



**CRELOS**

Guide to our Assessment model

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## introduction

Crelos' approach to assessment/development centres is focused on the key leadership challenges that we know the world, and business leaders, face today. For example, leading in continuously ambiguous circumstances, or balancing the need for innovation, creativity and imagination with the need for risk management and business ethics.

Despite many years of training, most managers possess little insight into themselves as leaders. To a large extent, this results from a focus on basic competencies such as planning, organising, controlling, developing and interacting. Unfortunately when they do turn to more complex managerial skills, "real" measurement, diagnosis and feedback is missed due to packaged prescriptions that have been developed for all. The outcome is that managers know a lot about management, but tend to know little about themselves as leaders or managers, and even less about their own potential to develop themselves. Most managers do not know what it is they need to develop to become real leaders. (Schroder, 1989)

Crelos sees basic competencies as the knowledge and skills needed to perform the jobs or functions of managing. They represent personal effectiveness skills that are more task-related and are needed to perform the more specialised, technical/functional skills required to manage. All managers should possess a common set of these behaviours. As the work place becomes a more complex organisational environment managers must also develop more exceptional performance leadership behaviours. These behaviours are relatively stable and are expected to produce significantly superior workgroup performance.

Managers can no longer rely on top-down authority for the direction of their employees – they are responsible for having them "buy in" to increased responsibility. Managers must also empower others to make decisions that they support. And, they can no longer follow approved plans and procedures – they make the plans, implement them, monitor and change them while taking responsibility for their impact on all other departments and functions in the organisation.

## Assessment Development Centres

The term assessment centre refers to an approach rather than a physical place. It is generally defined as bringing a group of participants together at the same time and place for a series of assessment exercises. The type of centre can vary between the traditional assessment centre used purely for selection, to the development centre that still involves assessments but whose primary purpose is development.

Various combinations of exercises, and sometimes other assessment methods like psychometric testing and interviews, are used to assess particular competencies in individuals. For example:

Exercises could cover:

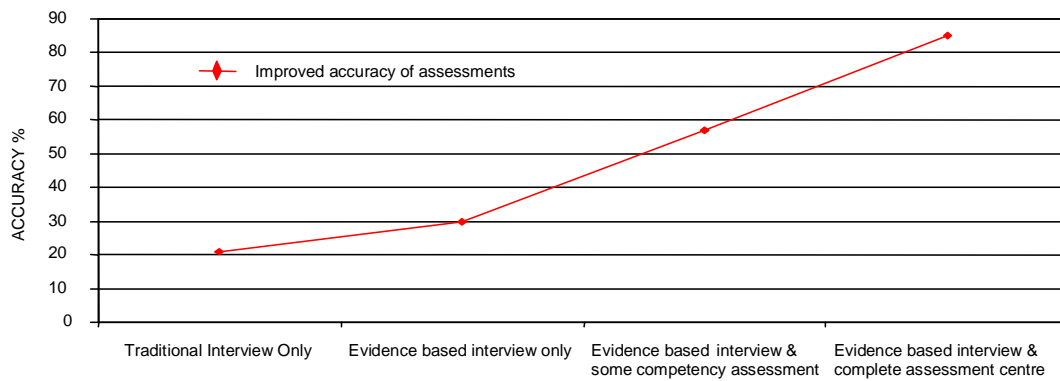
- Behaviours that tend to be more "right brain", where there are no right or wrong answers, no defined outcomes.
- Individual open ended (IO) e.g. Write a strategy paper, coach another individual
- Group open ended (GO) e.g. Strategy discussion/meeting
- Skills that tend to be more "left brain", where there is a known outcome that tests speed, structure, ability to succeed.
- Individual specific (IS) e.g. Presentations, in basket, simulated role specific tasks
- Group specific (GS) e.g. Produce an implementation plan, structure a proposal

It is important to use open and closed exercises in both assessment and development. However, the more senior and complex the role, the more open ended exercises must dominate. There is a huge difference between people that can lead in ambiguity and those that are not able to. This is particularly crucial in today's operating environment.

