

Development of the General Clerical Test Battery

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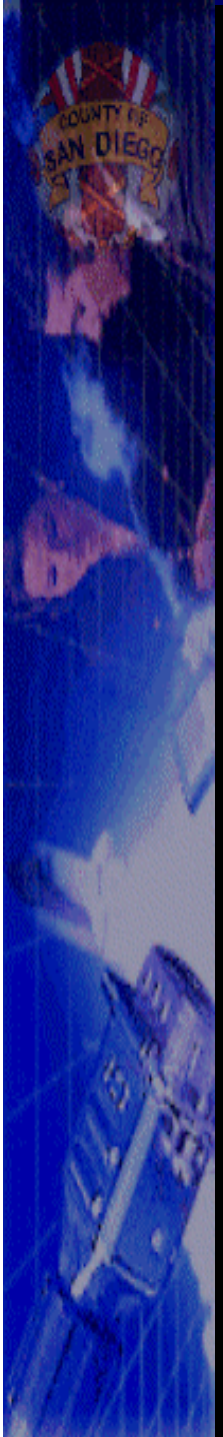
The Need to Provide More Efficient HR Practices

- Unemployment rate in San Diego County
 - 2.6% (40-year low)
- Increased competition from private sector
 - High-tech, high paying employers
- Previous assessment process for entry level clerical employees very cumbersome and time-consuming for both applicants and HR
- Target classifications: Entry level clerical
 - Approximately 1/3 of County of San Diego's 17,000 employees are in office/clerical classifications



Target Classifications

- **Administrative Secretary I**
- **Administrative Secretary II**
- **Booking Clerk**
- **Departmental Aide**
- **Departmental Clerk**
- **Intermediate Clerk Typist**
- **Jail Clerk**
- **Junior Clerk Typist**
- **Legal Procedures Clerk I**
- **Legal Support Assistant I**
- **Office Support Secretary**
- **Payroll Clerk**
- **Records Clerk**
- **Sheriff's Licensing Clerk I**
- **Sheriff's Records & ID Clerk I**



Objectives of General Clerical Test Battery (GCTB) Project

- Develop single written examination for entry level clerical classifications
 - Eliminate duplication in testing instruments
 - Save time and money for applicants and County
 - Continue to acknowledge unique emphases of each classification – weighted composite
- Streamline application process
 - Increase number of applicants
 - Improve customer service



First steps: Analysis of existing process

- Separate announcements, applications, information posted for each recruitment
- Group clerical recruitments not continuously posted
- Examinations for group and series recruitments not regularly scheduled – on “as needed” basis
- Applicants submit one application per recruitment
- Applicants take one written examination per recruitment



Analysis of existing written tests

- **91% of the items assessed general clerical knowledge, skills and abilities**
 - Filing skills
 - Reading comprehension
 - Following written instructions
 - Math skills
 - English skills
 - Checking and comparing
 - General office procedures
 - Following written instructions
- **Remaining 9% assessed specialized KSAs**
 - Payroll terminology
 - Legal terminology
 - Other
 - Military time conversion
 - Interviewing techniques
 - Reliabilities
 - .88 to .93



Test Development

- **Literature review**
- **Job analysis**
- **Item analysis of previous exams**
- **Score weights**
- **Development of new application packet**
- **Setting cut score**



Literature Review

- IPMA Technical Report: Development and Validation of the Clerical Series Examination Modules
- Standards for Educational And Psychological Testing (AERA, 1999)
- Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures (SIOP, 1987)
- Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978)



Job Analysis

- Task Analysis questionnaires sent and received from 30 subject matter experts
 - Update and assure accuracy of class specifications
- Tasks linked to knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs)
- KSAs analyzed for appropriateness for written test format
- Questionnaire sent to SMEs and incumbents for rating remaining KSAs



KSA Questionnaire

- Importance of KSA
 - 1-5: not important → extremely important
- Extent Needed
 - 1-3: not needed, learned on job, needed when hired
- Data obtained from 553 incumbents and 124 SMEs (48% & 54% response rate respectively)
- Decision rules
- Proportion of 4s and 5s (very important and extremely important) used to compute weights for each classification



KSA Questionnaire results (N = 677)

KSA	Ave. % “Very Important”	Ave. % “Needed When Hired”
Filing	81.1	76.7
Math	57.5	87.4
General Office	76.3	59.7
Checking & Comparing	75.7	74.2
English	88.0	96.6
Following Written Instr.	90.7	94.7
Reading comp	90.2	95.1
Computer skills	64.0	48.4
Reasoning	76.4	68.4

