



## Discovery Series

### Assessment & Development Centre Exercises

The SR&A Discovery series has been designed to offer the practitioner a range of tried and tested exercises which are applicable in a variety of assessment functions and cover the range from graduate to executive level. Each exercise is supported by an assessor's guide, administration instructions and observer rating or scoring sheets based around the SR&A generic competency model. The range continues to grow as we develop and trial new exercises.

Choosing the right exercise in terms of both level, and the competencies which the exercise can assess is a crucial aspect of assessment or development centre design. Our consultants can advise you about the best options for your particular requirements.

To ensure responsible use of the exercises we supply only to registered users based on holding appropriate qualifications or experience in assessment centre practice.

#### Benefits of the Discovery Series

- Useful for assessment and development centres
- Exercises available for all levels in the organisation
- Varied exercise content and style
- Tried and tested exercises
- Based on a generic competency model – readily adaptable to your own
- Wide range of exercise types
- Full support materials for administration and scoring

#### Exercise Types & Levels

The Discovery Series exercises are categorised into 4 different types:

**Group Exercises:** typically group discussion or negotiation exercises for 4 or more participants

**In-tray Exercises:** individual written exercises that require the participant to organise, prioritise and indicate actions to take around a range of issues that might appear in a person's in-tray

**Interview Exercises:** one-to-one interview simulations with a role player and the participant

**Analysis/Creativity Exercises:** individual written exercises designed to assess problem-solving and innovation in a variety of realistic scenarios

Each exercise is given one or more 'suitability symbols', as shown below, to indicate populations where the exercise may be most fruitfully applied. These should be treated as guidelines rather than prescriptively.

**G** Suitable for Graduates & First Line Managers/Supervisors

**M** Suitable for Middle to Senior Managers

**S** Suitable for Senior Managers, Executives & Directors

## **Group Exercises**

### **Special Projects Group Exercise** **G** **M**

*Assigned Role Group Exercise*

This exercise engages participants in discussion and negotiation concerning the rank order of importance of a set of proposals for funding from a Special Projects budget. This is an 'assigned role' exercise in which each participant must support a particular case while finding common ground for agreement by the end of the exercise. Participant materials include a copy of their own and others' proposals, as well as background organisational information.

**Number of participants:** Groups of 4 - 6 (materials are available for larger groups if required)

**Administration & completion time:** 60m.

### **Office Moves** **G** **M**

*Assigned Role Group Exercise*

This exercise requires participants to reach agreement on a revised accommodation plan that will entail the permanent relocation of some staff. Participants each manage teams based in one of 4 different offices. The plan must take into account some additional office space, current plans for refurbishment, and the requirement to close at least one office. A limited budget is available. Each participant has one strong reason for not wanting to see their own office closed.

**Number of participants:** Groups of 4

**Administration & Completion time:** 60m.

### **Plan & Build** **G** **M**

*Non-assigned Role Group Exercise*

This is a co-operative group exercise in which participants plan for and execute the production of a simple product to a specific client brief with limited supplies. Participants must analyse the brief to correctly identify customers needs, and plan to make a realistic estimate of their production capacity. The exercise outcome is scored, and two separate groups can be run in parallel to introduce an element of competition and fun.

**Number of participants:** 1 or 2 groups of 4 - 6

**Administration & Completion time:** 70m.

### **SSRB Planning Meeting** **M**

*Non-assigned Role Group Exercise*

This exercise has been designed to investigate how participants deal with a group discussion in which they are required to set the agenda for an initial Planning Meeting in terms of the significance of a set of issues related to the performance of a Social Services Department for consideration at an Inspection Visit. Background documentation is provided in the form of 'Extracts from Pre-Inspection Report' prepared for the inspection body (Social Services Review Body or SSRB)

**Number of participants:** Groups of 4 - 6

**Administration & Completion time:** 60m.

## **Bank Merger** **M** **S**

*Non-assigned Role Group Exercise*

This exercise has been designed to investigate how participants deal with a group discussion around issues involved in the merger between two financial organisations - a bank and a building society recently converted from mutual status. Participants are provided with a range of information about the two organisations and need to make recommendations about financial, personnel and cultural issues in both the short and the long term.

**Number of participants:** Groups of 4 - 6

**Administration & Completion time:** 60m.

## **Keen Cycles** **M** **S**

*Non-assigned Role Group Exercise*

In this exercise participants are presented with a range of options for reversing the recent downturn in profits of a cycle manufacturer. Information available includes the balance sheet for the last 3 years, a statement of the company's guiding principles, and an analysis of current strengths and weaknesses. Participants are required to identify a 5 year development plan for the company based on the options provided.

**Number of participants:** Groups of 4 - 6

**Administration & Completion time:** 60m.

## **Interstellar Trading Group Negotiation Exercise** **G** **M**

*Assigned Role Group Negotiation Exercise*

This exercise engages participants in a negotiation problem conducted between 2 groups of 2-4 participants. Each group takes the role of trade representatives seeking to achieve balances of trade among items of varying over and under-supply. Participants must set, implement and review their negotiating strategy to achieve the best outcome.

**Number of participants:** 2 groups of 2 - 4

**Administration & Completion time:** 60m.

## **Gastonville College** **M** **S**

*Assigned Role Group Negotiation Exercise*

This is an analysis and negotiation exercise for two groups of participants. One group takes the role of members of the Senior Management Team of City of Gaston College, while the other group takes the role of members of Senior Management Team of Bishop Warville College. The aim of the 2 teams is to agree an academic structure for the new Gastonville College which is to be formed by a merger of the two colleges.