Psychometric testing could cover:

- Aptitude, specifically measuring critical thinking (verbal reasoning) and numerical reasoning (numerical ability).
- Personality, measuring stable traits that remain consistent, and attitudinal patterns that will change over time.
- Motivation, providing insight in to the direction and the way in which individuals will most willing exert effort.

Organisations tend to move through a number of stages as their ability to assess competencies in individuals improves in accuracy and effectiveness. Initially it is up to the observer or selector to infer personal characteristics based on their subjective judgement in a traditional interview. This tends to result in a decisions based on whether the individual's 'face fits' with the organisation. As the sophistication of the assessments increase, the accuracy also improves as illustrated below.



# stages of a centre

Through out the design and running of a centre it is essential to set high standards that are clearly aspirational. High performers will respond to hard challenges and it is key to maintain interest and motivation. Ultimately this work will result in a performance plan (versus a development plan) that reaffirms what is learnt in the context of the organisation.

## 1. Identifying Assessment Methods

Using existing role profiles, competency frameworks and career paths we work with the organisation to identify the key areas of behaviour, ability and skills required to meet business requirements.

If the organisation is trying to create a commonly accepted framework of 'what good looks like' it is important to involve line managers. Often the senior executive in an organisation can't be sure that management shares their understanding of good. It is therefore key to use the senior managers to define the competencies and involve them in creating a clear visual picture of 'what good looks like' so that there is a clear and consistent framework for decision making that the executive committee trust. This is not a process of consensus but a process that creates a common understanding of how to classify 'exceptional' using a highly validated behavioural framework as the under-pinning frame of reference. This is an area where Crelos excels.

Once this is in place, it will provide the basis for identifying the necessary assessment tools.

## 2. Benchmarking

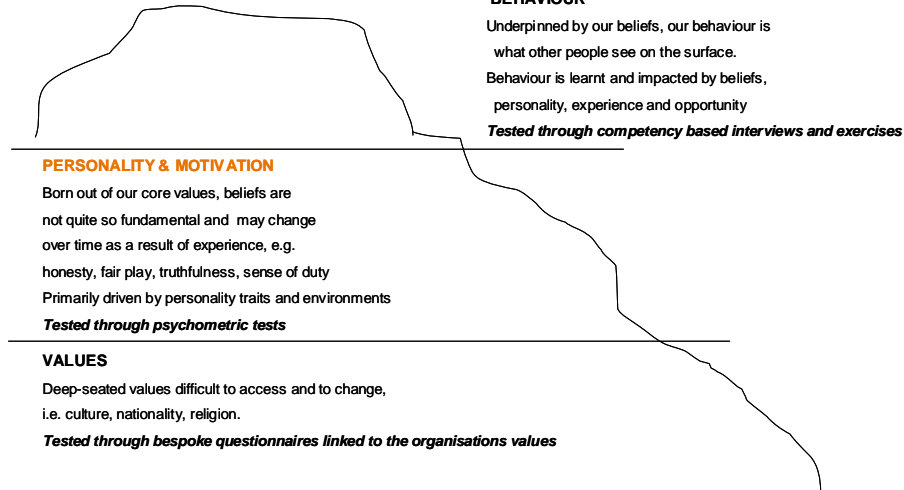
High performers will be assessed using the selected tools, to capture the key elements in behaviour, ability and skills that must be measured and supported in the recruitment and development process.

Internal, external and management credibility is an important consideration when selecting high performers. For example, an organisation may not trust their internal assessment for selecting high performers. There is a dilemma here - if they can't accept the data provided internally are they going to accept external validation and benchmarking? If the organisation feels it needs to use external experts to provide validation of the data, then senior managers must buy in to the data and assessment process for it to have internal validation.

This issue often arises when there is disagreement as to who should be assessed in a high potential programme - a manager may think s/he has identified a high performer and the assessment centre says no, or the assessment centre identifies a high performer and the manager disagrees. Both reflect badly on the manager and leaves the manager disempowered. Crelos' approach works to resolve this issue through line manager involvement and buy-in.

