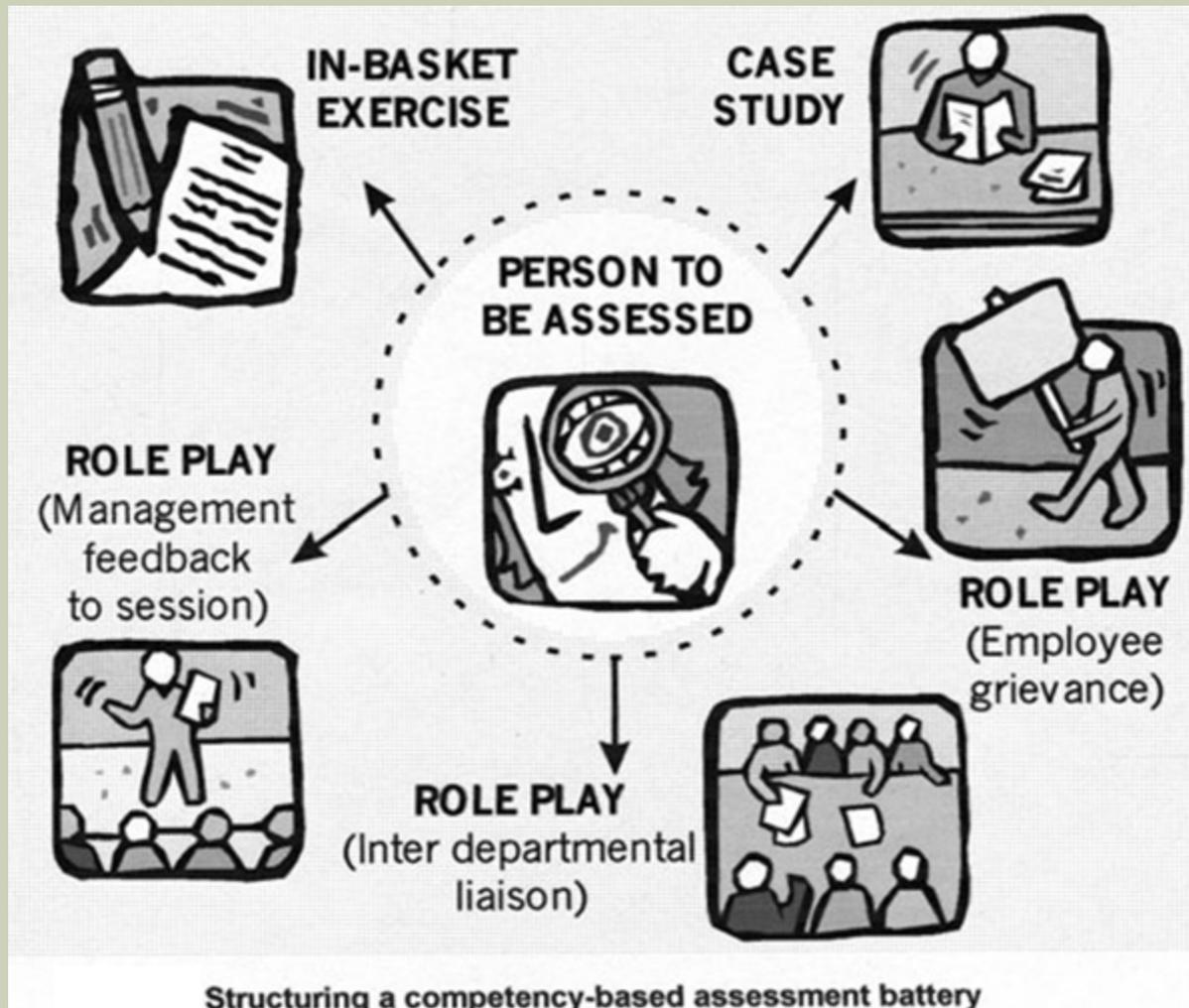- tend to be used with external candidates

DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

- do not have a pass/fail criteria
- are geared towards developing the individual
- address a longer term need
- have a 1:1 ratio of assessor to participant
- do not have line managers as assessors
- have a greater emphasis placed on self-assessment
- focus on potential
- are geared to meet needs of the individual as well as the organisation
- assign the role of facilitator to assessors
- place emphasis on developmental feedback and follow up with little or no selection function
- give feedback immediately
- involve the individual having control over the information obtained
- have a substantial pre-centre briefing
- tend to be used with internal candidates

ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH ASSESSMENT CENTRES

- Case studies
- In-basket exercise
- Job sample test/Skills test
- Direct observation
- Oral and written tests
- Portfolios
- Projects and assignments
- Questioning and demonstration
- Simulation and role play
- Trainability tests

IN-BASKET EXERCISE

CASE STUDY

PERSON TO BE ASSESSED

ROLE PLAY (Management feedback to session)

ROLE PLAY (Employee grievance)

ROLE PLAY (Inter departmental liaison)

Structuring a competency-based assessment battery

THE DESIGN MODEL (SCHLEBUSCH & ROODT, 2008)

- Propose a four-stage design model
  - Stage 1:
    - Analysis
  - Stage 2:
    - Design
  - Stage 3:
    - Implementation
  - Stage 4:
    - Evaluation

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ASSESSMENT CENTRE METHODS: SUSTAINING EVIDENCE-BASED TALENT MANAGEMENT

THE DESIGN MODEL (SCHLEBUSCH & ROODT, 2008)

- Propose a four-stage design model
  - Stage 1: Analysis
    - Conduct a needs analysis
    - Determine organisational effectiveness
    - Job analysis
    - Outcome of should be competency profiles

  - Stage 2: Design
    - Design simulations
    - Design AC
    - Pilot-test AC
    - Outcome should be a Functional AC

THE DESIGN MODEL
(SCHLEBUSCH & ROODT, 2008)

- Propose a four-stage design model
  - Stage 3: Implementation
    - Before
    - During
    - After
    - Outcome should be an Operational AC

  - Stage 4: Evaluation
    - Content evaluation
    - Validation and reliability analysis
    - Outcome should be a Validated AC

WHY DO ACS FAIL?

- Poor Planning
- Inadequate Job Analysis
- Weakly Defined Dimensions
- Poor Exercises
- No Pretest Evaluation
- Unqualified Assessors
- Inadequate Assessor Training
- Inadequate Candidate Preparation
- Sloppy Behaviour Documentation and Scoring
- Misuse of Results

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS: SITUATIONAL JUDGMENT TESTS (SJT)

"Your work is shared with a co-worker. You work every afternoon and the co-worker works every morning. The coworker is not doing a fair share of the work and as a result you have too much to do in the afternoon."

A. Ask the boss to handle it.
B. Talk with the co-worker and demand that the co-worker
C. do more work.
D. Decrease the amount of work you do.
E. Try to have a friendly, non-threatening meeting with the co-worker to divide the tasks.
F. Ask the boss to assign a different co-worker to you.

SJT EXAMPLE

"Your staff has very old computer equipment that compromises their work. New computer equipment arrives but it is only enough for 20% of your staff. Your superior tells you to take one of the new computers and divide up the rest as you see fit"

A. Distribute the new computers according to seniority of employees
B. Take one new computer for your self and allocate the rest based on the work needs of each employee
C. Have a draw and those who win get new computers
D. Give the new computers to those employees who are more productive
E. Meet with your staff and establish criteria for distributing the new computers

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS: TECHNOLOGY & DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

- E-trays
- Technology-enhanced assessment centres

- Development centres

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