

Sample Test Material for:

Administrative management of work and resources

Test material will be presented in a job simulation exercise format.

For more information about this format, please see the section titled *More Information on Job Simulation Exercises* that follows the *Sample Job Simulation Exercise*.

Test Task: You will be given **Background** information on a fictional agency and your role in the agency. You will then be presented with a series of situations. Each situation will be followed by a list of choices that represent possible responses one could make. You will need to read the information presented and select the best choice(s) to take to collect relevant information and/or resolve the problem(s) in the situation described.

SAMPLE JOB SIMULATION EXERCISE:

Background and Sections A and B:

BACKGROUND
New York State Department of Regulations

A new bureau, the **Bureau of Communications**, has just been organized within the New York State Department of Regulations. The Bureau Director is Rena Morgan. The Bureau's principal objective is the efficient and effective flow of communication and information within and among divisions in the Department and between the Department and its publics.

The **Bureau of Communications** is comprised of three groups:

- The **Public Relations Group** serves as the liaison between the Department's Commissioner and Executive Office, and the public -- primarily the media.
- The **Freedom of Information Group** maintains and processes requests from individuals and groups for information under the Freedom of Information Laws and Regulations.
- The **Central Communications Group** serves as an information and communication center for Department management and the general public.

You have recently been appointed as Head of the Central Communications Group within the Bureau of Communications. The principal functions and activities of your group are as follows:

- Make and coordinate presentations on Department issues to the public and other interest groups.
- Respond to letters and telephone inquiries on general issues pertinent to Department operations.
- Serve as liaison between the Department and Legislative staff.
- Produce Department publications.
- Design Department forms for public and internal use.
- Prepare Department annual report and other reports as assigned.
- Assist Public Relations Group staff with publicity issues.
- Review communication flow within the Department and recommend necessary improvements.
- Assist in drafting and disseminating Department policies and procedures.

Your supervisor is Rena Morgan, Director, Bureau of Communications.

As Head of the Central Communications Group, you supervise a secretary and three unit supervisors:

- Sandra Fineberg, Secretary 1
- Frank Williams, Supervisor, Agency Publication Unit
- Mary Walters, Supervisor, Agency Presentations Unit
- Bill Richards, Supervisor, Legislative Inquiries Unit

Frank Williams and Mary Walters are both experienced employees. Frank and Mary each supervise two professional staff. Bill Richards has recently been assigned to your group after spending the first 18 months of his agency employment in one of the Department's line divisions. Bill's unit has one professional staff position, which is currently vacant. In addition to working as your secretary, Sandra Fineberg also provides word processing support to Frank, Mary, and Bill and their unit staff.

You have been Head of the Central Communications Group for just under a month. After three days away from the office, you find the following items in your in-basket:

- a memo from Bill Richards to Rena Morgan, concerning a new training course
- a memo from Bill Richards to you, concerning his workload
- a memo from Sandra Fineberg to you, concerning Bill Richards

READ THE IN-BASKET MATERIALS WHICH FOLLOW.

**IN-BASKET ITEM ONE
M E M O R A N D U M**

TO: Rena Morgan, Director, Bureau of Communications
FROM: Bill Richards
SUBJECT: What this Department needs . . .

TO: *You*

*What is this about?
Rena*

. . . is a new training course on "Ethical Decision Making."

From my experience in working with public inquiries and Department correspondence, it strikes me that our decisions are difficult, and the "best" solutions are seldom without costs. Yet we need to make these decisions without undue delay.

In one of my graduate courses, we studied F. Mosher, who emphasized the need for flexibility and value priorities in public decision-making. There is a high ethical content in governmental decisions - often they do not succumb neatly to factual analysis. Rarely are they totally right or totally wrong. And the public character of this Department's decisions adds complicating dimensions to ethical behavior.

Anyway, I have lots of ideas that would be useful for this course. I'd like to present it to interested Department employees in general and bureau staff in particular (they need it!).

I'm available to discuss this in further detail, at your convenience.

IN-BASKET ITEM TWO
MEMORANDUM

TO: You, Head, Central Communications Group
FROM: Bill Richards
SUBJECT: Workload

I am pleased to be assigned to this group, since the work involves critical activities occurring throughout the Department. I enjoy most of the work I have had to date, and am always eager for more.

However, I get the impression that you think some of my work is "incomplete" or has "erroneous" information. Let me point out that I probably produce more than Frank's and Mary's units combined. Maybe if they did more of their share of the work I would feel less rushed.

