

In-Baskets

Effective Simulation for Management/Leadership Evaluation

An In-Basket is a “high fidelity” simulation in which candidates are provided with material and information that is typically found in a manager’s in-box. They are asked to respond to this information as he/she sees fit.

In-Baskets are one of the most powerful tools available for human resource professionals to evaluate managerial and leadership candidates. Providing an effective simulation of “a day in the life” of a manager, in-baskets mock up professional scenarios in real time, enabling a more accurate evaluation of a candidate’s performance and capabilities.

Description

- In-Baskets are a timed, web-based simulation that measures leadership and managerial competencies for success.
- During the assessment, the participant assumes the role of a manager at a fictitious company.
- The participant is provided with all the background information about the company and their role before the assessment begins.
- Once the participant begins the assessment they are presented with an e-mail in-basket (similar to Outlook) with a number of e-mails sent to them from the other employees.
- The participants’ duty is to respond to the e-mails in the order of highest priority and in the exact same manner they would if they were performing the job.
- The participants are provided with supporting documents to help them make decisions and create their responses.

Role Plays

- In addition to responding to e-mails, each participant will participate in two role plays.
- The participant receives two e-mails at the beginning of the simulation describing the meetings they will have with another “employee”.
- During the role play, an assessor will assume the role of the other employee and interact with the participant.
- Both role plays measure the participant’s leadership ability.

Competencies Measured

- **Decision Making Style**
 - Being able to step back from detailed data analysis and see how it fits into a larger picture, identifying and understanding connections, interrelationships and cause-effect relationships among different pieces of data
 - Making decisions and taking actions that have a positive, beneficial impact on the team, the organisation, and themselves.
- **Empowering Others**
 - Maintaining beliefs that are consistent with sharing power and responsibility with others as opposed to seeing the world as a fixed pie where there is a limited amount of power or responsibility that needs to be guarded
 - Demonstrating belief and trust in the abilities of others
 - Encouraging others to take on new challenges and providing support to help them achieve their goals
- **Interpreting Information**
 - Gathering and focusing on relevant information and conducts analyses that help to better understand the situation or problem under consideration
 - Effectively breaking complex problems and information into the key variables while still keeping the ultimate goal in mind
 - Making accurate interpretations based on analyses
 - Displaying confidence in results of analyses

“Among all simulations, In-Baskets provide the clearest picture into how someone will actually handle their job. They also provide insights into leadership style and decision making that aren’t possible with other tools.”

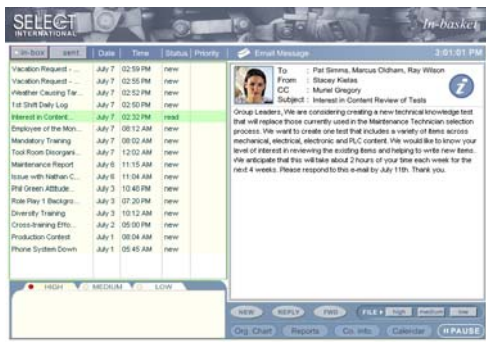
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Sample Visuals:



Leadership Style

- Focusing on creating and maintaining agreements, setting clear expectations for performance and responsibility, and ensuring that goals are met
- Serving as a role model of appropriate attitudes and behaviours for the organisation to be successful
- Creating and maintaining high levels of energy, instilling pride, and sustaining a vision

Managing Resources

- Planning projects such that specific tasks, timelines, milestones, and objectives are clearly established in advance
- Organising or adjusting information and materials to ensure accurate and timely completion of tasks
- Instituting effective methods for keeping track of project details

Working with Others

- Working effectively with others on a team or in a work group
- Encouraging and supporting the ideas and effort of other members of the team
- Being sensitive to the unique contribution and viewpoints of others
- Viewing and responding to feedback as a learning process as opposed to an affront on one's self-esteem or personal competence

Written Communication

- Avoiding reacting in a defensive manner
- Finding ways to help the team or group perform effectively, either by actively contributing work or ideas or by encouraging others
- Comprehensively presenting written ideas in an easy to understand manner where ideas flow logically

- Effectively communicating complex ideas or thoughts clearly and at a level appropriate to the target audience
- Using appropriate grammar, including vocabulary and sentence structure

In-Basket Scoring

- Candidate's responses (emails) are sent to online database
- Assessors log in and score each item (email) using structured rating criteria
- System provides recommended ratings based on individual item ratings
- Assessor can override recommended rating
- Integrated with other parts of assessment

Hardware Requirements

- Personal Computer with high speed internet connection (T1 recommended)
- Private room with desk and two chairs for role plays
- Scratch paper and pencils

Advantages

- Face valid – seen as fair by the candidate
- Interactive and engaging – not like taking a traditional test
- Unstructured response format – allows candidates to respond any way they want
- Evaluate how candidates will handle realistic situations
- Observe leadership style and judgment
- Administered remotely
- Scored Remotely
- Difficult for candidate to fake