



SSRB Planning Meeting: Exercise Description

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SSRB Planning Meeting

Background

This exercise has been designed to investigate how participants deal with a group discussion in which they are required to rank order the significance of a set of issues related to the performance of a Social Services Department for consideration at a Review Meeting. It is suitable for graduate to middle managers. This 'non-assigned role' group exercise tests the capacity of candidates to quickly get to grips with a brief, construct and communicate good arguments and work cooperatively with others to achieve an agreed consensus. Although the exercise is set in the context of a social services review body the issues are relevant to any organisation looking to review the quality of service provision.

The competencies that are relevant to this exercise and can be used as rating dimensions are as follows:

Communication Skills

Strategic Perspective

Analysis & Problem Solving Skills

Business Awareness

Users may substitute versions of the competencies above from their own existing competency framework as desired.

A five minute briefing is required in which candidates are provided with their materials and this is followed by a 15 minute 'silent reading' period. Following this participants are instructed to start their discussion with a 35 minute time limit, by the end of which participants must agree and rank order identified key issues for discussion at a subsequent board level review meeting. This exercise is suitable for up to 6 participants.

Exercise Content

The 10-page participant brief provides all of the background information including factors such as the borough council's aims and objectives for social care needs, the structure of the social services department, etc.

Other types of data are provided for consideration, for example details of working partnerships, survey and other data related to customers and employees, staff turnover rates (see example extract from brief – Table 32 below with data and other entries omitted) etc.

Table 32. Staff turnover (% per year) compared with national average rates

Division	Dept. Turnover Rate	National Average Turnover rate
Service Commissioning	..%	..%
..	..%	..%
Community Services (Adult)	..%	..%
..	..%	..%
Registration & Inspection	..%	..%

The brief provides the participants with a comprehensive set of information that highlights strengths and development areas for the department.

The instructions to participants outline the scenario as follows:

“In this exercise you are to take the role of Review Team Members working for the Social Services Review Body. The SSRB was set up by Government to assure, monitor and improve the quality of Social Services provision in England and Wales.....The role of the SSRB is to lead, review and assist improvement in Social Services provision.

.....Equal attention is paid to areas of best practice that others may learn from, as to areas of underperformance that need to be addressed. In preparing for a Review visit, a key source of information is the **Pre-Assessment Report** which provides a summary of.....

The Chair wishes you to provide a rank order of the following issues in terms of their significance for the Social Services Department. Specifically, the Chair wants to know which are the most pressing issues, taking into account in relation to overall service delivery. Consequently, your task as a group is to identify and rank order the issues, based on your judgment of the evidence contained in the attached extracts from the Pre-Assessment Report.”

Assessor Brief

The Assessor Brief provides background information (i.e. an Overview, Relevant Competencies, Timing, Exercise Materials and Key Issues). A separate full set of Administration Instructions is provided. General advice is provided on observing and rating the exercises, along with rating guidelines, and details of how to conduct a Post Exercise Review.

Quantities

The Administration Pack contains the following items:

- 12 Participant Briefs
- 2 sets of Admin Instructions
- 12 Observation Sheets
- 12 Rating Forms
- 4 Assessor Briefs

After initial purchase of the Admin Pack, a Refill Pack may be purchased which contains the following consumable items:

- 12 Participant Briefs
- 12 Observation Sheets
- 12 Rating Forms

Current pricing can be determined by reference to <http://www.sr-associates.com/pricing.html>

If desired, further queries as to the exercise demands and content can be made to:

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