

**CAN ASSESSMENT CENTERS ELIMINATE
CHALLENGES TO THE PROMOTIONAL PROCESS?**

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Perhaps the most difficult problem facing fire service managers is promoting qualified fire service officers. The ability to promote competent fire officers is complicated by the increasing number of contested examinations. As with most fire departments, the Orange County Fire Rescue Department has had more than its share of contested promotional examinations.

The Fire Loss Management Division wanted to avoid problems with their Staff Lieutenant/Fire Inspector 1 promotional process. Due to the time constraints being placed to fill these new positions, the Fire Official wanted a “clean” examination that would identify the best people with as little delay as possible.

The purpose of this research project was to determine if an assessment center would be the best way to identify those employees. In conducting this research, the author utilized descriptive research methodologies involving a literature review and survey. The information learned during the research was used to answer the following questions:

1. What is an assessment center?
2. What is the necessary factors in the design of an assessment center?
3. Is the assessment center process fair to the concerns of affirmative action?
4. What is the history on assessment center based promotions being challenged?

Surveys were sent to metropolitan sized departments in the southeastern United States. In addition to Orange County Fire Rescue, 48 departments in the southeast were

identified through the International Association of Fire Chiefs as members of the Metropolitan Chiefs Section.

The study used a survey instrument to collect the necessary data. The survey was divided into four distinct categories: promotional testing in general, assessment centers in the promotional process, success of candidates selected by assessment centers, and the results of challenges that may have been filed as a result of an assessment center.

Surveys indicated that fire departments are utilizing many of the same dimensions in evaluating candidates for promotion as private industry. A major difference between the private and public sector's use of the assessment center is the public sector's lack of adherence to the recommendations in *the Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations*.

The survey results and literature review both indicate that the assessment centers conducted are reliable and valid. In fact, there have been little successful legal challenges. However, the successful legal challenges were based on the premise that the assessment center did not meet the criteria established. The fire service as a whole does not conduct an assessment center, but a "modified" assessment center. Until there is a proper peer review of the "modified" assessment center and proper recommendations are established to validate such a process, it may not stand litigation.

While no testing procedure is free of any legal challenges, assessment centers have been proven to weather the challenges and be a valid method of identifying qualified people for specific positions. It is recommended that the Orange County Fire Rescue Department's Fire Loss Management Division utilize an assessment center in their Staff Lieutenant/Fire Inspector I promotional examination process.

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INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the most difficult problem facing fire service managers is promoting qualified fire service officers. The ability to identify individuals who will be competent supervisors, managers, and leaders is a difficult task, complicated by the increasing number of contested examination processes and results. As with most fire departments, the Orange County Fire Rescue Department has had more than its share of contested promotional examinations.

Too often, promotional testing results usually include an appeal, grievance, or legal challenge that must be addressed and satisfied before the actual promotion can take place. Depending upon the complexity, the challenge can last days, months, and even years, causing animosity between the applicants, the department, and the governing body.

The Fire Loss Management Division wanted to avoid problems with their Lieutenant/ Fire Inspector 1 promotional process. The County Administrator had approved three Inspector 1 positions for Fiscal Year 2001, effective October 1, 2000. Due to the time constraints being placed to fill these new positions, the search for a new fire chief, and the County Chairman's commitment to a more diversified fire department, the Fire Official wanted a "clean" examination that would identify the best people for the positions with as little delay as possible.

More departments are using the assessment center as a viable testing method for promoting and hiring chief officers while still using conventional testing methods for the "troops". If the assessment center is effective in selecting the correct chief officer candidate, can it not also identify the most qualified line, nonsupervisory, and technical

personnel, and eliminate or at least satisfy the endless challenges occurring after most promotional examinations?

The Fire Official decided to try something other than the written test and oral interview method of promotions and looked to a more progressive, validated, and “legal” approach that would avoid the pitfalls usually associated with the Department’s promotional examination process. He then asked the author if he would be interested in developing a promotional examination that could meet the Fire Official’s expectations.