# stages of a centre

## 3. Assessment



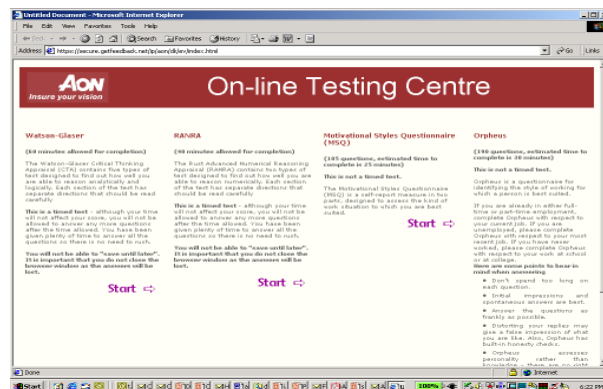
## Online Psychometric Assessment

A web based competency site, similar to that shown below, is often created. This site is supported by Getfeedback technology and branded specifically for the organisation. As such it provides relevant information about the organisation's development and competency approach.

The assessments can include:

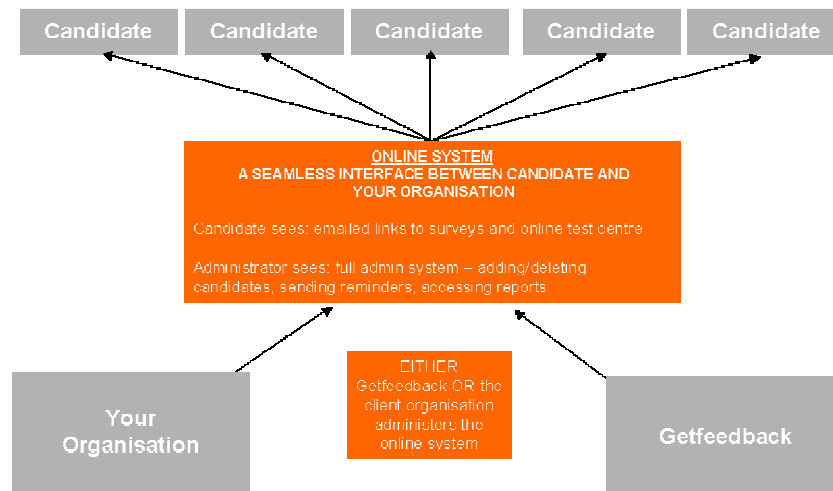
- Aptitude
- Personality
- Motivation
- Culture

## Sample Online Screen



# stages of a centre

## Online Process



## 360 and Interview Assessment Tools

While the Psychometric Assessments begin the process of understanding the candidate or employee, to improve that understanding it can be very useful to generate specific feedback from 1:1 and group interactions. For example:

### Behaviour Event Interview (BEI)

- What people have done previously is strong evidence of what they will do when in a similar situation again.
- Behavioural event interviewing seeks evidence of past behaviour against an agreed framework
- Evidence shows that this process creates a 70% reliable profile of a leader.
- Crelos provide a bank of rigorously trained assessors – inter-rater reliability is extremely high

### Career Aspirations Interview

- Use of questionnaire and open questions to determine a candidate's primary and secondary career motivations
- Technique employs 'forced choice' questions to discriminate rank order of a candidate's "anchors"
- Process is a powerful supplement to the behavioural event interview, helping to build a complete picture of the candidate

# stages of a centre

## Job simulation Exercises

The exercises usually involve a combination of collective and individual activities. The purpose is to reveal how candidates would actually perform within a given job at the organisation, and gauge their competency levels against requirements.

Although generic business simulations are often used, it is Crelos' view that simulations should be created specific to the organisation. We use a generic principles based template around which business specific simulations can be created. This approach makes the event more meaningful for the individual and the organisation.

## 4. Completing assessment, feedback and development planning

All participants will be assessed and receive 1:1 feedback. In addition, they will develop targeted, actionable development plans aligned to their objectives. This will include a development needs plan and development agenda for the next twelve months.