**Number of participants:** 2 Groups of 2 - 5

**Administration & Completion time:** 60m.

## ***In-Tray Exercises***

A key feature of our in-tray exercises is the structured Assessor Report Form which assists rapid scoring against the generic SR&A competencies.

### **Home Store Ltd In-Tray G M**

*Individual In-tray*

HSL is an in-tray exercise which requires participants to be able to prioritise, organise, and action plan around a series of typical events in general management. The scenario is located in a retail context with participants taking the role of Acting Store Manager in a large out-of town retail outlet.

**Number of participants:** 1 upwards

**Administration & completion time:** 65m.

### **Pan Globe Trading In-Tray M S**

*Individual In-Tray*

This is a higher level in-tray designed for use with middle and senior managers and above. In addition to the prioritising and planning of day-to-day events typically required in an in-tray exercise, this exercise requires consideration of more strategic issues and matters associated with change management.

**Number of participants:** 1 upwards

**Administration & completion time:** 65m.

## **1 to 1 Interview Exercises**

### **Purchasing Department Employee Interview** **G** **M**

*One-to-one Role Play Exercise*

This is a one-to-one role play exercise designed to investigate how the participant deals with an exploratory interview with an employee who has shown a recent decline in performance. The exercise requires considerable perception and ability to identify unstated, but implied problems. The participant will need to give careful attention to the conclusions he or she draws and then agree an action plan which will result in improved performance.

**Number of participants:** 1

**Administration & completion time:** 45m.

### **TalkPlace One-to-one Interview** **G** **M**

*One-to-one Role Play Exercise*

The purpose of this exercise is to enable a participant to be observed while conducting a meeting under role play conditions with another person. The focus of the meeting is a customer complaint received by the hotel of which the participant is playing the manager. The exercise requires exploration and analysis, as well as skills in negotiation and compromise.

**Number of participants:** 1

**Administration & Completion time:** 30m.

## ***Individual Analysis/Creativity Exercises***

### **Creative Solutions** **G** **M**

#### *Individual Creativity Assessment*

Creative Solutions presents participants with a number of scenarios based on realistic management problems. The task presented to individuals is to: identify the essentials of the problem; identify their goals in solving the problem; generate as many alternative solutions as they can; rate their judgement of the satisfactoriness of the solutions. The test therefore assesses judgement as well as fluency in generating alternatives.

**Number of participants:** 1 upwards

**Administration & Completion time:** 60m.

### **Housing Association Review** **G** **M**

#### *Individual Analysis and Presentation Exercise*

Participants are asked to review some extracts from a pre-inspection report of a group of housing associations with a view to identifying areas of good and bad practice, areas of improvement and decline, and key issues to explore in the inspection. Participants must make a stand-up presentation summarising their analysis.

**Number of participants:** 1 upwards

**Administration & Completion time:** 100m (80m preparation, 20m presentation & questions).

## **PURCHASING THE DISCOVERY SERIES**

Purchasing the discovery series is a simple 3 step process.

**1. Register to purchase the materials.** To ensure responsible use of the exercises they may only be purchased by those who have been trained in the management and design of Assessment & Development Centres or who are experienced in running them. Therefore those wishing to purchase and use Discovery Series exercises first need to register with us. For those who are not yet qualified we offer an Assessment & Development Centre Design course.

**2. Identify the exercises that best meet your requirements.** The brief explanations provided in this leaflet, together with the information about appropriate levels should assist you in narrowing down your choices. Our consultants will be pleased to discuss your requirements and advise on the best solutions. Specimen sets are available to help you evaluate your options.

**3. Order 1 or more Administration Packs for your chosen exercise.** Each pack contains everything required to run the exercise for up to 10 people (12 for Special Projects). Don't forget that each assessor will require an Assessor Brief to assist in understanding and rating the exercise.

For registration and order forms either contact SR&A on 0161 877 3277 or download from our website at [www.sr-associates.com](http://www.sr-associates.com).

### **PRICING (Valid from 4<sup>th</sup> January 2008)**

Each exercise is supported by an Administration Pack, providing all of the consumable materials necessary for administration to 10 participants (12 for Special Projects); and an Assessor Brief, one of which should be available for each assessor or observer. A Specimen Set comprising one of each of all of the elements of the participant and assessor materials is available for each exercise.

#### **Group Exercises, Interview Exercises, Analysis/Creativity Exercises**

*Administration Pack* (includes administration instructions and all consumable materials, observation/scoring sheets for up to 10 participants)

Pack of 10: £155+VAT

(N.B. Special Projects pack of 12: £185+VAT)

*Assessor Brief* (includes rating guidelines): £25

*Specimen Set* (comprises 1 of each element above): £47+VAT

#### **In-Tray Exercises**

*Administration pack* (includes administration instructions and all consumables: in-tray materials, answer sheets, report forms/observation sheets)

Pack of 10: £310+VAT

*Manual* (includes rating guidelines): £47

*Specimen Set* (comprises 1 of each element above): £70+VAT

Postage & Packing: 10% of order value + VAT

## ***Further Information***

If you would like to find out more about exercise content or the range of levels for which an exercise is suitable please call our consultants on 0161 877 3277. Our range of exercises is continually expanding – contact us for the latest additions to the Discovery series.

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