The purpose of this research project was to determine if an assessment center would be the best way to identify those employees who could perform the Inspector 1 job duties successfully. If successful, the process would be able to match the specific requirements for the job with those individuals best suited to accomplish the assigned tasks.

In conducting this research, the author utilized descriptive research methodologies involving a literature review and survey. The information learned during the research was used to answer the following questions:

1. What is an assessment center?
2. What is the necessary factors in the design of an assessment center?
3. Is the assessment center process fair to the concerns of affirmative action?
4. What is the history on assessment center based promotions being challenged?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Orange County Fire Rescue Department is a full service metropolitan sized public safety organization, located in sunny Central Florida. The department was created in 1981, when fifteen independent fire districts agreed to consolidate and form the Orange County Fire Rescue Department. The department operates 32 fire stations and provides fire, emergency medical, specialized rescue, and emergency management services to more than two million residents and visitors. The department has 858 employees and responded to more than 69, 900 calls for service in 1999.

The Fire Loss Management Division has 38 employees assigned; eleven personnel are Staff Lieutenant/Fire Inspector 1 (certified fire fighters), thirteen personnel are Municipal Fire Inspectors (civilian inspectors), four personnel are in managerial positions, and ten clerical support positions. Fire Loss Management is divided into three sections: Plans Review/Permit Office, New Construction, and Maintenance Inspections.

Fire inspection personnel have been faced with continuous and dramatic changes in the scope and complexity of services delivered to citizens, business operators, contractors, architects, engineers, and visitors. Because of the professionalism demanded from fire loss management personnel, they are being scrutinized more closely than ever before. The ability of fire inspectors, both civilian and certified, to make sound decisions on and off the inspection field are more important than ever in carrying out the goals and objectives of the organization. The Fire Official has recognized the need to establish the best selection and promotional system possible, so that personnel can perform more effectively in today's changing environment.

Since its inception, the fire department has used conventional written and oral testing practices in hiring and promoting. During the past two years the department started incorporating a variety of “assessment center” exercises to their process to simulate actual conditions. However, the traditional written test and follow-up oral interview has been the norm in the fire prevention bureau. In most cases, the written test was given first and candidates receiving a passing grade then completed the oral interview. An outside vendor was usually used to conduct the written test and the oral board evaluators were usually fire loss management division managers.

These promotional practices caused many grievances during the past several years, as well as numerous employee complaints against management. Invariably, before, during, or after the promotional testing begins or ends, someone is complaining or has filed a grievance against some portion of the examination.

Many individuals felt that people were being promoted to Inspector I only because they played golf with the captain, drank beer with the guys, or because of some other “payback”. In addition, to the apparent mistrust among the subordinates, there was a morale problem. The mistrust and morale issues are significant in that effective and efficient job performance suffers. If these problems continue, it could negatively impact service delivery, customer satisfaction (internal and external), and the retention and productivity of valuable employees.

By developing a promotional process using an assessment center, the Fire Official felt that he could put some of that trust and respect back into the selection process.

This research paper has a direct relationship to the Executive Leadership course the author attended in February 2000. The need to properly identify, train, and promote

qualified people within the fire service through the most efficient instrument is essential to the fire service. Like the Executive Leadership curriculum, the assessment center provides an effective predictability of performance from the promoted candidates.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Assessment Centers

Assessment centers are not a place, but a method (Coulton & Field, 1995). It is a method that utilizes multiple dimensions in an evaluation of prescribed behaviors. Situational tests are the essential feature of the assessment center, whereby exercises are developed to measure specific behaviors. The individual's behavior is then compared with the dimensions being evaluated and the candidate's overall ability to perform the job is determined (Haas, 1999).

Assessment centers are not a new idea. Private industry has been using some aspect of an assessment center since the 1950's (Keil, 1981). However, the assessment center concept was born in the military (Maher & Michelson, 1992). Shortly after World War I, the German High Command developed a process by which current military officers could be identified with exceptional command or military abilities. Those promising individuals were then trained in modern warfare.

