

The BMC approach to **Assessment and Development Centres**



- ▷ **Identify new hires that ‘fit’ with your culture**
- ▷ **Promote the most able people**
- ▷ **Scientifically highlight training and development needs**

Assessing individual capabilities is an essential element of organisational success.



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Introduction to Assessment & Development Centres

Assessing individual capabilities is an essential element of organisational success. Apart from the financial considerations, there is the desire to effectively match individual performance and potential to the challenges of a specific role and the characteristics of the organisation. The Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD) estimate that the average cost of filling a vacancy is £8200 (CIPD Survey, 2004), multiply this by the number of appointments you make every year and it can add up to a significant investment for which you will want a return. The good news is that the CIPD has also identified that improving the selection techniques used can significantly increase the chances of making effective recruitment and selection decisions.

Evaluation

At BMC we see the assessment process as a chance not only to evaluate individuals against specific criteria for a role, but also to consider the cultural fit of an individual and to demonstrate to candidates the ethos of your organisation and ensure they have a positive view of a future within your company.

The BMC approach

Our approach covers diagnostics to establish the purpose of the selection process, defining the criteria, selecting appropriate activities, training assessors/observers, running the centre and providing feedback and follow up activities. Whatever approach we take you can rely on it being:

- **Valid - fair, ethical, objective and balanced**
- **Flexible - working with your needs and requirements**
- **Authentic - matching the needs of the individual and the organisation**
- **Innovative - taking into consideration your current and future needs**

Credibility

A good assessment or development centre depends upon the professionalism of the designers and the credibility of the process in the eyes of those who are taking part in it. At BMC we ensure that the integrity and impact of our development centres is maintained by using only the most highly qualified and experienced HR professionals. Our consultants have developed and run hundreds of assessment centres and include people who have Masters in Occupational Psychology are Chartered Occupational Psychologist, Level A & B trained, and are certified coaches.



Key Stages

Summary of the key stages involved in our approach

Diagnose — Establish the purpose of the selection process, for example, are you seeking to fill an individual role, evaluate a group of individuals against several roles or identify individuals with further potential. We work with you to agree the outcomes for the process and ensure they fit with your organisational challenges and culture.

Define — We work with you to establish the criteria for the process based on measurable skills, knowledge and observable behaviours. We ensure that these are compatible with the culture of the organisation and really reflect the skills and behaviours you need for the role(s) both now and in the future.

Design — At this stage we use our expertise to identify the exercises or activities that will enable individuals to demonstrate the selection criteria, whilst providing you with a broad bank of evidence to evaluate in relation to your requirements. These activities can include group activities, role play, presentations, briefings and interviews, together with a range of psychometric tools. Our Chartered Psychologists are qualified to advise on this aspect. Based on the criteria and the chosen exercises, we are able to design the format of the solution ensuring that we take into account the needs of the candidates, as well as the requirements of the organisation, so that the experience is a positive one for all parties.

Communications — A key element in the success of this type of activity is the supporting communications, including briefing sessions, updates and supporting materials. We work with you to ensure that all stakeholders feel fully involved and consulted.

Deliver — We are experienced at ensuring that all the various elements of the solution come together to ensure a smooth and seamless event. The administration of the event can be handled by our team or we can work with your staff to ensure they feel confident and competent to successfully manage the event.

Feedback /Follow up — A crucial element of any assessment process is to provide valid feedback to the individual based on observed evidence and the agreed criteria. At this stage we work with both you and the individual to ensure that next steps are agreed to address performance/development gaps.

Evaluation — In order to maximise the return on investment we work with you to measure the effectiveness of the process against the agreed objectives and collect customer/ stakeholder feedback to identify potential improvements and tangible benefits.



Example
assignment



Improving the selection process at graduate entry, middle and senior management level

This organisation has been experiencing a period of rapid growth resulting in the need to recruit talented software engineers to support new projects. Prior to working with this client, the selection method for short listed candidates was a semi-structured interview with software engineers in post. The HR Director and Manager recognised the need to improve the quality of the selection process. In addition, they were keen to develop a selection & assessment strategy that supported the organisational competencies by function & level. In short, to ensure that new recruits had the required competencies for the job and fitted into the culture of the organisation.

As a result a new selection methodology was developed for entry-level graduates, experienced software engineers and project managers. Assessment Centres tailored to each group were designed. These included:

- ▷ **The introduction of Psychometric Testing to assess candidates' aptitude for the role and their motives, talents, their preferred work styles and predicted culture fit.**
- ▷ **The design of a bespoke analysis exercise for graduate and project manager candidates.**
- ▷ **The development of structured competency based interviews for all groups.**
- ▷ **The introduction of credible role-plays involving actors to test relevant competencies.**

The organisation has used the new selection process to recruit new engineers in 2006 and the HR manager now runs the Assessment Centres on a regular basis. He proudly suggests that the organisation's selection process is more sophisticated and effective than their holding company, which is one of the largest players in the aerospace industry!



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Example
assignment

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Identifying, developing and retaining individuals with potential to fulfil senior roles

Following the appointment of a new MD and the decision to adopt a 10 year expansion plan the HR Director commissioned us to work to address the human capital issues of the business. The organisation had grown organically over the previous 25 years and was now faced with the need to review its management population and evaluate their capability and motivation to rise to the new challenges facing them.

The first stage of our approach involved a research phase to determine what the business would require of its senior leaders in the future. This enabled us to construct a leadership competency framework which would increase an individual's chance of succeeding in a leadership role within this organisation both now and in the future. These were translated into user friendly language and introduced to the business.

Following the successful launch of the competency framework all the leaders in the business were invited to participate in a talent development programme. The aim was firstly to explore and identify individual career aspirations. This was done via a self assessment tool which encouraged participants to consider past career decisions, their values in relation to their career and then to consider their future aspirations. The next step was to build a detailed profile of their skills, knowledge and behaviours against the leadership competency framework. This was achieved via a one and a half day workshop involving a series of observed exercises including an in depth competency based interview, a work simulation, individual presentation and group exercise. After each activity individuals were encouraged to reflect on their approach and received high level feedback from the observers.

Following the workshop, participants were encouraged to reflect on their career aspirations in the context of the detailed feedback report which was explored during a one to one with their nominated consultant. At the end of this process participants constructed a development plan focused on leveraging their strengths and addressing any specific gaps identified.

As a result of this programme the organisation has a much clearer insight into the talent they have within the organisation. They have identified clear gaps and are now able to construct a meaningful succession plan which focuses on a longer term strategy to grow their human capital.

The next step

If you would like to know more about how we can help you create and implement your own Assessment and Development Centres please contact us

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