



Assessment Centre Hints and Tips

Assessment Centres are becoming increasingly popular with employers and are considered by many to be the most reliable, objective and fair process of selecting suitable candidates.

Ice Breakers:

Organisations use ice-breakers to help you relax and to help the group to gel. Sometimes they are practical and involve the completion of a task within a tight deadline, or they might be more intellectual. Everyone is expected to play a part and share information. For example, you might be asked to build a tower from straws, paper and pins. If you are asked to make something, try to make sure the group doesn't spend too much time discussing and designing and run out of time for construction. Another example is to talk about something you have done in your past, an unusual event or hobby.

Group Exercises:

Group exercises are used to evaluate your communication and problem-solving skills, and to ensure that you can work effectively in a team. You need to support the group in completing the task that has been set, whether that involves discussing a particular issue, constructing something i.e. from stationery or selling an object in a sales task. The best way to impress the employers is to show yourself as a good team player – flexible, full of ideas but willing to listen to and help expand the ideas of others.

- You need to contribute, but not to dominate. Be assertive, but not aggressive. If you are aware that you are usually a shy person who does not speak up, do your best to participate. If you know that you can sometimes be overbearing in groups, hold that tendency in check
- Speak clearly and confidently. Listen and ask questions if you are unclear on anything. Be aware of what others in the group are contributing. You could try to draw out quieter members and seek their views.
- Be diplomatic. If one person is behaving in a dominant way, don't shout them down, but try to make sure that everybody gets a chance to share their thoughts. Be prepared to compromise.
- Keep an eye on the time and stay focused on the overall objective. From time to time, try to summarise the group's progress.

Your success is typically assessed against a list of competencies i.e. Communication, Listening, Team Player, Objective Handling etc.

Remember that you are assessed across a number of exercises. It is often the case that candidates do not perform well in all of the exercises, so accept that some parts will go better than others. Do not crumble if one exercise goes badly.