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| ***“Selecting the right person for promotion is always a difficult process”******“One of our strongest assets is we customize your Assessment Center so that it’s exercises are based on the actual policies and practices of your department”*** |

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| PROMOTIONAL ASSESSMENT SERVICES |

Reliance on past performance and one or two testing processes may not result in the selection of the BEST person for promotion. The Assessment Center process conducted by the Illinois Fire Chiefs Promotional Evaluation and Assessment Service can assist Fire Chiefs, Fire Commissioners, Human Resource Directors and other key leadership in the promotional procedure by providing insight into a person’s ability to perform in the new position.An Assessment Center is based on a thorough analysis of actual job behaviors translated into a series of simulated job-related scenarios where candidates for promotion are observed and graded by assessors who evaluate performance during the exercises. The value of Assessment Centers, developed through years of research and countless exercises, is their PREDICTIVE ABILITY. That is the ultimate success or failure of a promoted candidate has a high probability of correlation with how well the candidate performed in the Assessment Center.Another important value of an Assessment Center is that the promotional candidates participating in the process invariably feel that the process is fair, job related and equitable. This important aspect of a promotional process is often overlooked. Promotional candidates who feel good about the process are less likely to challenge their final ranking and the process. The Illinois Fire Chiefs Promotional Evaluation and Assessment Service was organized in 1975 to assist fire departments and fire protection districts in the selection of personnel for supervisory positions from the rank of Engineer through Fire Chief, utilizing the Assessment Center evaluation methodology. **Our Assessment Center processes are fully compliant with the Promotions Act (P.A.93-0411). All our Assessors are annually trained and certified to comply with the rules established by the Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) and Office of the State Fire Marshal.** |

**Is it worth the time, effort and cost?**  As a professional, critical partner in public safety service delivery, industry professionals agree that no cost, time or effort should be spared to select the right person for promotion. The outcome of selecting supervisors in the fire service is relatively permanent and the need to make the right decision on candidate abilities avoids failures within your organization. However, financial considerations must be taken into account, which is why the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association formed the Promotional Evaluation and Assessment Service to provide a professional, cost-effective approach to the promotional process. We are a leader in this service and bring current, professional, highly trained leaders to your organization to give you the greatest chance to make informed decisions for the future of your organization.

The next several pages contain information on the various promotional test plans describing the types of exercises and the related cost per candidate. Each exercise is observed, evaluated and scored by at least three assessors. Typically, using four recommended exercises, we would conduct your Assessment Center in one-day using from three to six, or more, Assessors depending on the number of candidates. For the rank of Lieutenant, we recommend four exercises; Group Problem Solving Exercise, Writing Exercise (tied to the Group Exercise), Problem Employee Exercise and a Tactical Exercise. For the ranks above Lieutenant we also recommend four exercises; Leaderless Group Problem Solving Exercise, Writing Exercise (tied to the Group Exercise), Problem Employee Exercise and a Tactical Exercise and/or Structured Oral Exercise.



We recommend you take advantage of an in-house **Training Workshop** for all the candidates prior to the Assessment Center. The workshops will give the candidates an overview of the exercises they will be participating in for the Assessment Center, as well as opportunities to practice sample exercises. We offer a four-hour Training Workshop or an eight-hour Training Workshop. By choosing the eight-hour Training Workshop candidates will have more opportunities to practice sample exercises. Assessors that are instructors for the Training Workshops do not participate in the Assessment Center. Training Workshops are governed by state statute and we can review those requirements with you.

 

We offer a post-assessment review **with the Commissioners/decision makers to discuss the candidates’ strengths and weaknesses**. If you choose this option, it must be conducted immediately after the conclusion of the Assessment Center (there are two options to select from). We also provide post-assessment reviews **with candidates, one-on-one, to discuss the process and their strengths and weaknesses.** This has proven to be a very valuable and extremely popular tool for growth of the individual candidates (one of our most sought after components of the testing process).

**ASSESSMENT CENTER EXERCISES**

Listed below are seven promotional exercises. Select the plan most suitable and beneficial to your needs. The Assessors will be Chief Fire Officers, or recently retired Chief Fire Officers, trained in observation skills and Assessment Center techniques. Public Act 95-956, effective on August 29, 2008, provided new requirements relative to the use of an “assessment center” in the promotional process (50 ILCS 742/50). Effective January 1, 2010, only individuals who are certified in accordance with the provisions approved by the Office of the State Fire Marshal may be employed to grade candidates participating in the assessment center testing process. All our assessors are certified with the Office of the State Fire Marshal. **All Exercises are the sole possession of the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association © 2018– IFCA PEAS and may not be duplicated, reproduced or published in whole or in part or used in any fashion without the expressed, written consent of the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association.**

