

IMPROVED INTERVIEWING PROCEDURES PROJECT

PART 5

THE FICTIONIZED "INBOX TEST"

This is part of the improved procedures project for managerial hiring. This test is to be given when managerial candidates have reached the second round of interviews.

Goal for this test:

There is no right answer. Instead, you want to assess:

- How the candidates think and plan
- Their attention to detail
- Their ability to work under pressure
- Whether they can ask for help
- If they have guts to ask you to reschedule or cancel things
- Whether they keep commitments to their personal life (this would be good)

How to administer the inbox test:

1) Each department will create a 1-page introduction to their situation, with appropriate changes based on the specific job. An example for the Customer Service Manager is:

- It is 1:30 PM.
- You have a 2:30 PM meeting with Manager X to talk about the long-term goals for the Group Sales program.
- You have a dentist appointment at 4:30 and wanted to leave.
- All rush orders/next day have to be in by 2 PM

2) Create a stack of 20+ items, including handwritten notes, pink slip phone messages, incoming fax orders etc. Examples for the Customer Service Manager might include

- Stack of group orders to enter, some marked "rush"
- A note describing situation: A retail customer comes in and the rep who dislikes retail answers the door.....
- A fax with a group fax "RUSH/URGENT" order. Near the bottom of the stack, another fax that cancels the order (!)
- A note that someone is having trouble running the XX daily report
- Pink message slip with an urgent call to return
- A note describing the situation: You just overheard a customer service rep on the phone saying, "(fill in bad thing)". What do you do?
- Note from 2 customer service reps requesting tomorrow off
- Misc. junk mail and reports

3) Present the inbox and the summary to the candidate. Leave the room for 2 minutes, no more, no less. Just enough time for them to glance through the pile.

4) Have them describe to you their thought process and their reasoning for what they would do. Jot down notes about their choices, so you can review later. You may *ask questions for clarification*, not to help them or give feedback.