

**HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW
APPRAISAL ASSISTANT (CLERICAL)
SELECTION PROCESS**

Why a Competency (Behavioural) Interview Guide?

This guide has been developed to provide applicants with an understanding of the process followed by BC Assessment when recruiting Appraisal Assistants. The characteristics and competencies (behaviours) assessed are those that are required of an Appraisal Assistant within BC Assessment.

What is a competency?

A competency is defined as a skill, knowledge, ability or behavioural characteristic that is associated with superior performance.

There are two basic levels of competencies: technical and behavioural. The first level, Technical Competencies, are predominately about acquired knowledge and technical abilities and skills. These competencies are often easier to see, train for and develop. Examples of technical competencies include knowledge of administration, office procedures and computer skills.

The second level of competencies are behavioural competencies, such as communication skills or team member skills. These competencies can be harder to see and develop but are key indicators of how an individual approaches his/her work.

All competencies identified as key competencies by BC Assessment should be:

- ✓ Observable
- ✓ Measurable
- ✓ Linked to job requirements
- ✓ Linked to BC Assessment strategy and business needs
- ✓ Future-oriented
- ✓ Based on strong performance

What are BC Assessment's competencies?

There are eleven (11) identified leadership competencies

Personal/Professional Effectiveness

1. Communications Skills
2. Innovation & Change Management
3. Customer Focus
4. Professional Conduct

Team Skills

5. Team Member Skills
6. Team Leadership Skills

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Thinking Skills

- 7. Analytical Thinking and Judgment
- 8. Planning & Organizing

Technical Knowledge

- 9. Administration / Technical knowledge
- 10. Office Procedures
- 11. Systems

The competencies that will be assessed are available on our web site at:
http://www.bcassessment.ca/pdf/about/careers/Appraisal_Assistant_Competencies.pdf

What is the difference between traditional and competency (behavioural) based interviews?

Competency based or behavioural interviews focus on past performance as a predictor of future performance. Research has shown that behavioural interviews achieve a higher level of accuracy than traditional interviews.

In a competency based interview, candidates are asked to provide detailed accounts of what they have done, said, thought and felt in situations similar to what they will experience as an Appraisal Assistant at BC Assessment.

A traditional interview focuses on education, qualifications and credentials. Often, responses given address an individual's opinions and feelings but do not provide information on actual performance on the job or about job experiences or accomplishments. It is difficult for a panel to determine how a person will perform into the future without an idea of what and how they have performed in the past.

Why are we using a competency-based selection process at BC Assessment?

We wanted to use a selection process that would enable interview candidates to tell the Selection Panel about their work experiences and past accomplishments. The competency (behavioural) based interview enables a candidate to bring a full spectrum of work, school and volunteer experiences into an interview and to draw parallels between work they have performed with work they will perform with BC Assessment.

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What is the selection process?

While the Selection Panel will determine the appropriate selection process for a competition, the basic principles of a fair and transparent process will be applied. Generally, competitions for Appraisal Assistant II, Appraisal Assistant I, and Appraisal Assistant Trainee are required to complete an exercise, behavioural interview and thorough past work performance reviews.

Applicants will be required to complete an exercise either before or after a behavioural interview.

The Selection Panel consists of at least two individuals and may include up to four individuals. The Selection Panel will take notes during the interviews and probe for further details when required. The Selection Panel members will interview the candidate and will assess and assign, by consensus rating, a number to the candidate's responses. Provided a pass mark (e.g. 60%) is attained, the candidate will qualify for further consideration.

The final step in the selection process is thorough past work performance reviews.

What will be included in the Appraisal Assistant Clerical selection process?

Questions will be focused on obtaining information relevant to the defined competencies of the job.

Exercise:

The exercise will evaluate your computer skills (e.g., Excel, Word) and possibly other competencies for example, communication skills and/or customer service skills. The exercise will be conducted at the local office.

Competency-based Interview:

Candidates will be asked questions that will enable them to provide detailed accounts of what they have done, said, thought and felt in situations which will be similar to situations they will encounter as an Appraisal Assistant with BC Assessment. Candidates may be asked for more than one example.

For example, instead of asking, "What is good Customer Service?" a candidate would be asked, "*Describe a situation when you have provided superior Customer Service. What were the circumstances? What were your specific actions? What was the result?*"

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Past Work Performance Reviews (Reference Checks):

Part of the selection process includes a review of your past work performance with your previous direct supervisors. References may be provided with an overview of the clerical work and the competencies required to fully perform in the role; the reference will be asked to speak to your demonstrated competencies related to clerical work. When you are contacted for an interview, you will be asked to provide a list of direct supervisors from your past work experience as well as their current contact information.

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How do I prepare for the interview?

In preparation for the interview, reread the posting notice which includes the position description as well as the competencies listed above and on the BC Assessment website. These documents will assist you to understand the key competencies and duties for the position. Examples of key competencies for most positions in BC Assessment include commitment to customer service, analytical skills and judgement, demonstrated interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills and team member skills.

As you review the documents, note experiences from your own work, school and volunteer history that you feel would be similar to the duty or would demonstrate your level of competency.

As you prepare, make a list of examples of how you have demonstrated a competency. When you speak to that competency in the interview, be sure to use the example that you feel best demonstrates your skills and abilities. By preparing early, you will be able to draw on the best example vs. the first or most recent example you remember.

When answering the questions be sure to provide full details to the Selection Panel – include the who, what, where, when, how and why of the situation as well as what your specific role was, what follow up you did and how you communicated throughout the situation.

One method you can consider which may help you to organize your example for the Panel is the **STAR** method:

Situation - What was the situation? What was the background and context?

Task - What specific task did you need to accomplish?

Action - What specifically did you say and do? What were the actions you took?

Result - What were the results of your actions? What was the impact? What did you learn?

The target level of the 'ideal' candidate is noted within each competency. Using the STAR method, prepare some examples that you can use during the interview (*see example below*).

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Example: Customer Focus

<p>1.</p>	<p>Follows Up and Maintains Clear Communications</p> <p><i>Trainee</i></p>	<p>Follows through on customer inquiries, requests, and complaints</p> <p>Keeps customer up-to-date about progress of inquiry (but does not probe customer's underlying issues or problems)</p> <p>Maintains clear, efficient communication with customer</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Takes a Customer Perspective</p> <p><i>Appraisal Assistant I</i></p>	<p>Takes personal responsibility for solving customer problems</p> <p>Demonstrates the ability to see issues from the customer's perspective</p> <p>Flexible in approaching customer needs in order to come to a mutual understanding of the issues and potential solutions</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Takes Action for the Customer</p> <p><i>Appraisal Assistant II</i></p>	<p>Understands the value of the customer to the organization</p> <p>Takes actions beyond normal expectations</p> <p>Takes on customer problems and resolves them even if they were not originally one's problem</p> <p>Gives the customers options and choices when appropriate</p>