

How the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) solved their assessment needs in very short timescales.

Keywords: Assessment centres, role analysis, feedback reports

→ The challenge

Our work for NCIS came at a time when they were being incorporated into the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA). Due to the creation of the new agency, our client needed an assessment strategy able to cope with large numbers and extremely tight timescales.

→ The solution

Initially we were tasked with:

- Role analysis
- Development of exercises
- Design and delivery of assessment centres
- Delivery of feedback to every candidate

We worked with senior managers to identify the capabilities that would be necessary to tackle the evolving roles. We then used this role analysis to develop an approach fit to assess both internal candidates, hoping to be promoted, and external candidates who would offer 'new blood' to the organisation.

This process became cyclical in nature, as the organisation continued to find a need to recruit and promote to a given level.

The approach evolved into a series of one-day selection events. In the last recruitment campaign, we assessed approximately 140 candidates over 4 weeks of assessment events.

The event itself made use of:

- Psychometric testing
- Competency-based interviews
- Written exercises

- Role-play interactive exercises involving actors

In addition to the initial tasks, we were also involved in advising on the communications strategy, briefing of assessors and interviewers, provision of assessment scores and feedback reports.

Assessment scores and decisions (derived from algorithms) were provided at the end of each assessment event, so that candidates could be informed of decisions as quickly as possible.

→ The achievements

- Over a period of 18 months, we developed and ran over 70 assessment centres in four recruitment rounds
- The need to feedback to every candidate often meant we were delivering over 100 feedback reports in little over two weeks
- We moved from assessment design to delivery of feedback reports in 2 months

This work allowed us to show our ability to design and deliver assessment centres, on a large scale in short spaces of time.



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