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 **Assessment Centre**

Selecting the Right People

The Assessment Centre described below was run for one of the largest County Councils in the UK. The authority employs 44,000 staff and used the Assessment Centre to recruit graduate, management trainees.

The process started with a national advertising campaign. The applications were evaluated and fifty potential employees short listed to attend the Assessment Centre.

The applicants were invited to attend the assessment centre which ran on a single day. However, there were three stages prior to the assessment day.

Stage 1 – Identifying Qualities and Competencies

A key set of qualities and competencies were identified as being highly desirable for the council. A series of individual and group tasks was designed to test the required qualities and competencies. In addition to tests of organisation, leadership and communication, a decision was made to test numerical reasoning and report writing as well.

Stage 2 – Observer Training

This involved discussing the tasks each graduate was going to undertake and what qualities and competencies were being tested. A rotation of observers was agreed to ensure that each candidate was observed by as many different observers as possible.

Stage 3 – Numerical Reasoning and Report Writing

The numerical reasoning and report writing tests were undertaken prior to the assessment centre with the numerical reasoning test carried out on-line and a report on a specified topic written and submitted for

grading.

The Assessment Day

On the day of the Assessment Centre the Council provided 25 observers that worked in five groups of five, the makeup of each group changed for each task to reduce bias. Five consultants and one technician were provided by The Development Company.

At the Assessment Centre, the candidates were given a set of exercises and tasks to perform while being observed. The scores for the numerical reasoning and writing skills were combined with the observers' marks and comments to agree a short list for interview.

The Assessment Centre was extremely well received with fifteen candidates progressing to interview.

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