Aims for today’s Careers lunch and learn

• Preparing for psychometric tests

Please turn **on** your phone, laptop etc and take as many pictures as you like. And, **ask questions as we go**
What are online tests?

- Largely, conventional psychometric tests
- Most commonly:
  - Numerical reasoning
  - Verbal reasoning
  - Personality questionnaires
  - Values/interests – Situational Judgement Tests
  - E-tray
  - Games
How graduate recruitment process looks

Traditional model has largely been

- Complete and submit application
- Manual sift (competency based questionnaires)
- First Interview (Interview and Psychometric tests)
- Assessment Centre
- OFFERS

But now looks more like this

- Submit on-line application
- Semi-automated sift
- Online testing and video interview
- Assessment Centre
- OFFERS
The application begins with a psychometric test

**Typical application process**

- **Verbal and numerical, SJT and reasoning tests and video interview**
- **Background information such as: education, nationality, languages**
- **Open questions e.g. tell us about clubs you have been involved in, extra curricular activities, voluntary work**
- **Motivation – “provide us with a pen sketch of yourself”**
- **Specific questions on areas such as: teamwork, problem solving, innovation**
Why use psychometric tests

• Identify high preforming candidates, help point to future success
• Identify competencies not immediately visible from a regular interview
• Remove interview bias
• High predictor of future success (both through the assessment process and in the role)
• Cost effective, ensure the recruitment process is as efficient as possible through optimal conversion rates (applicants / hires)
What are the benefits?

- More cost effective – Return on Investment in hiring
- Speeds process up for both applicants and assessors
- Perceived to be more fair
How to pass: Verbal reasoning

• Base your answer on the information you have in front of you, and don’t bring in any personal or prior knowledge
• Read and critically evaluate texts
• Look up the meaning of words and think of alternative words with the same meaning
• Review understanding of grammar
• Practise spotting associations between words or types of words with a friend
• Complete crosswords and word games to improve vocabulary.
• Read newspapers, articles on the internet, books and journals to improve ability to understand and interpret written material.
Plants survive by extracting CO2 from the air and using sunlight to convert it into proteins and sugars. Scientists have found that plants are growing faster as they absorb the increasing volume of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This phenomenon is buying us time as the climate changes, however scientists have warned against drawing false comfort from such findings, as other factors, such as drought will have a negative effect.

The negative effects of drought will invalidate the positive effects of increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

A TRUE
B FALSE
C CANNOT SAY
Plants survive by extracting CO2 from the air and using sunlight to convert it into proteins and sugars. Scientists have found that plants are growing faster as they absorb the increasing volume of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This phenomenon is buying us time as the climate changes, however scientists have warned against drawing false comfort from such findings, as other factors, such as drought will have a negative effect.

Plants would not exist without carbon dioxide.

A True  B False  C Cannot Say

CORRECT ANSWER - A
YOUR RESPONSE - A

Explanations
The first sentence states that plants survive partly by extracting CO2 from the air. Consequently, they would not survive without carbon dioxide. Therefore, the statement is true.
How to pass numerical reasoning

• Work with numerical data or materials
• Revise basic arithmetic principles and equations – ratios, percentages, fractions
• Practice completing calculations with and without a calculator
• Look at tables, graphs and charts and interpret their meaning in words
• ‘Eyeball’ data by looking for patterns and predicting future trends
• Critically examine pieces of numerical information
• Read financial reports in newspapers and journals

Aim for speed **and** accuracy
What was the overall percentage decrease in the share price between June 2008 and May 2009?

A 11%  B 21%
C 44%  D 56%
E 74%
What was the overall percentage decrease in the share price between June 2008 and May 2009?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>11%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CORRECT ANSWER - D**

**YOUR RESPONSE - D**

**Explanations**

**Step 1**
- Share price in Jun 08 = 0.71
- Share Price in May 09 = 0.31
- First, establish the actual difference between the 2 share prices:
  \[0.71 - 0.31 = 0.4\]

**Step 2**
- Now establish what 0.4 is as a percentage of 0.71 (the original share price).
- This will give you the difference as a percentage:
  \[(0.4 / 0.71) \times 100 = 56\%\]
Situational Judgment Tests

• SJTs are designed by employers to simulate the decisions you will need to take in the role you’re applying for

• Employers have a set of responses which reflect how the ideal candidate will respond

• Situational judgement tests are strong and effective predictors of future success
You work as an IT Specialist for a large electronics retailer. You have been made aware of certain glitches within the stock check system that manages and automatically requests deliveries to each store. Your management are concerned as this issue has never occurred before and may result in over-stocking or no stocking at all for approximately 74 stores. You do not have much clarity on the cause of this problem. What do you do?