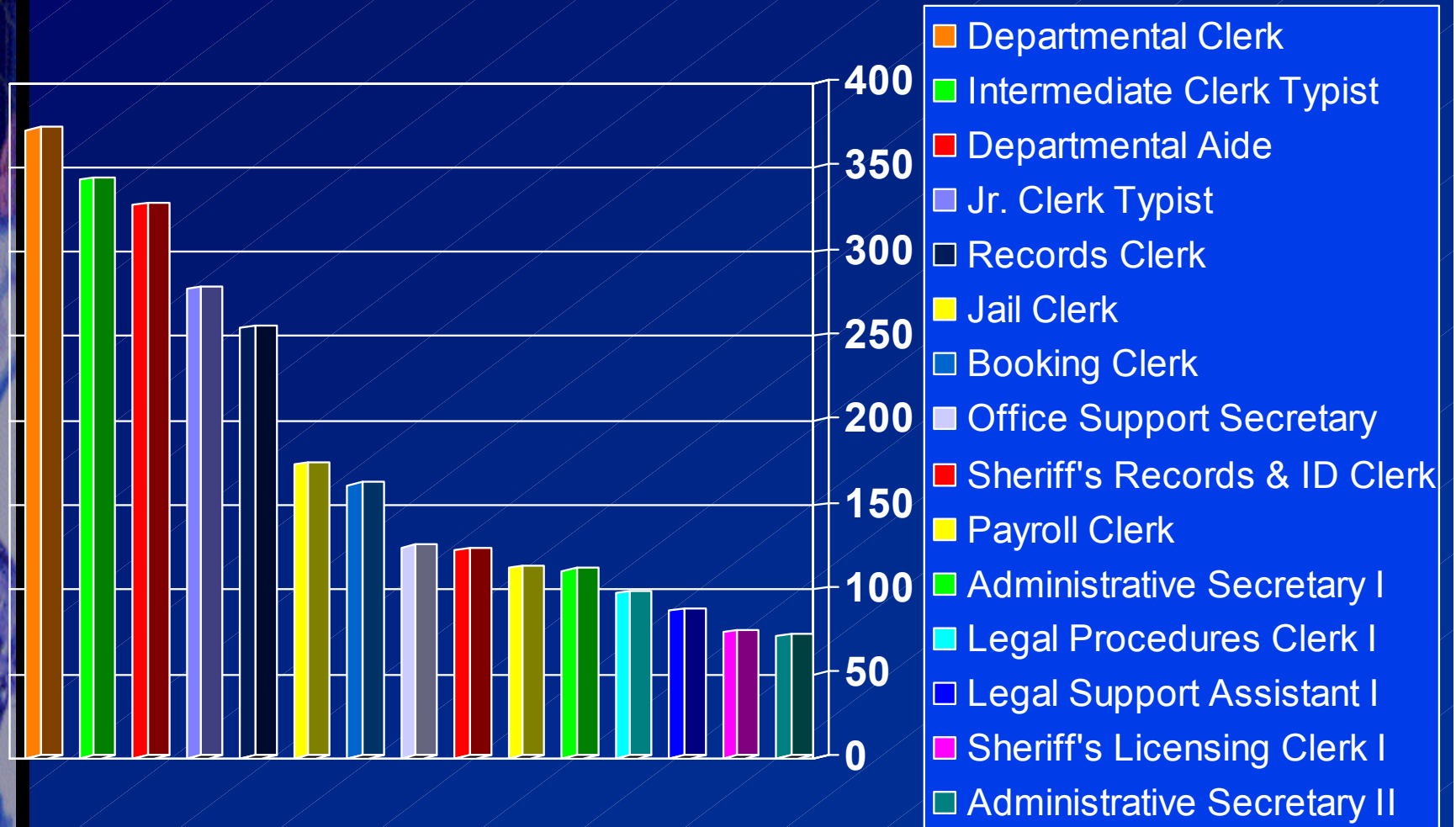
Variance in importance ratings

KSA	Ave%	Low%	High%
Filing	81.1	69.6	92.3
Math	57.5	42.9	92.3
General Office	76.3	65.2	90.4
Checking & Comparing	75.7	52.2	95.2
English	88.0	78.6	98.1
Following Written Instr.	90.7	81.1	100.0
Reading comp	90.2	84.6	100.0
Computer skills	64.0	43.5	83.3
Reasoning	76.4	57.1	84.6

