



OHIO ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

OACP Advisory Services, the Assessment Center Process and IACP Written Examinations

Expertise and Experience: The OACP has been providing law enforcement services since 1928, with assessment centers, management reviews and organizational studies being conducted since 1985. The OACP has conducted over 800 Assessment Centers and 17 management reviews (organizational studies) throughout Ohio. In conducting Assessment Centers over the last two decades, the OACP has “fine tuned” the Assessment Center process. The consultants who conduct the Assessment Centers are required to receive additional training from experts on an annual basis.

For potential clients, OACP is pleased to provide a list of recent clients who have used OACP police management consultants. We encourage perspective clients to contact other clients and obtain their thoughts on how the process worked for them. It is noted that those who use the OACP Assessment Center approach and management reviews/organizational studies tend to keep using the process.

The Advisory Services Policy Committee helps to direct and monitor the activities of the police management consultants. This committee oversees the application process for interested consultants, grants approval of consultants and manages the process of assigning them to particular clients. The committee provides a continuing review to ensure that the process is being conducted in an objective and professional manner.

Assessment Center process: The OACP provides assistance to cities, villages, townships, universities, and other organizations with promotions to sergeant, lieutenant, captain and other command level positions, including chief. The Assessment Center process is being utilized to measure the capability of candidates beyond the standard written exam.

The Assessment Center process, which consists of both oral and written exercises, is administered by consultants who are available through the Advisory Services Division of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police. The assessment team, which conducts the assessment, includes three senior law enforcement experts, one of whom is designated as the Lead Consultant. We now have over 40 consultants, most of whom are police chiefs, located throughout Ohio.

It is important to note our consultants are representative of Ohio’s diverse population in terms of race and gender. The OACP will suggest the makeup of the team. Biographic information for these individuals would be provided to you as the client immediately.

Guidelines OACP uses in recommending team members include:

1. Team members should come from a similar sized police department.
2. The consultants should not come from nearby agencies. (This is done to eliminate bias as perceived by candidates.)
3. Consultants who know any of the candidates will not be selected.

As the client, you have the final approval of the assessment team. After the approval, it is recommended that the biographic information for the team be posted in a manner that provides any candidate the opportunity to know who will be conducting the assessment. If a potential candidate has an objection with a suggested member of the team, the OACP should be notified immediately.

The Pre-assessment: When the decision is made to use the assessment process, the Lead Consultant conducts a Pre-assessment that includes a one-day, on site meeting. The Lead meets with those officials involved in making the decisions relative to the employment process. At that time, decisions will be made about which assessment exercises will be used, which dimensions will be measured, and information to be collected and used in constructing the content of the exercises.

Assessment Center Exercises: The Assessment Center process typically includes three or four exercises selected from the five different types of exercises: In-Basket, Oral Presentation, Group Discussion, Written Problem Solving, and Counseling Session. Both written and oral exercises are used to measure each individual's abilities to command, to manage work efficiently and effectively, and to work with community leaders. As nearly as possible, the format of the OACP Assessment Center process is the same from assessment to assessment. However, the content of each Assessment Center is uniquely different for each as it is based upon the information provided by the client during the Pre-assessment Meeting.

Dimensions Measured: Using the typical multiple-choice exam alone does not adequately measure the skills required for an administrative/command position. In addition, the Assessment Center exercises are customized for each department and are designed to address each local situation. Assessment Center exercises assess 8 "Dimensions" which are:

- **Oral Communications** - Effectiveness of spoken expression in individual and group situations (including gestures and other non-verbal)
- **Written Communications** - Effectiveness of expression in writing
- **Interpersonal Insight** - Perceiving and reacting to the needs of others and understanding the impact of self on others
- **Problem Analysis** - Skill in identifying problems, securing relevant information and identifying possible causes of problems
- **Judgment** - Ability to develop alternative solutions to problems, to evaluate courses of action, and to reach logical decisions
- **Decisiveness** - Readiness to make decisions, render judgment, take action, and commit oneself
- **Planning & Organizing** - Ability to efficiently establish an appropriate course of action for self or others, to accomplish a specific goal, to make proper assignments of personnel, and to use resources appropriately.
- **Delegation** - Effectively directs, monitors, assess and develops subordinates

Six Candidates Per Day: Six candidates can be accommodated each day. A seventh candidate can be accommodated for a small additional fee. So that candidates and the assessment team do not become fatigued as a result of the lengthy day, assessments with eight or more candidates are scheduled for two days.

Costs: A not-to-exceed estimate that includes both a half day Pre-Assessment Meeting and a one-day Assessment Center is \$5,300.00. The cost of each additional day for is approximately \$3,100.00. In addition to the number of days involved, the exact cost for an Assessment Center depends on the number and type of exercises used and the travel/lodging costs incurred.

Doing It by the Rules: OACP Advisory Services ascribes to the process described in the current “Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations,” as endorsed by the *International Congress on Assessment Center Methods*.

Results: A list including candidate scores and rankings will be submitted to the Client within four days following the Assessment Center. A full written report will follow within two weeks.

Evaluating the Process: In preparing for an assessment, information about the position provided by the client is the essential determinant in developing each exercise. The information included in the final report is as detailed as possible and is always linked to the Dimensions being measured.

IACP WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS: Through the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) also provides written promotional examinations for all police ranks. Clients are asked to complete job analysis information for the positions being tested. Officers currently serving in the rank being tested complete job task analysis forms. Individuals of higher rank or authority may also complete the forms, providing their perspective on the target job. The content of the promotional exams rely heavily on these responses.

That information is sent to IACP, who then develops a test based on that job analysis. The OACP receives the test, proctors the exam, returns the written examinations to the IACP and then reports the score results to the client.

Clients are provided a list of references for candidates to read. It is recommended that a 60-day time interval, from the time the candidates receive the reading list, be allowed to provide candidates time to prepare for the exams.

It is important to note that these are not standard “off the shelf” tests; rather, they are designed from the officers’ job analysis. Candidates are given a list of five study references from which test questions are developed by the IACP. This list changes over time and attention must be given to make certain candidates obtain the correct books for study. The test contains 100 questions with up to 3 hours for completion.

Written Test Security: The written examinations are prepared by the International Association of Chiefs of Police located in Alexandria, Virginia. They are sent to the OACP by secure mail and then forwarded to an OACP proctor. At no time is the test housed by the client.

Actions taken by the proctor to ensure the security of written examinations:

- Makes certain envelopes containing written examinations remain sealed
- Brings all testing materials to the test center
- Works with client to verify identity of candidates being tested
- Explains to candidates the security steps taken to maintain integrity
- Makes certain that candidates have only written examinations and answer sheets in possession during testing
- Maintains constant observation during the complete testing period
- Takes custody of all testing materials at the conclusion of the testing period, except those required by the client for any protest procedures

When the written examinations and any protest procedures are completed they are promptly sent to IACP by certified mail. The OACP Advisory Services Policy Committee provides continual monitoring of the written testing process.

Fees For IACP Written Examinations

1-10 candidates	\$1,585.00
11-20 candidates	\$1,885.00
21-30 candidates	\$2,185.00
31-40 candidates	\$2,585.00
41-50 candidates	\$2,885.00