

*Utilizing Non-Assessment Personnel
as Assessors: Training Others in the
Art of Assessment*



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Assessment v. Administration



The role of assessor includes administration of the selection system:

- Obtaining test materials
- Conducting the assessment
- Evaluating the applicant's performance on the assessment
- Communicating results to the applicant
- Ensuring security of all test materials

Why Train Non-Assessment Personnel?

- Limited number of assessment personnel available for multiple assessment programs
- Create self-sufficiency within programs
- Add to the ‘face validity’ of selection systems
- Applicants meet their future colleagues and supervisors
- Assessors become advocates for the selection systems



Who Can Be Trained?

Assessors should have:

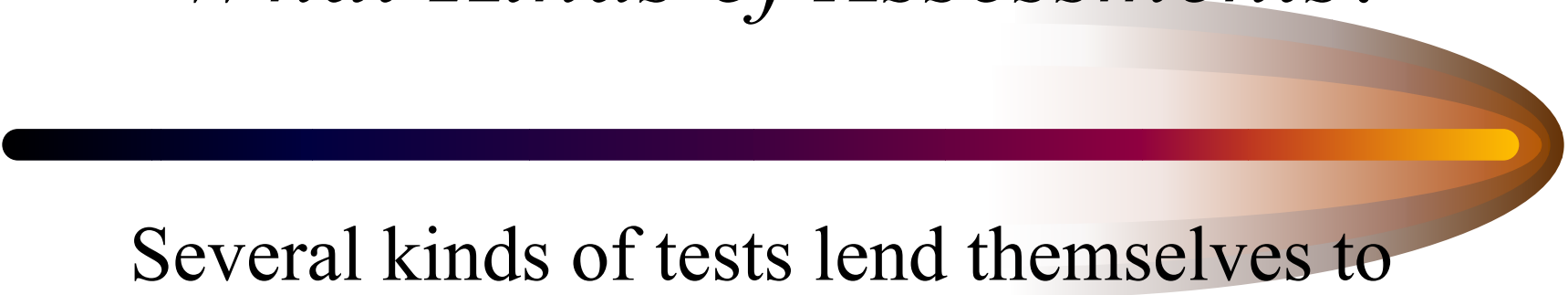
- Intimate familiarity with the job
- Ability to perform and/or supervise the target job at a superior level
- Excellent communication skills
- Time and motivation to serve as assessors

Who Trains Assessors?



- Ideally, those who designed the selection system should deliver the training to assessors and/or trainers
- Selection system developers are familiar with:
 - the job
 - the development process
 - all aspects of the selection system
 - details of assessment (e.g., rating errors, test security, fairness)

What Kinds of Assessments?



Several kinds of tests lend themselves to having trained, non-assessment personnel serve as assessors:

- Assessment Centers
- Structured Interviews
- Physical Abilities
- Work Samples/Simulations

Examples from Our Work




- Structured Interview for a law enforcement occupation responsible for inspecting those entering the U.S.
- Work Simulation for a customer service occupation responsible for answering immigration-related questions from the general public

The Assessments



- Structured Interview:
 - applicants respond to three situational questions; interviewers choose from a bank of structured questions
 - applicants are evaluated on four competencies
 - interview is scored pass/fail
- Customer Service Work Simulation:
 - applicants review a set of reference materials, then respond to a series of ‘customer’ phone calls
 - applicants are evaluated on behavior checklists for the phone calls and on overall competency rating scales
 - work simulation is scored pass/fail

Characteristics of the Selection Systems



- Assessments:
 - Part of multiple hurdle systems
 - Structured
 - Competency-based
 - Interaction with and evaluation of the applicant
 - Panel of assessors (2 or 3) and consensus ratings
 - Materials not maintained by assessors
- Training for Assessors:
 - Two-day training sessions by test developers
 - Role plays during training
 - Resources for assessors after training
 - Same key elements emphasized in training sessions for both systems

Key Elements in Training



- TEST SECURITY
- Documentation
- Fairness and standardization
- Development and structure of the assessments
- The role of the assessor in the selection process
- Details of the assessment process
- Evaluation of and feedback to applicants
- Language of training: NOT statistics, jargon, I/O-ese
- Feedback from trainees

Effectiveness of Training

Session	Number of Sessions	N	Average Effectiveness Rating
Interviewer Training	3	72	4.65
Train-the-Trainer	3	57	4.70
Work Simulation Assessor Training	2	11	4.82

- Ratings on exercises conducting during training all rated, on average, over 4.2 on a 5-point scale
- Participants indicated that training was appropriate length of time (average ratings 3.01, 3.12, and 3.18, respectively, with 3=length of training just about right)

Effectiveness of Assessors



- Customer Service work simulation is just now being implemented; no data to report yet
 - pilot test with ‘live’ applicants
 - strong advocates among assessors
- Structured Interview
 - Pass Rate = 91% as expected
 - n = 1,490 (from March 1, 2002 to June 1, 2002)
 - No complaints from interviewers or applicants

Effectiveness of Assessors Cont'd



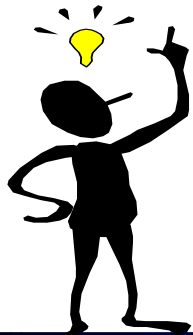
- Follow-up survey with interviewers:
 - n=127; 29.5% response rate
 - 78.6% of respondents trained via the train-the-trainer model
 - 31.5% have not conducted the interview since being trained
 - 54.8% have conducted less than 10 interviews
 - 8.0% have conducted 11-20 interviews
 - 5.6% have conducted more than 20 interviews

Effectiveness of Assessors Cont'd



Of those reporting that they've conducted the interview:

- 83.9% reported their expectations have been met with regard to identifying highly qualified candidates for the position (rating of 3 or above on 5-point scale)
- Average rating of expectations being met = 3.56 (5-point scale)
- Average rating of training preparing the individual to conduct the interview = 4.37 (5-point scale; 1=not at all, 5=very much so)



Lessons Learned


- Role plays are key to knowing (as the trainer and test developer) whether or not your assessors ‘got it’
 - Increase comprehension of the training materials and confidence level of interviewers
 - Raise issues and questions that may not have arisen otherwise
- Cannot over-emphasize the importance of test security and documentation

Lessons Learned Cont'd



- Availability of resources is crucial to the comfort level of the assessors
 - access to the test developers after training
 - training manuals
 - contact information for other assessors
 - contact information for other entities associated with the selection process
- Quality control of assessment process - need to follow up with assessors and ensure the assessment process is running as trained

What's Next?



- Follow-up with work simulation assessors once it is implemented and data are available
 - gather feedback from assessors
 - make revisions to operating procedures as needed

What's Next? Cont'd



- Address issues arising from follow-up with structured interviewers
 - monitor quality of documentation and provide feedback to the interviewers and trainers
 - reiterate key issues: proper procedures for administration and documentation
 - ensure that as training is distributed, the message is not lost
 - resources for non-interview issues (e.g., scheduling)