Example of section weights

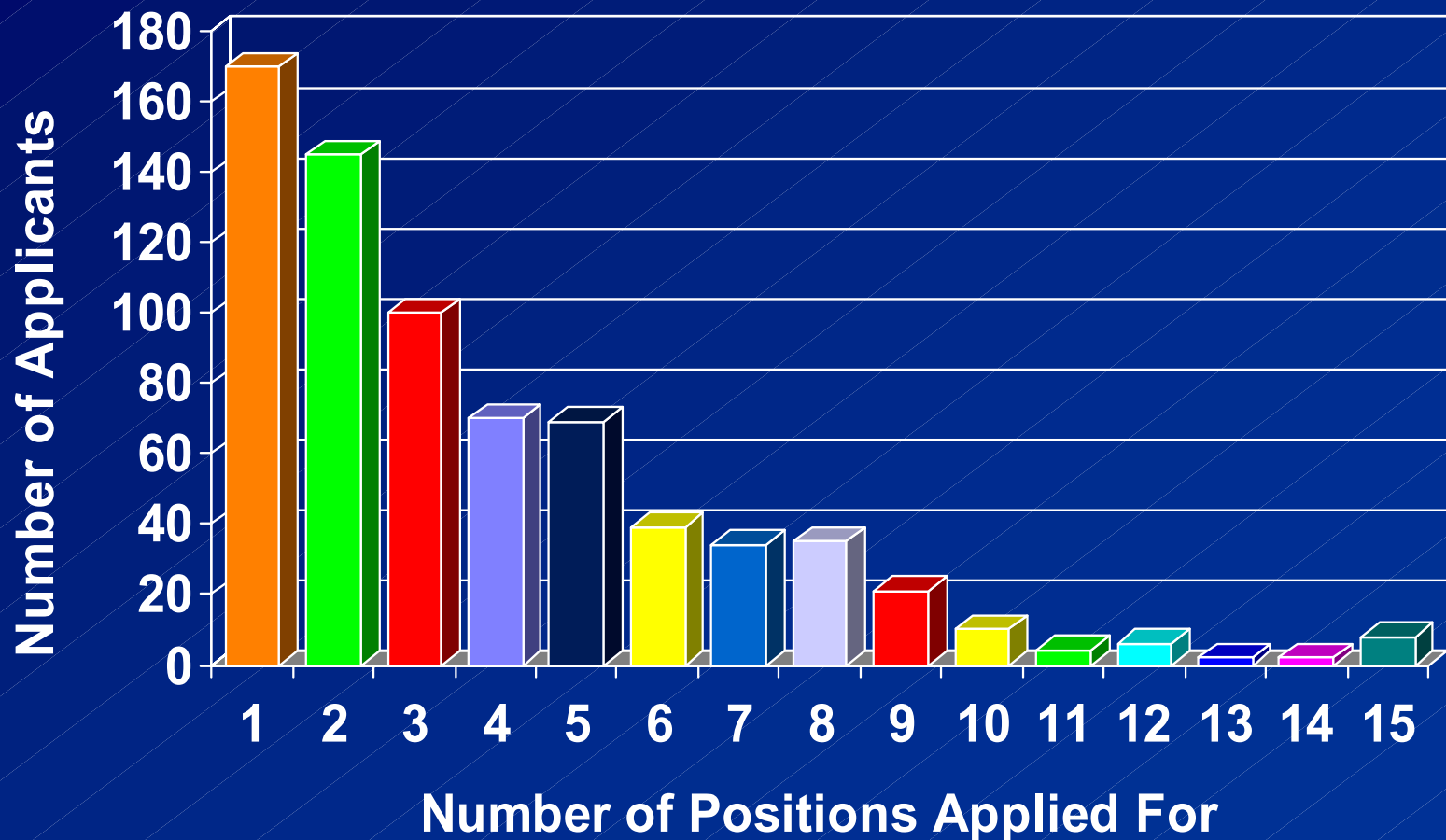
KSA	Raw score	Class 1 Weight	Class 1 Score	Class 2 Weight	Class 2 Score
Filing	7	1.15	8.05	1.40	9.8
Math	5	0.54	2.70	1.13	5.65
General Office	10	0.91	9.10	0.84	8.40
Checking & Comparing	14	1.14	15.96	1.23	17.22
English	15	1.41	21.15	0.84	12.6
Following Written Instr.	11	1.08	11.88	1.33	14.63
Reading comp	13	1.27	16.51	1.03	13.39
Computer skills	9	0.78	7.02	0.64	5.76
Reasoning	11	0.72	7.92	0.56	6.16
TOTAL	101		100.29		93.61

Applications for Clerical Support Positions (4/15/00 – 5/31/00)