There has been a great deal of research done into the behaviours required in Leadership. Results show that there are those that people are born with and those that people can develop. Schroder (1999) outlines these as follows:

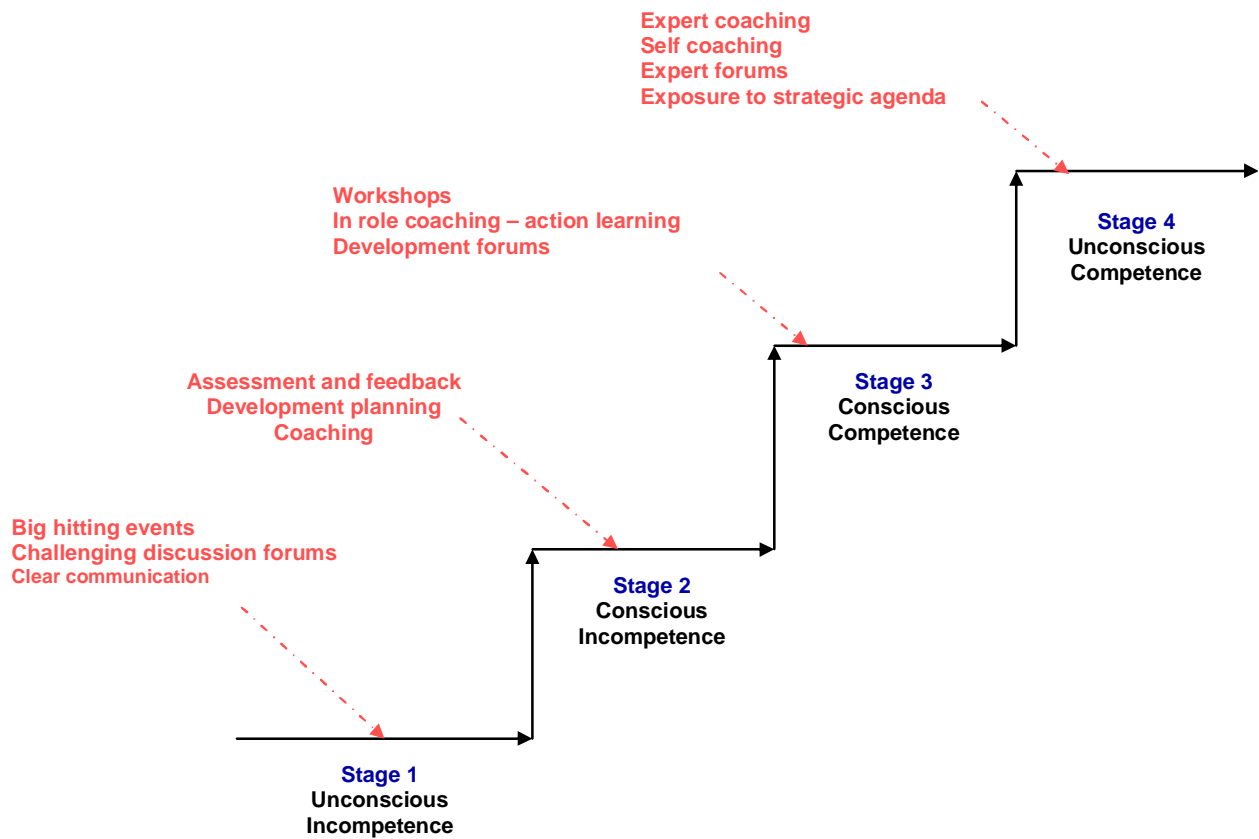
In addition a high focus will be placed upon building understanding of the importance of competency based selection, development and performance management. A mechanism for integrating this into business as usual will be agreed and presented.

## 5. Development of business as usual processes

Assessment data will be analysed to provide critical development information and to inform a development agenda with critical information about particular key development requirements. It will describe modular training, coaching, action learning or experiential experiences required to ensure that development takes place. All recommendations will be made in light of current HR processes and integrating competency based development and performance management into business as usual.

# stages of a centre

Development techniques are best matched to the stage of competence



# overview of assessment methods

## Psychometric Testing

Ability, aptitude and personality are all important in the world of employee assessment. The continuing rise in the use of psychometric testing to measure each of these attributes now creates an amazing array of choices when developing psychometric facilities within organisations. Used properly, the impact it can have throughout an organisation is significant – not only in the selection process, but across individual and group competency, strategic HR management and the retention and development of a company's talent pool.