During World War II, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the grandfather of the Central Intelligence Agency, used assessment centers to identify personnel who had the qualities to be a good spy (Maher & Michelson, 1992). Those dimensions measured by the OSS are the same qualities that are relevant to the fire service today: motivation,

practical intelligence, emotional stability, social relations, leadership, physical ability, observation and reporting, propaganda skills, and maintaining cover.

Essentially, Maher and Michelson (1992) continue, the fire service does the same thing. Candidates are given a series of exercises relevant to the position and are evaluated on how well they perform under realistic conditions.

The American Telegraph and Telephone Company (AT & T) was the first in American private industry to adapt the concept to select and identify management personnel (Keil, 1981). In the early 1960's several studies were published about the success that AT & T's program produced. Several major companies began to show interest in the concept and soon many American corporations were using assessment centers for selecting managers and were generally pleased with the results.

Law enforcement began experimenting with assessment centers in the early 1970's (Coulton & Field, 1995). Tielsch and Whisenand (1977) reported that there were over 1000 assessment centers in operation throughout the United States. According to George Thorton (1992), assessment centers are now used by many governmental and non-profit organizations to improve the accuracy of supervisory selection and development decisions.

The fire service "discovered" the assessment center approach in evaluating candidates as chief fire officers in the early 1980's and the assessment center has become an integral part of the examination process (Johnson, 1994). Louise Fitzgerald's and Marilyn Quaintance's study of 1982, and Samuel Yeager's study in 1986, determined that approximately 44 percent of fire and police departments utilized assessment centers in the promotional examination process. When Lowery conducted his survey in 1996, he

found that over 60 percent of the police and fire departments utilized assessment centers in the promotional examination process.

Assessment Center Design Factors

Due to the rapid growth of assessment centers, users began to raise serious questions about the validity of the process that reflected a need to establish parameters for all assessment center users. In 1975, the Third International Congress on the Assessment Center Method, an informal group of assessment center specialists issued the *Standards and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations* (Maher and Michelson, 1997). These guidelines were expanded in 1979 and again in 1989 by the Seventeenth International Congress on the Assessment Center Method. The 1989 revision was entitled, *Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations*. The Congress created ten essential elements that must be present for an examination process to be properly labeled as an assessment center.

The ten essential elements are: assessors, assessor training, gathering information, evaluating information, assessor discussion, number of assessors, assessment techniques, job analysis, candidate orientation, and participant feedback. The guidelines were intended to establish professional and ethical considerations for users of the assessment center method. Maher and Michelson (1997) further state that the term “assessment center” is restricted to those methods that follow the guidelines. The guidelines provide: guidance to human relations specialists, industrial/organizational psychologists, and others designing assessment centers; information to managers deciding whether or not to institute an assessment center; and instructions to assessors serving on the staff of an assessment center.

Kiel (1981) indicates that a job analysis is critical in the development of any assessment center process. According to Kiel (1981), the attitude of describing and analyzing jobs has not been taken seriously and was not a valid basis for personnel decisions.

Kouwe (1993) states the first step in any assessment center is making certain that there is a clear, complete, and current job description. It must provide precise benchmarks, those elements that are necessary for effective performance. Maher and Michelson (1997) agree that a job analysis is an absolute mandate and that many public sector assessment centers fail to meet the guidelines, simply because they are not based on a job analysis. The job analysis is critical to identifying the proper kinds of simulation exercises needed to determine what kinds of attributes will be measured.

Scott (1993) addresses the issue of job analysis by writing, "... the position being interviewed for must be analyzed to determine the skills and personality characteristics needed, and the importance of those characteristics must be rated." The author was very clear that both professional responsibility and the guidelines require a competent job analysis as the cornerstone in any selection process.

The question then arises as to what competency dimensions will be evaluated for fire service personnel. A number of authors have compiled comprehensive lists of supervisory attributes. The lists often include personal qualities, as well as actual job performance proficiencies. There is some consensus among most lists and according to Bittle (1987), the dimensions most often measured are: creativity, stress tolerance, leadership, sensitivity, initiative, independence, problem solving, decisiveness, flexibility, tenacity, management and control, risk taking, judgement, and impact.