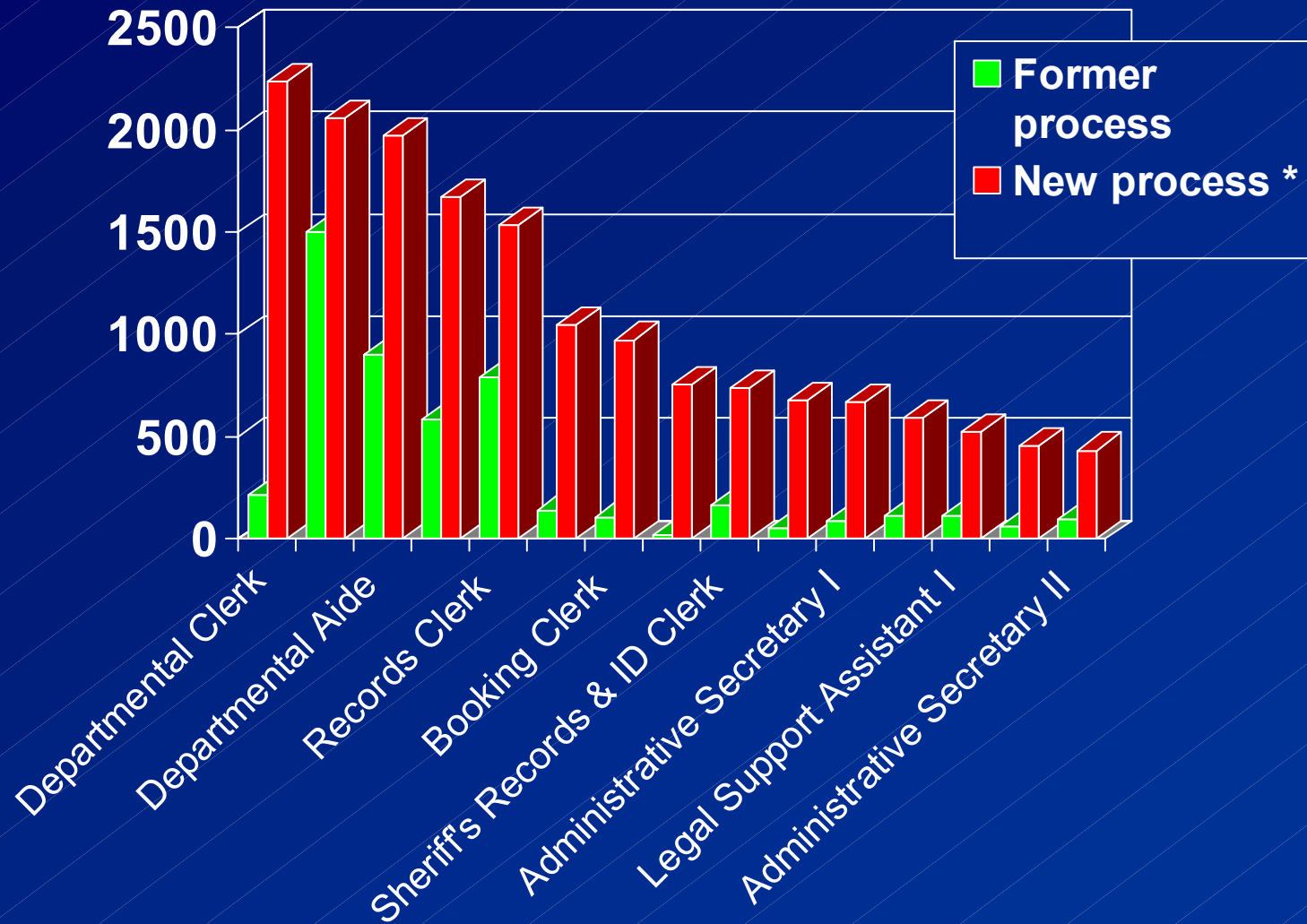


Applications for Clerical Support Positions under new process

($\bar{x} = 3.8$ classifications per applicant)