Crelos' extensive knowledge of the theory underpinning the development of psychometric tools and the practical application of psychometrics in business enables us to deliver informed advice in the successful use and implementation of such tools in today's work place. Whilst it is known that psychometric testing can provide predictive validity in a selection process, fundamental to this is the necessity to know what tool is right for the job in hand, and that it is being used in safe hands. Crelos can operate at many levels from simple psychometric testing provision through its sister operation Getfeedback, to full organisational assessment, recommendation and training of the teams who will be using the psychometric tools. Psychometric testing is a complex science – Getfeedback's art is breaking it into its component forms, selecting the appropriate tools and giving each client the knowledge and confidence to manage the testing process effectively.

# overview of assessment methods

## APTITUDE TESTS

**Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal** (John Rust produced new norms) Published by The Psychological Corporation)

A test of crystallised ability (verbal reasoning). There are five subsets; drawing inferences from facts; recognising assumptions implicit in statements; drawing deductions from facts; interpretations of statements; and evaluation of arguments.

The ability to think clearly is generally regarded as one of the major goals of education. Careful, analytical reasoning is an important part of most management roles and is known to play an important part in many occupations. The WGCTA has been designed to measure some of these important abilities and provides an invaluable assessment strategy for personnel professional and recruitment specialists involved in the selection and training of managerial and other professional staff. This high demanding measure has been updated for 2001, including an extensive re-norming study and the production of new UK norms.

**RANRA – Rust Advanced Numerical Reasoning Ability** (John Rust created) Published by The Psychological Corporation

RANRA builds on and extends the critical thinking skills appraisal available through Watson-Glaser. RANRA is based on the Watson-Glaser model and measures mathematical abilities that have a clear relevance for managers and other decision makers in organisations. Unlike many numerical reasoning tasks, RANRA uses Watson-Glaser style format design to examine higher level numerical skills involving deduction, interpretation and evaluation. RANRA users benefit from extensive norms, shared with the popular Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (WGCTA).

**Combined Watson-Glaser/RANRA Verbal and Numerical Reasoning Test** (John Rust) Published - Psychological Corporation

The combined W-GCTA and RANRA has 7 tests; 5 critical thinking and 2 numerical reasoning. There are a total of 112 questions.

**The Differential Aptitude Test (DAT)** (Bennet et al, 1962)

Widely used in the USA, measures a number of aptitudes. Aptitude refers to pure factors, and cultural sets of abilities, and even personality traits. Specifically it measures verbal reasoning, and numerical ability.

# overview of assessment methods

## PERSONALITY TESTS

**Giotto** (John Rust designed) Published by The Psychological Corporation

A work-based personality questionnaire designed to assess integrity. 101 items, and generates scores on 7 scales based on the Prudentius model of personality (Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, Justice, Faith, Charity & Hope). It can be used for selection, promotion, appraisal, or staff development purposes.

**Orpheus** (John Rust designed) Published by The Psychological Corporation

Work-based personality questionnaire, which is based upon the big 5 personality domains. In addition to these 5 main scales, there is also a subscale of attitudinal measures and an internal audit scale.

The main domains are fellowship (social), authority (organisational), conformity (intellectual), emotion (emotional) and detail (perceptual). These are stable traits and will remain consistent over time. The seven sub-scales however, are attitudinal and will change over time. The measures are proficiency, work orientation, patience, fair mindedness, loyalty, disclosure, and initiative.

## MOTIVATION TESTS

The simple message from motivational research is that possessing the right competencies is not enough to achieve results unless the motivation factors are also right. The **Intrinsic Motivation Test** will show you what motivates you to perform. The development of Intrinsic can be traced from three main areas of research:

- Self-fulfilment – Adler, Maslow and Herzberg who were interested in self-fulfilment and the concept of developing to be “all you can”, (1959).
- Level of aspiration – Lewin and Vroom established that to achieve performance you must not only have the skills but also be motivated (1964). Porter and Lawler (1968) extended this theory to suggest that motivation to aspire can be maintained by ensuring that exerted effort leads to reward.
- Achievement motivation – McClelland and Atkinson’s (1953) work on achievement motivation and attribution theory pointed towards the importance of a general tendency to strive to meet certain needs.

