



In-Basket Testing Considerations

In-basket tests are used to assess whether a candidate has the specific skills needed for a job. These tests also help familiarize the candidate with some of the responsibilities of the role.

Considerations

- In-basket tests should be measurable so it always good to have a shared rating scale for all the interview panelists to use in the evaluation. E.g. a scale of 1 – 5 with 5 indicating an excellent response and 1 indicating a poor response.
- In-basket tests are timed so ensure that you allocate enough time as you plan the interview for the candidate to complete it.
- Ensure that the test is appropriate and relevant to what might actually occur in the position.
- Inform the candidate that they will be taking part in an in-basket test, format of the test, and how much time they will have to complete it.
- Let the candidate know that they can opt out of taking the in-basket test; however, should they decide not to do the test, they will not score any points in that portion of the interview.
- Be aware that some candidates might need accommodation in order to take the test so ask ahead of the interview if they will need any special arrangements.

Examples

Specialized knowledge test: this can be done online or on paper and is a great way to test a specific skillset/knowledge required for the position e.g., using SPSS to analyze data, questionnaire.

Administrative skill testing: this is a good strategy to use in assessing a candidate's ability to perform administrative tasks e.g., responding to a difficult email, answering telephone questions, mail merge.

Case Study: case studies are a great way to get an understanding of how the candidate processes new information and is also used to evaluate the candidate's ability to analyze and solve a problem.

Presentation: if the position requires a lot of public speaking or presentation, having the candidate prepare a 5-10 minute presentation is a great method of assessing verbal communication.

Role play: role playing is an interactive way to evaluate the candidate for handling unusual situations and interactions. This is a great test to use if the role involves a lot of interpersonal skills. The interviewer can play the role of a specific character (e.g. difficult customer) or characters can be played by other members of your unit/department.