Annual number of applicants per classification



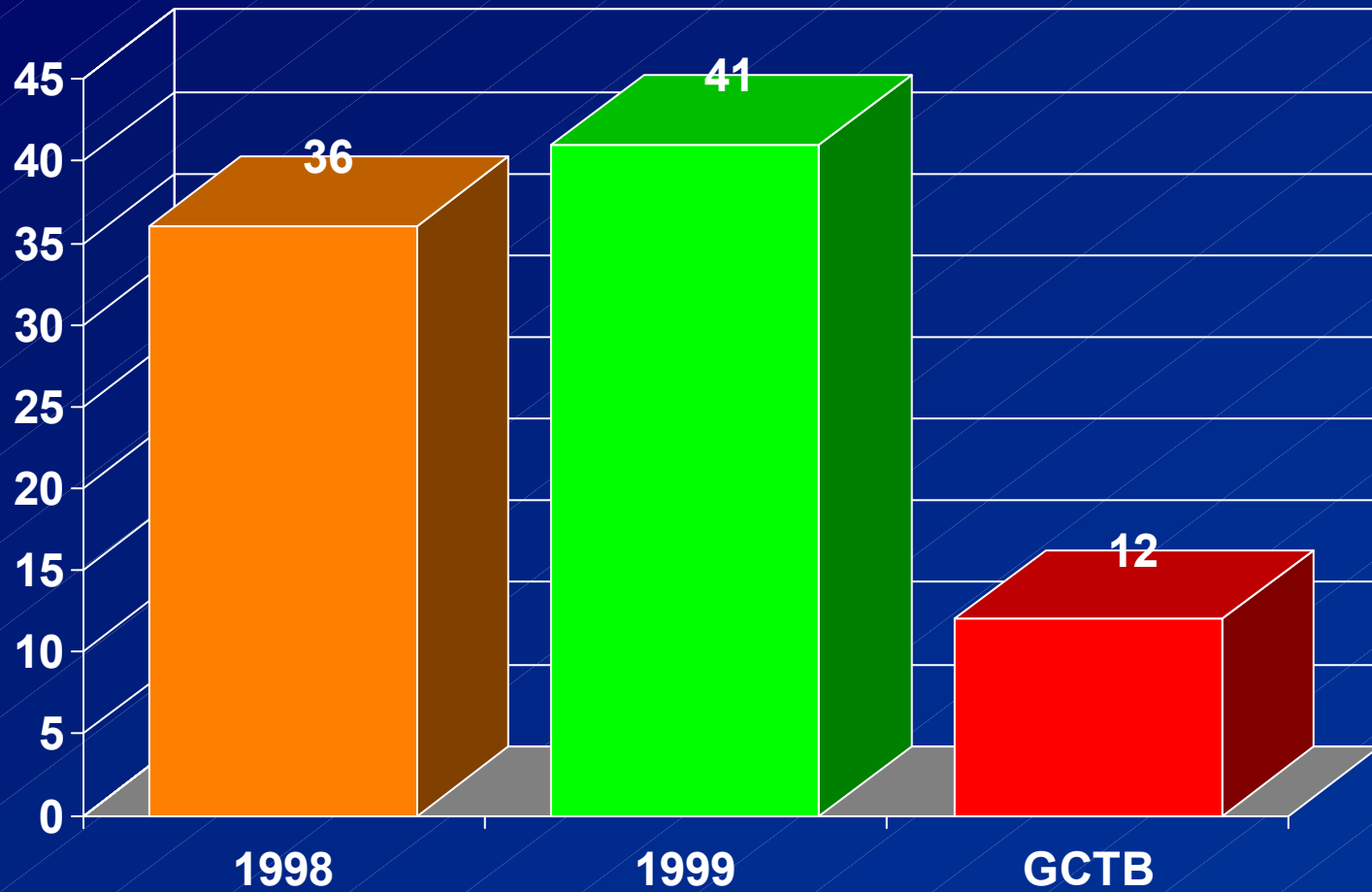
* Figures for new process are projected based on current applicant flow



Results of General Clerical Test Battery

- One test administered to assess knowledge, skills and abilities common to 15 entry level clerical classifications
 - 9 sections
 - 135 items
- Each section weighted to reflect what is most important to each classification
- Mean = 91.7 (68%)
- Reliability = .94 (N = 391)
- Passing score (weighted) = 83 (61%)

Number of clerical exams administered



Results of General Clerical Test Battery

Former process

- 76% of applicants applied for only one clerical position (1998)
- Qualified candidate took an average of 1.2 written examinations
- Lists of qualified candidates established at different times depending on classification
- Total of approximately 40 administrations per year

New process

- 24% of applicants apply for only one position
- Average applicant applies for 3.8 classifications
- Qualified candidate takes one test to qualify for an average of 3.1 classifications
- Lists of qualified candidates are refreshed each month for each classification
- Total of 12 administrations per year



Overall results

- Improved customer service for applicants
- Improved quality of employment lists for departments
- Faster turnaround time from application to hire
- Higher test reliability
- More effective and efficient process for Department of Human Resources