

# Implementing an Assessment Program for Executive Candidates

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## ○ Background

- Sodexo – who are we?
- Hiring process for management positions

## ○ Executive Assessments

- Why?
- The process
- Resources
- Outcomes

## ○ Recommendations and future directions

# Sodexo – Who Are We?



- First of all, we have no “h”!
- Sodexo is the leading food and facilities management services company in North America
- **Revenues: \$7.2 billion USD**
  - Including approximately \$1 billion in facilities management
- **Locations:**
  - **Schools: 500**
  - **Universities & colleges: 1,000**
  - **Nursing and retirement homes: 500**
  - **Hospitals: 1,800**
  - **Business and Industry: 2,000**
  - **Government and Defense: 70**
  - **Remote sites: 50 (Alaska, Canada and Mexico)**
- **Employees: 125,000+; 20,000 management, 105,000 hourly**



# Sodexo Management Competency Model



# Hiring Process for Management Positions



# Objectives of Executive Individual Assessment Process



- Implement a standardized, valid, and fair selection process for executive hiring
- Provide hiring managers with detailed information on candidates' abilities, skills, and personal characteristics that impact executive success
- Utilize multiple assessments to assess candidates' overall executive potential
- Scope: All VP positions grade 13 and above; optional and for a fee for grade 12 positions
  - Filled 40 positions in calendar year 2007
  - Projected to fill 60 positions in 2008



# Executive Selection Process



**Achieving Market Growth**  
**Building Strategic Relationships**  
**Communicating Persuasively**  
**Financial Acumen**  
**Leading for Excellence**  
**Promoting a Client-Focused Culture**  
**Strategic Thinking**  
**Talent Management**



- ❑ *Interview with I/O Psychologist*
- ❑ *Analytical Skills Assessments*
  - *Verbal Reasoning Test*
  - *Critical Thinking Skills Test*
  - *Creative Problem Solving Test*
  - *Numerical Reasoning Test*
- ❑ *Personal Characteristics Assessments*
  - *“Values” Assessment*
  - *“Social Styles” Assessment*

# Executive Assessment Part I: The Interview



**Description:** Candidate participates in an interview with Sodexo I/O Psychologist

**Administration Time:** 1 ½ hours

**Assessment Scoring:** Sodexo Psychologist records responses and provides clinical assessment of candidate's experiences and work styles.

## Interview

- *Interview focuses on candidate's history, qualifications, skills, and personality*
  - *Education and Work History*
  - *Accomplishments*
  - *Problem Solving Style*
  - *Leading/Management Style*
  - *Work Style*
  - *Strengths and Developmental Needs*
  - *Career Goals and Aspirations*
  - *Communication Style*



# Executive Assessment Part IIa: Analytical Skills Assessments



**Description:** Candidate is administered four cognitive ability tests that address thinking and decision-making skills.

**Administration:** Timed paper and pencil tests

**Administration Time:** 1 ½ hours

**Assessment Scoring:** Responses are scored. Scores are then compared with normative database of over 9,000 high-performing managers and executives.

## Verbal Reasoning Test

- Assesses verbal reasoning abilities that impact executive success.
- Executive norms used
- 40 Questions (18 Minutes)

## Critical Thinking Skills Test

- Assesses critical thinking abilities that impact executive success.
- Executive norms used
- 40 Questions (35 Minutes)

## Creative Problem Solving Test

- Assesses spatial reasoning that impacts executive creativity and planning/organizing success.
- Executive norms used
- 64 Questions (20 Minutes)

## Numerical Reasoning Test

- Assesses quantitative analytical reasoning that impacts executive success.
- Executive norms used
- 20 Questions (5 Minutes)



# Executive Assessments Part IIb: Personal Characteristics Assessments



**Description:** Candidate is administered two personal characteristics assessments.

**Administration:** Timed paper and pencil assessments.

**Administration Time:** 1 hour

**Assessment Scoring:** Responses are scored. Scores are then compared with normative database of over 9,000 high-performing managers and executives.

## “Values” Assessment

- Focuses on a person’s underlying values that impact executive decision-making*
- Executive norms used*
- 45 Questions (Not Timed)*

## “Social Styles” Assessment

- Assesses four social styles that lead to executive success.*
- Executive norms used*
- 18 Questions (Not Timed)*

# Feedback Report



- **Two part report:**
  - **Narrative Report**
    - Problem Solving and Critical Thinking
    - Communication and Persuasiveness
    - Work Style and Motivation
    - Leadership Abilities
    - Overall Recommendation for the Position and Factors to Maximize Success
  - **Metrics Page**
    - Percentile scores on the four cognitive tests
    - Ratings on each of the executive competencies
- **Feedback report given to hiring manager and debriefed with Sodexo I/O**
- **Internal candidates (or externals who are hired) are given the same feedback report for development**



- **Sodexo I/O Psychologists' time and expertise**
  - Estimated about a full day of time for each candidate, including administration, scoring, and feedback report
  - Analysis of volume of candidates – break point for need for another I/O
- **Consortium with other organizations – normative database for test scoring and feedback summary**
  - \$400 per candidate for scoring

- **In-depth analysis of critical skills for key leadership positions**
- **Feedback from hiring managers:**
  - Better hires
  - Greater confidence in hiring decisions
  - Ability to help new executives hit the ground running
- **Some candidates hired are now hiring managers in this process...**
- **Expansion of the process:**
  - Developmental purposes
  - VP positions grade 12

## ○ Recommendations:

- Target competencies critical for the positions
- Develop assessments that minimize time for candidates
- Minimize time impact on hiring process
- Tangible outcomes for hiring managers and organization
- Partnership with stakeholders – executive recruiters, hiring managers

## ○ Future directions:

- Continued expansion of the program to field positions (e.g., District Managers)
- Tie-in to global executive assessment process for Sodexo
- Link to 360 assessments, currently contractual and as-needed



# Questions and Contact Information



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