Lowery (1993) states that as with all exercises, the more realistic the simulation, the easier it will be for the candidate to get into the role and the more accurate the assessment will be of the candidate's ability to handle similar situations in real life. Joiner (1990) also states that job related exercises also increase the predictive validity of the screening process because the candidates are more easily able to address the task as they would in reality.

Another key component in the assessment center process is the assessors and their ability to accurately observe and evaluate the candidate's behavior. The Guidelines provide specific direction concerning the training goals of assessors. According to Scott (1993), the most important factor in choosing assessors is their ability to objectively observe and evaluate behavior.

Assessment centers do have a limitation. They tend to favor smart people who have good verbal and interpersonal skills. They do not discriminate well among those who do not have good time management skills, do not take supervision well, have certain personality disorders, or poor writing skills (Scott, 1993). And because of these limitations, it may be necessary to incorporate more traditional testing procedures into the assessment center process.

Legal Issues

Bittle (1987) states that research findings have validated the use of the above dimensions to be in compliance with the Equal Employment Opportunity Act guidelines in identifying management potential, provided they are measured under professionally supervised assessment center conditions. In fact, Coulton and Field (1995) state that promoting and hiring of police officers have been viewed favorably by the legal system

when they were based on the results from a professionally administered assessment center. Thorton (1992) states, “In no case has a court ruled against an organization using an assessment center.”

Most courts view assessment centers as the preferred technique to remedy gender and/or racial discrimination in human resource management decisions. Courts have held that the situational tests in assessment centers are generally received as fair and that reduces the risks of complaint filings by unsuccessful applicants. Undoubtedly, this view may be held because of multiple assessors and variety of techniques used.

Furthermore, Title I of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act requires that selection decisions be made on the basis of the applicant’s ability to perform essential job functions, with or without reasonable accommodations. The law prohibits the use of medical examinations to screen applicants prior to an offer of employment.

Another advantage of the assessment center is the validity of the data they produce. Studies of previous public agency assessment center applications (mainly police departments) with private industry assessment centers provided considerable support for the validity of the scores generated. Because assessment centers have a reputation for accurately identifying successful candidates, there is widespread support for the criterion-based scores.

PROCEDURES

The population for this study included those fire departments in Florida that the Orange County Fire Rescue Department uses for benchmarking. This was done because these departments are approximately the same size and deliver similar services, and the department routinely uses this measure to determine salaries, benefits, equipment acquisition, resources, and other personnel and operational areas.

Since there are a limited number of departments that Orange County Fire Rescue uses in their benchmarking, additional surveys were sent to other metropolitan sized departments in the southeastern United States. In addition to Orange County Fire Rescue, 48 departments in the southeast were identified through the International Association of Fire Chiefs as members of the Metropolitan Chiefs Section. Criteria for membership in the IAFC Metro Section includes those chief officers with 400 or more career fire fighters and a population of more than 200,000 people. The geographical area was limited due to similar labor laws and working environment.

The study used a survey instrument to collect the necessary data. The survey instrument's questions were developed from the various surveys used in the past to determine the effectiveness of assessment centers. Common questions were identified and listed. Based on the literature review and from the list of often-used questions, four distinct categories were created.

The four categories selected were the promotional testing process in general, the use of assessment centers in the promotional process, success of the candidates selected through an assessment center process, and the results of any challenges that may have been filed as a result of an assessment center process.

The final survey instrument containing fourteen questions and a comments section was mailed to the selected fire departments with a cover letter stating the purpose of the study and providing instructions to the respondents. Of the 48 surveys delivered, a total of 39 were returned, for a response rate of 76 percent.

RESULTS

The results were achieved through the literature review and survey responses.