**STATEMENT A**

Identify the error logs and explore the information within. Consider the timings of the problems and when they were reported, the location of the stores, and whether these particular stores have specific exclusive products in their stock. Share this information with your team to get a quick resolution.

![BEST](#) ![WORST](#)

**STATEMENT B**

Contact the providers of the system and ask them to give guidance on what to do next.

![BEST](#) ![WORST](#)

**STATEMENT C**

Ring up each store that is affected and ask them for a detailed log of what they experienced, such that any consistent pattern may emerge.

![BEST](#) ![WORST](#)

**STATEMENT D**

Notify all stores via the central notification system that you plan to reboot the stock checking system, as this has previously worked with many machines that run similar software.

![BEST](#) ![WORST](#)
You work as an IT Specialist for a large electronics retailer. You have been made aware of certain glitches within the stock check system that manages and automatically requests deliveries to each store. Your management are concerned as this issue has never occurred before and may result in over-stocking or no stocking at all for approximately 74 stores. You do not have much clarity on the cause of this problem. What do you do?

A. Identify the error logs and explore the information within. Consider the timings of the problems and when they were reported, the location of the stores, and whether these particular stores have specific exclusive products in their stock. Share this information with your team to get a quick resolution.

B. Contact the providers of the system and ask them to give guidance on what to do next.

C. Ring up each store that is affected and ask them for a detailed log of what they experienced, such that any consistent pattern may emerge.

D. Notify all stores via the central notification system that you plan to reboot the stock checking system, as this has previously worked with many machines that run similar software.
You are working as a Manager in a large supermarket. As you wander along some of the aisles you decide to spend some time observing the behaviour of customers. As you observe, you notice a customer who has walked along the same aisle twice. He appears to be looking for something but has not picked up anything. The customer walks on and away to the next aisle. What do you do?

**STATEMENT A**

Nothing, the customer has probably noticed the product he might want is not on that aisle and has gone on to the next aisle where he will find it.

- BEST
- WORST

**STATEMENT B**

Approach the customer and ask them if there is anything you can help with.

- BEST
- WORST

**STATEMENT C**

Get one of your team members to go and ask the customer if they can help with anything.

- BEST
- WORST

**STATEMENT D**

Follow the customer around to see if they are actually finding the products they need. This might give some insight into whether the products are labelled clearly.

- BEST
- WORST
You are working as a Manager in a large supermarket. As you wander along some of the aisles you decide to spend some time observing the behaviour of customers. As you observe, you notice a customer who has walked along the same aisle twice. He appears to be looking for something but has not picked up anything. The customer walks on and away to the next aisle. What do you do?

A. Nothing, the customer has probably noticed the product he might want is not on that aisle and has gone on to the next aisle where he will find it.

B. Approach the customer and ask them if there is anything you can help with.

C. Get one of your team members to go and ask the customer if they can help with anything.

D. Follow the customer around to see if they are actually finding the products they need. This might give some insight into whether the products are labelled clearly.
Example of a SJT

You are working at a housing advice centre. You overhear your colleague providing out of date information covering housing regulations to a client over the phone. Do you:

A  Interrupt your colleague to tell them that the regulations have changed, and give them an update

B  Wait for the phone call to finish and then tell your colleague that regulations have changed and offer to update them

C  Inform your line manager as it could be a training issue for all staff

D  Email all your colleagues to update them on the new regulations

• Sheffield University Careers
Games – Artic Shores
Total Earned £ 0
Current Earned £ 30
Total Pumps : 3
### MOST PEOPLE SIT HERE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Wear’s heart on sleeve, anxious, can worry before important events. Avoids risk. Organised, prefer planning, enjoy high attention to detail, may be resistant to change. Takes time to make decisions. Introvert, calm, reserved style, takes considered approach, comfortable in own company, may feel uncomfortable in new social settings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Calm, relaxed, do not get stressed easily, can easily switch off after work. Enjoys risk taking. Flexible, adaptable to change, spontaneous, disorganised, may be seen as untidy. Comfortable making quick decisions with limited or ambiguous information. Outgoing, Sociable, comfortable meeting new people and being centre of attention, confident, outspoken.