So far all of my assignments involve gathering information or preparing letters or reports under very tight deadlines. I would like to get some assignments that involve longer range planning or project development as well as get a chance to do some public speaking. Also, there are some divisions I am not familiar with. If I knew more about the work of these divisions, I'm sure my work would be even better.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss better ways of scheduling the workload with you as soon as possible. I had a course in workload scheduling if that will be of any help.

IN-BASKET ITEM THREE
MEMORANDUM

TO: You, Head, Central Communications Group
FROM: Sandra Fineberg, Secretary 1

Bill Richards has insulted me again, and I feel it is just not fair. I must do work for four people in this group, but Bill insists that his work is "top priority" and should be done first. He told me I am just too slow!

I don't need this. I am going to request a transfer if the situation continues.

Continue now with SECTION A

SECTION A

To address the most urgent of these three memos, you would first deal with: **(Choose ONLY ONE.)**

1. Bill's memo and Rena's note about Bill's proposed training course
2. Bill's memo about the group's workload
3. Sandra's memo about Bill

- Mark 'A' on your answer sheet if you are **selecting** that choice or action.
- Mark 'B' on your answer sheet if you are **not selecting** that choice or action.
- You **must** mark A or B for **each** choice presented.

Then, go to SECTION B on the next page.

SECTION B

Rena calls you and expresses her concern about Bill Richards' manner in working with others. Rena comments that Bill produces a substantial amount of work, but it is not always accurate. Rena also says that she considers Bill abrasive and argumentative. She asks you to talk with Bill further and then get back to her.

You would now: **(Choose UP TO TWO.)**

4. Review available records of Bill's work performance and relationships.
5. Ask Frank and Mary if they have had any personal problems working with Bill.
6. Check informally with others in the Department and see how they view Bill.
7. Briefly review Frank's, Mary's, and Bill's unit assignments and overall workload.
8. Ask Sandra for a written list of the problems she has had with Bill.
9. Contact the director of the line division where Bill was employed for the last 18 months.

- Mark 'A' on your answer sheet if you are **selecting** that choice or action.
- Mark 'B' on your answer sheet if you are **not selecting** that choice or action.
- You **must** mark A or B for **each** choice presented.

This is the end of the Sample Background and Sections A and B.

The Solutions to Sections A and B are found on the following page.

Solution to Sections A and B from the Sample Job Simulation Exercise:

In the preceding sample Section A, the *most important* memo to address first is choice 3, and this choice is valued at +1. The memos described in choices 1 and 2 will require attention, but are not as critical as the urgent concerns expressed in Sandra Fineberg's memo (choice 3). Therefore, choices 1 and 2 are valued at 0.

Listed below are all the choices presented in sample Section A and their assigned values:

1. Bill's memo and Rena's note about Bill's proposed training course **0**
2. Bill's memo about the group's workload **0**
3. Sandra's memo about Bill **+1**

In the preceding sample Section B, the most helpful steps to take in gathering information before talking with Bill are described in choices 4 and 7. Choice 4 offers more comprehensive information on the quality and quantity of Bill's work performance and relationships, and choice 7 provides objective information about the distribution of work, which Bill views as a problem (see preceding memo). Therefore, in this "Choose UP TO TWO" section, choices 4 and 7 are valued at +1. Choices 5, 6, 8, and 9 are either less effective or inappropriate; therefore, these choices are valued at 0.

Listed below are all the choices presented in sample Section B and their assigned values:

4. Review available records of Bill's work performance and relationships. **+1**
5. Ask Frank and Mary if they have had any personal problems working with Bill. **0**
6. Check informally with others in the Department and see how they view Bill. **0**
7. Briefly review Frank's, Mary's, and Bill's unit assignments and overall workload. **+1**
8. Ask Sandra for a written list of the problems she has had with Bill. **0**
9. Contact the director of the line division where Bill was employed for the last 18 months. **0**

Scoring Sections A and B from the Sample Job Simulation Exercise:

Section A is a "Choose ONLY ONE" section. There is only **one** positive choice in this section, choice 3, and that choice is valued at +1. There are two other choices in this section, choices 1 and 2, and they are valued at 0.

In a "Choose ONLY ONE" section, only one of the candidate's choices is scored. A choice with a value of 0 is scored before a choice with a value of +1.

- A candidate would receive the maximum credit for this section (+1) if the choice valued at +1 was selected and none of the choices valued at 0 were selected (i.e., if the candidate marked 'A' on the answer sheet for choice 3 and 'B' for choices 1 and 2).
- A candidate would receive a section score of 0 if either of the choices valued at 0 were selected.
- If a candidate selected **more than** one choice, only one choice would be scored. A choice valued at 0 would be scored and additional choices valued at 0 or +1 would **not** be scored.
- A candidate would receive a section score of 0 if **no** choices were selected.