Promotional Testing Process

Nearly all of the departments (ninety-eight percent) returning surveys stated that they used a written test in their promotional examination. Due to the costs involved with an assessment center, especially when using an outside vendor, forty-two percent of the departments stated that it was used as a selection tool to advance candidates to the actual assessment center phase of the examination process. One fire department stated that while they use competitive testing for hiring employees, their promotional process for every position but fire chief was based on oral interviews and seniority.

Fifty-two percent of the departments utilized their training staff to conduct promotional testing, while forty-one percent of the respondents used an outside vendor to manage their testing, and two percent of the respondents stated that their human resource department handled their promotional process. Five percent of the departments stated that they use a combination of the above in the development and implementation of their examination process.

More than two-thirds of the respondents provided informational sessions, seminars, study guides, preparatory courses, or assistance prior to the promotional examination. Five of the respondents indicated that it is part of their minority hiring and promoting goals that any employee requesting remedial training in any area is provided the opportunity to improve their skills in their deficient areas. One department stated that they are required to provide remedial training only to minority and protective class members. Three departments stated that their fire fighter local provides promotional examination assistance to their members from remedial courses to mock assessment centers.

Use of Assessment Centers

More than 70 percent of the responding departments stated that they use some aspect of the assessment center process in their promotions. Interestingly, all but three of the departments responding used the assessment center process in their new hire process.

Seventy percent of the respondents stated that they provide assessor training. The training varied from one to eight hours, depending upon the complexity of the assessment center and the experience of the assessors. Only four departments provided assessor training in accordance with the guideline's recommendations of eight or more hours of training for each eight hours of candidate testing. Ninety-four percent of the respondents utilized two to three assessors for each exercise/dimension tested during the assessment center.

Seventy-one percent of the respondents stated that they used some sort of exercise to measure at least eight of the dimensions in the assessment center guidelines. Twelve percent of the departments stated they measured six dimensions and three percent

indicated that they measured less than six dimensions. Of the fourteen dimensions noted on the survey, the six consistent dimensions tested were oral communication, written communication, leadership, planning, delegation, and judgement.

More than 60 percent of the respondents were either unfamiliar or did not use the assessment center guidelines in the validation of their process. Thirty-three percent of the respondents were familiar with or used some aspect of the recommendations in the guidelines. Only three departments stated that it was part of their request for proposal that the vendor had to comply with all of the recommendations in the assessment center guidelines. One respondent stated that until their training chief attended a course at the National Fire Academy did they incorporate any of the recommendations in the guidelines and that they are working on implementing all of the recommendations in their district chief promotional process scheduled for January, 2001.

The amount of time that metropolitan departments in the southeast have used assessment centers in their promotional examinations is also varied. Of the departments using assessment centers, more than 50 percent of the respondents have used the assessment center as part of their examination process for five or more years. Fourteen percent have used the assessment center process for ten or more years. Twenty-one percent of the respondents have used an assessment center for less than five years and two departments implemented assessment centers within the past year.

Candidate's Success

All but one of the respondents stated that no candidate for promotion did not complete their probationary period in their new position. And the one respondent stated that the employee was terminated because they discovered he had cheated on the written

examination. The only time that there appeared to be a failure of the assessment center was involving new hires. The reasons for leaving or being terminated usually dealt with interpersonal relationship problems, leaving for a better position, or problems with the candidate's background investigation.

The success rate of candidates that were promoted by some other method than an assessment center was very similar. Only seven departments stated that a promotional candidate did not complete their probationary period. The vast majority of people leaving or being terminated were also new hires.

Challenge Results

Nine percent of the respondents stated that there had been a successful challenge to their assessment center promotional examination process. The main reason that the challenge was successful was based upon the question of the assessment center's validity and compliance with the established recommendations. As a result of the challenge two of the departments adopted the recommendations in future assessment centers and the remaining departments contracted with outside vendors who had experience with assessment centers. It is interesting to note, that only one of the successful challenges involved affirmative action related questions.

While the question was not asked, almost 50 percent of the respondents volunteered that until they started utilizing the assessment center almost every challenge was a success. In fact, one respondent stated that it was unusual to not have at least one or two candidates promoted because of a procedural error, poorly written test questions, or affirmative action complaint.