### EMOTIONALITY AND RISK TAKING

Your responses to the game suggest that you have a tendency to worry before important events and that you may find it hard to switch off after work. It is possible that you may take things personally and ponder over any criticism for some time. Individuals with similar profiles often find it difficult to switch off after work, and can often feel stressed. You may also see yourself as a cautious individual who prefers to take quite some time before making any decisions, gathering facts or exploring information. Any decisions you make are likely to be well thought through and considered, reducing the risk of negative outcomes. You are therefore more likely to avoid taking risks. However it is also likely that you sometimes say things that you later regret, particularly during moments of high anxiety or stress. You may be seen by others as ‘a bit of a worrier’.

### WORK MANAGEMENT AND DECISIONS MAKING

The responses analysed from the game suggest that you have an extreme preference for structure and being organised when compared to others. It is highly likely that you enjoy tasks which involve attention to detail and that you are highly conscientious, taking responsibility for completing tasks in a dutiful manner. Individuals with similar profiles like structure and organisation, and would be very uncomfortable in situations where they do not have the opportunity to plan. Whilst others may see you as very organised, you may also appear to be resistant to change; the potentially perceived over planning may be seen as an approach which is rigid, and therefore not best suited to environments that require adapting. You are unlikely to take much risk.

### SOCIABILITY

Your responses to the game suggest that you are likely to have a preference for spending time alone than with others. A game profile of your type suggests that you may be somebody with a reserved and cautious style, and may be unlikely to be forthcoming in group conversations. Individuals with preferences similar to yours may also have a tendency to be extremely shy and quiet particularly in group situations; you probably tend to avoid new social situations.
Influencing and Persuading
Influences others to own way of thinking uses rationale and mutually beneficial reasoning.

Communicating
Communicates clearly and concisely, using both verbal and non-verbal communication.

Working with Colleagues
Collaborates and works with others to achieve common goals.

Innovating
Looks for ways of improving current methods to become more efficient from a time and cost perspective.

Leading
Inspires others to take on challenging tasks and guides them in order to develop them and achieve organisational goals.

Planning and Organising
Structures their work to ensure tasks are better managed and prioritised effectively.

Delivering Results
Meets targets and delivers on objectives in a timely manner.

Customer Centred
Demonstrates empathy to customers and anticipates customer needs. Listens and asks questions to better understand.

Solving Problems
Uses a methodical and logical approach to solve issues in an efficient and effective manner.
Competencies **ALL** recruiters look for

**Judgement**
- Intellectual capacity
- Comfort with ambiguity
- Business judgement
- Creativity
- Ability to listen and learn

**Personal Impact**
- Presence
- Confidence
- Vs - ego
- Team player
- Credibility
- People skills

**Leadership**
- Integrity
- Inspirational
- Can take personal risks
- Student activities
- Maturity

**Drive and aspiration**
- Enthusiasm
- Driven by results
- Action oriented
- Desire to excel
- Demonstrating success outside of academic studies

**Digital skills**
- Deal with complexity
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Autonomy
- Collaboration
- Adapting to new/evolving technology
Practice tests

Graduates first

Assessment day
Find out more

- The Careers & Enterprise Centre subscribe to full length practice tests, including answers, from [Graduates First](#) and [Assessment Day](#). (Click for further details and to register).

- Visit the [Knowledge Bank](#) on QMPlus, for our top resources to help you prepare.

- Visit our blog for a number of posts relating to psychometric tests, with information on how to prepare, plus tips about specific tests such as Situational Judgment Tests (SJT) and Personality tests.
What are the issues?

- Security of test content
- Limited choice of tests
- Practise effects
- Foreign language versions
- Loss of face to face contact with candidates
- Limited research
Thank You

Iain McLoughlin