Section B is a “Choose UP TO TWO” section. There are **two** positive choices in this section, choices 4 and 7, which are valued at +1. There are four other choices in this section, choices 5, 6, 8, and 9, and they are valued at 0.

In a “Choose UP TO TWO” section, only two of the candidate’s choices are scored. Choices with a value of 0 are scored before choices with a value of +1.

Some of the possible scoring outcomes include the following:

- A candidate would receive the maximum credit for this section (+2) if the two choices valued at +1 were selected and none of the choices valued at 0 were selected (i.e., if the candidate marked ‘A’ on the answer sheet for choices 4 and 7, and ‘B’ for choices 5, 6, 8, and 9.)
- A candidate who selected two choices, one valued at +1 and one valued at 0, would receive a section score of +1, the sum of the two choices.
- A candidate who selected *only one choice* would receive the score associated with that choice (i.e., either +1 or 0).
- If a candidate selected **more than** two choices, only two choices would be scored. The choices valued at 0 would be scored first, then the +1 choice, up to a maximum of two choices total.
- A candidate would receive a section score of 0 if **no** choices were selected.

End of Sample Job Simulation Exercise

MORE INFORMATION ON JOB SIMULATION EXERCISES:

Job simulation exercises present candidates with situational judgment problems, similar to those encountered on the job, and many possible answer choices.

Each answer choice is numbered. Candidates must select the best answer choice(s) presented and, on the separate scannable answer sheet, mark ‘A’ for the choice(s) selected and ‘B’ for the choice(s) not selected. Candidates must mark each and every answer choice as either one they are selecting or one they are **not** selecting.

In the preceding Sample Job Simulation Exercise, each choice has a value of +1 or 0. In sections that specify the number of choices to select (e.g. Choose ONLY ONE or Choose UP TO THREE), only that number of choices are scored. In these sections, a candidate’s choices with a value of 0 are scored before the candidate’s choices with a value of +1. If a candidate has selected more than the specified number, only the number of choices specified are scored.

To compute subtest scores for a job simulation exercise, candidate section scores are totaled and scaled according to the range of possible points for the subtest (e.g., 0 to 15, 0 to 30, etc.)

Directions for Job Simulation Exercises:

The job simulation exercises will present you with situations that are similar to those you might encounter on the job. The job simulation exercise will start with **Background** information that will tell you about the job setting and your role in that setting. The Background may also include some job-related issues, situations, and/or resource materials for you to consider.

You will then be given a series of situations in simulation Sections. Each Section will present the situation and choices representing possible responses one could make in that situation. You are to read the information and select the best choice(s) to take to collect relevant information and/or resolve the problem(s) in the situation presented.

The job simulation exercise will start with **Section A**. The Sections will continue in alphabetical order (Section B, then Section C, etc.) to the end of the exercise. Each Section will present you with choices, and you are to select the most appropriate choice(s) from among those presented.

Instructions for Selecting Answer Choices:

Each section will include an instruction on **how many** choices to select in that section. The instructions may tell you to:

- choose a specific number of choices, e.g., **“Choose ONLY ONE.”**
- choose **“up to”** a maximum number of choices, e.g., **“Choose UP TO THREE.”** (Candidates may choose fewer than three, but should not choose more than three.)
- choose as many choices as are appropriate, e.g., **“Choose AS MANY as are appropriate.”**

Follow the instructions to each section carefully. Failure to follow the instructions may result in a lower score.

Instructions for Marking Answer Choices:

In order to be scored, all your answers must be recorded on a separate, scannable answer sheet. Using a No. 2 pencil, you are to mark ‘A’ for the choices you select and ‘B’ for the choices you are not selecting. The following instructions will appear at the end of each Section:

- Mark 'A' on your answer sheet if you are **selecting** that choice or action.
- Mark 'B' on your answer sheet if you are **not selecting** that choice or action.
- You **must** mark **A or B** for **each** choice presented.

You must mark either **A** or **B** for each choice presented because your answer sheet will be optically scanned by a machine that reads the darkest filled-in circle next to a choice number as your selection for that choice number. Marking **A** for choices you select and **B** for choices you do not select will ensure that your choices are recorded accurately.

Complete instructions on how to mark your answer sheet will be provided with your test materials on the day of your test. Be sure to follow these instructions carefully to ensure that your answers are scored correctly.

End of More Information on Job Simulation Exercises