DISCUSSION

Much of the literature reviewed for this paper indicated that assessment centers were the preferred method for promotional examinations. In fact, the results of the survey indicated that the majority of respondents agreed that assessment centers work well in the promotional and hiring process.

The survey also indicated that fire departments are utilizing many of the same dimensions in evaluating candidates for promotion that private industry is using for promoting managers and supervisors (Scott, 1993).

A major difference between the private and public sector's use of the assessment center promotional process is the public sector's lack of adherence to the recommendations that were developed and implemented in *the Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations*.

Another difference is the dimensions not measured. It was interesting to note that only one department listed subordinate development as a measured dimension. The private sector tends to place a higher emphasis on developing subordinates and delegation than on leadership and decision-making (Fitzgerald & Quaintance, 1982). In addition, Lowery (1996) states that many large private sector organizations encourage, and in some cases require, mentoring by its management staff to promising young employees. Whereas, the public sector tends to hold an opposite point of view as based upon the survey results.

Another area where the survey respondents support the findings in the literature review is the number of fire departments utilizing the assessment center process. According to the respondents, only fourteen percent of the departments utilized

assessment centers for ten or more years, while research conducted in 1982 (Fitzgerald, et al) and 1986 (Yeager) indicated that 44 percent of the police and fire departments in the United States used an assessment center.

Today, 71 percent of the respondents used an assessment center in their promotional or new hire examination process. Lowery in 1996 found that over 60 percent of the police and fire departments use assessment centers. While the literature review studies were conducted nationwide and this paper only dealt with southeastern metropolitan fire departments, both indicate that the number of fire departments conducting assessment centers have increased.

Another item supported by the literature review and surveys is the deficiency in the amount of training provided assessors. Lowery (1996) found that the average amount of time spent by the public sector was four to seven hours; whereas the survey results indicated that less than one percent of the departments provided the requisite number of hours. Furthermore, the survey indicates that very few departments utilized an assessment center as defined in the guidelines established for such a process. While fire departments are calling their programs assessment centers, there are in fact, some hybrid, since they follow the intent and not the letter of the guidelines. Lowery (1996) states that because of the complexity of the work of police and fire departments, perhaps the public sector should use the term, “modified” assessment center, because “we cannot call a test an assessment center unless it is conducted in accord with the published guidelines. Anything else, is something else.”

The respondents and literature review both indicate that the assessment center promotional examination process conducted is reliable and valid. In fact, the literature

review and several respondents stated that there have been little successful legal challenges. The literature review did address the legal success and the view of the court based upon those assessment centers conducted in accordance with the recommendations and guidelines established. This correlates with the respondents surveyed that the successful challenges were based upon compliance with the guidelines and validity. Until there is a proper peer review of the “modified” assessment center and proper recommendations are established to validate such a process, it may not stand litigation if the plaintiff has an attorney who is familiar with assessment centers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the literature review and survey results, the author agrees that an assessment center is the best approach in filling the Staff Lieutenant/Fire Inspector I positions. In order to measure the attributes of a qualified Inspector I, a job analysis is not only essential, it is critical to the success of the program.

With a comprehensive job analysis, the skills, knowledge, and abilities required can be identified in order to establish those job dimensions that are critical to successful performance.

While the assessment center is being developed, it is also important that the Fire Official and his management team discuss with fire prevention personnel about the changes being made to the examination process. A seminar should be scheduled to explain the use of assessment centers in the promotional examination process, what dimensions will be tested based upon the job analysis, how the dimensions will be tested,

what scoring mechanism will be used to determine the ranking of the candidates, and what criteria will be used in selecting the candidates. Based upon the history of previous examinations, it may be necessary to fill the new positions from the candidates in ranking order.

To further insure “buy-in” of the program, the Fire Official should encourage his personnel to assist in developing a comprehensive job analysis for the Inspector I and Municipal Fire Inspectors. In addition, an outside vendor familiar with and well-versed in assessment centers should be used in the development and implementation of the assessment center. This would further reduce the severity of any challenge from an unsuccessful candidate that may result.