Intrinsic combines the best of this research to analyse behaviour beyond those dimensions covered by personality measures and ability tests. It is designed to define the kind of work situation to which individuals are best suited by providing insight in to the direction and the way in which individuals will most willing exert effort. The scores from this questionnaire

# overview of assessment methods

combine to produce several thousand reports. This means that your report is specific to you and makes this one of the most valid profiling tools.

## 360 and Interview Assessment Methods (examples)

### 360 FEEDBACK

Feedback is collated from the participant (Self), Colleagues, Line Manager and Direct Reports. The participant chooses the nominated feedback-givers on the basis of preference. 360 Feedback has been shown, on average, to provide a profile that is approximately 65% accurate.

### BEHAVIOURAL EVENT INTERVIEW (BEI)

Behavioural Event Interviewing in combination with 360 Feedback provides a 90% accurate leadership profile. In the BEI the assessor codes leadership examples, given by the leader, against the framework. For example, if 60% of your nominated feedback providers rate you as a "4" on a particular behaviour, your assessor would seek examples against the framework to identify whether this behaviour was a "strength" or a "developing strength". A behaviour will not be recorded as a "strength" unless there is strong evidence from the BEI that it is used consistently at strength level. Inconsistencies between the BEI and the 360 will be clearly highlighted in this report.

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE GRID

The Management and Leadership Experience Grid is designed to describe the optimum career path in terms of 'increasing complexity' of management and leadership roles. Particular levels of the grid are correlated with specific levels of leadership competence. The grid is used to understand the level of systematic progression within an organisation and also to identify leaders who are out performing or under developed in comparison to their level on the grid.

### CAREER ANCHORS AND CAREER HISTORY

The Career Anchors inventory was designed and developed by Dr Edgar Schein to match individual career expectations with corporate human resource planning. Schein coined the phrase 'career anchor' to describe the combination of perceived areas of competence, motives and values that develop overtime, and which once developed, shape and guide career choices and decisions. Schein's work shows how an individual's career anchors gradually come to be their own definition of career success (Schein, 1974, 1978). A career anchor can be described as the one or two things that you would not give up under any circumstances.

### CAREER ASPIRATIONS INTERVIEW

This interview is designed to ascertain the options and preferences you have for the future. As part of the development planning process you will be encouraged to identify the behaviours you must develop to ensure you achieve your aspirations.

## Exercises (examples)

### MULTI-TASKING EXERCISES (e.g. in-basket)

**WRITTEN EXERCISE** (e.g. response to simulated data, for example creating an approach to market or conducting an analysis of an industry sector)

A good example is a strategy paper which is designed with both the role and the broader context of the specific organization in mind. The objective is to explore the candidates' strategic thinking ability.

**GROUP THINK EXERCISES** (e.g. based upon providing real data upon which the group must come to a relevant conclusion)

The Group Exercise is an ideal opportunity to test industry knowledge and business acumen specific to the role. The candidates receive a unique individual brief. The assessors observe interaction, management of conflict, empathy, involvement of other members and concept formation. Objective is to explore candidates' competence in the people-facing behaviours.

### ROLE PLAYING EXERCISES

Role-playing is not an approach we use comfortably. We would rather put people into situations that simulate the circumstances they will be in, and asking them to act as they would normally. There is a key difference.

## What do Crelos and Getfeedback offer?

### Organisational mapping

Job families, role profiles, role complexity. Your business, mapped out from an HR perspective. Now we're starting to get clarity

### Online psychometric assessment

We can accurately and seamlessly measure aptitude, personality and motivation. Essential information for understanding the whole candidate and managing risk.

### Assessment centre design and management

Discriminating between short listed candidates is not easy, but it's really important. That's why Getfeedback use assessment centres to give the right candidates the green light. Our assessment methodology has proved to be 93% accurate in predicting in-role performance. Behavioural event interviewing, role playing, written exercises, group work and career aspirations meetings are all in a day's work for us - or even a half-day if you're really tight for time.

### Online candidate management

From application to hire. You've got candidates, we've got a system to keep track of them.

### Tell us about your business and we'll give you some fresh ideas...

Articles about our client work are frequently in the HR trade press and more recently have begun to permeate the business pages of national newspapers. Your successes make us famous.

Do you want to learn more about our talent management offerings?

Email us at [info@crelos.com](mailto:info@crelos.com)