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| **Exercise A** | **Structured Oral Interview** |
| **Dimensions:** The structured interview is to assess both attitudinal and background information on the Candidate. |
| **Approximate Time Per Candidate: 20-30 Minutes** |
| **Description:** Candidate may be questioned in the following areas:* Fire Service in general
* Local department rules, regulations, ordinance and operating procedures
* Candidate’s desire to become a manager/leader
* Candidate’s view of management functions
 |
| **Exercise B** | **Writing Exercise** |
| **Dimensions:** Conforms to assigned objectives and group consensus, presents problems and solutions, and writes completely and accurately, Logical order and format. |
| **Approximate Time Per Candidate: 20-60 Minutes** |
| **Description:** This exercise is given to evaluate the Candidate’s written communication skills utilizing memos, letters, etc. or a narrative format. Often, the Writing Exercise is used in conjunction with another Assessment Center Exercise for more realism and relativity. Examples include writing a Tactical Narrative after a Tactical Assessment Scenario, writing an After Action Report after an employee counseling session, and writing a consensus report from a Group Problem Solving Exercise. |

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| **Exercise C** | **Tactical Exercise** |
| **Dimensions:** Knowledge of common fire ground practices, knowledge of standard operating procedures, critical thinking, reading smoke, problem solving techniques, safety, judgment, adaptability, perception, leadership, interpersonal skills and delegation, situational awareness. |
| **Approximate Time Per Candidate: 30 Minutes** |
| **Description:** This custom exercise is a computer generated simulated incident in the community that may occur during officer’s tour of duty (we use material supplied by the department for accuracy and relative realization). The Candidate is given an emergency fire/EMS/Haz-Mat situation in his community. The Candidate is evaluated on the decisions he makes during this simulated emergency incident as they relate to common industry practices, department standard operating guidelines and local policies, procedures and expectations. |

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| **Exercise D** | **Presentation Exercise** |
| **Dimensions:** Ability to plan and organize their presentation, Written and oral communication skills, Problem analysis and Presentation skills. |
| **Approximate Time Per Candidate: 15-30 Minutes** |
| **Description:** This exercise requires the Candidate to prepare an outline and then give a presentation before a group (the Assessors). A wide range of topics, both traditional and current, are used to evaluate the Candidate’s public speaking ability based on a limited preparation time. This exercise is intended to demonstrate the candidate’s ability to present an idea, plan a presentation to various groups such as a workforce, civic group, and media, Village/City Manager and/or Board. This exercise is also routinely tied to a Chief Officer Hiring Process where the candidates start out with a Group Exercise.  |
| **Exercise E** | **Group Exercise** |
| **Dimensions:** Communications, problem analysis, planning, organization, leadership, sensitivity, decision making, decisiveness, development of subordinates, initiative, listening and persuasiveness. |
| **Approximate Time Per Candidate: 60 Minutes** |
| **Exercise F.1** | **Problem Solving Group** |
| **Description:** This exercise is designed for first level supervisors. Candidates work in a small group utilizing their oral and writing skills to arrive at a solution to a problem and justify their position. |
| **Exercise F.2** | **Leaderless Group** |
| **Description:** This exercise is designed for middle and top management positions. The Candidates are required to work together in a group (of 4 to 8); to reach a consensus with very limited information and limited direction. The exercise is used to evaluate the individual’s ability to establish and work with informal leadership roles while making decisions and solving problems. |
| **Exercise F** | Fact Finding and Decision-Making |
| **Dimensions:** Communications, problem analysis, planning, organization, leadership, sensitivity, decision making, decisiveness, development of subordinates, interpersonal relations and description and development of an action plan. |
| **Approximate Time Per Candidate: 30 Minutes** |
| **Exercise G.1** | **Employee Interview Simulation, Disgruntled Citizen, Community Encounter** |
| **Description:** The exercise is based on a simulated situation that would require the Candidate to conduct a one-on-one interview with an employee (an Assessor). Situations include employee counseling, a superior/subordinate interview, a problem employee scenario and other similar situations. The Employee Interview Simulation Exercise most often will deal with some type of a disciplinary or deficient performance problem. However, other scenarios such as interviews with dissatisfied citizens, grievance situations, or almost any other type of one-on-one situation encountered on the job are available. |



**Contact the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association Assessment & Consulting Services for a custom quote Phone: (847) 966-0732**

***CONDUCTING PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATIONS USING ASSESSMENT CENTER***

***METHODOLOGY FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT SUPERVISORY POSITIONS***