Furthermore, it is critical that if the assessment center process is selected, it must be an assessment center that complies with all of the recommendations established by the guidelines.

Regardless of the type of promotion process selected and ultimately implemented, the department will need to minimize the initial resistance to a new testing procedure through effective communication throughout the organization. Furthermore, the Fire Official should consider inviting the Local International Association of Fire Fighters Union and the County’s Human Resource Department to monitor the new testing method to insure that the institutionalization of the change is working as anticipated.

While no testing procedure is free of any legal challenges, assessment centers have been proven to weather the challenges and be a valid, accurate, and successful method of identifying qualified people for specific positions.

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APPENDIX A

**A SURVEY CONCERNING PROMOTIONAL TESTING
PROCEDURES AND ASSESSMENT CENTERS**

This survey is being done as a project for the National Fire Academy and is being used to determine the effectiveness of assessment center examinations for promotions.

1. Which of the following testing procedures does your department use in a promotional process? Please circle all that apply.

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| a. oral interview | c. assessment center |
| b. written test | d. other process _____ |

2. Who conducts your promotional process? Please circle all that apply.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. outside vendor | c. fire department training chief |
| b. human resource department | d. other _____ |

3. Are the participants provided information prior to the testing (i.e., reading list, schedule, grading method, ...)?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | b. No |
|--------|-------|

4. Do you have different types of testing procedures for chief officer positions vs. company officer positions? If so, what processes are used?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | b. No |
|--------|-------|

explain difference if any _____

If you circled assessment center in question one, would you please answer the following questions. If you did not circle assessment center in question one, please return the survey to the address at the end of the survey.

4. Does the entity conducting the assessment center provide Assessor Training prior to the actual assessment center examination?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | b. No |
|--------|-------|

If the answer is yes, what is the length of the training? _____

5. What is the minimum number of assessors used to evaluate each dimension within the assessment center process? _____

6. Typically, how many dimensions are measured in your assessment center process? _____

7. Please circle all of the dimensions that are measured in your assessment center process.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. Oral communication | h. Persuasiveness |
| b. Written communication | i. Decisiveness |
| c. Initiative | j. Community Sensitivity |
| d. Listening skills | k. Planning and organizing |
| e. Subordinate development | l. Independence |
| f. Judgement | m. Delegation |
| g. Interpersonal relationships | n. Leadership |

Any other dimensions not listed? _____

8. Please circle each type of exercise used in the assessment center process.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Leaderless group | f. Interview simulation |
| b. In-basket | g. Background interview |
| c. Tactical simulation | h. Oral presentation |
| d. Group discussion | i. Personnel counseling |
| e. Written problem | j. Biographical sketch |

Any other type exercise not listed? _____

9. Are the Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations, endorsed by the Seventeenth International Congress, utilized by the developers of the assessment center to validate the process?

- a. Yes b. No c. Don't know

10. How long have you been using the assessment center process for your promotional examination? _____

11. Did any candidate who was promoted through the assessment center process not complete probation?

- a. Yes b. No c. Don't know

12. Did any candidate who was promoted by any other process than an assessment center not complete probation?
- a. Yes b. No c. Don't know
13. Has a promotional process conducted by an assessment center legally challenged?
- a. Yes b. No c. Don't know
- If yes, what was the disposition? _____
- _____
- _____
14. Has a promotional process conducted by other than an assessment center legally challenged?
- a. Yes b. No c. Don't know
- If yes, what was the disposition? _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

If you have any other information that you feel would be useful to this survey, please add in the space below.-

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to complete this survey. All answers will remain confidential. A summary of the survey results will be available from Carl F. Weaver, Brevard Community College, 1595 Shelter Street, Northwest, Palm Bay, FL 32907. You may obtain a copy by checking the box below and include your name and address.

☐ Yes, I would like to receive a copy of the survey results

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____