

*a New Day for Federal Service*

## Leveraging Assessments: How to Effectively Measure Competencies for Selection


UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

2

Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us for this Webinar titled *Leveraging Assessments: How to Effectively Measure Competencies for Selection*.


My name is Natasha and I'm joined by Juli and Leigha. We are from the Classification and Assessment Policy group here at OPM.

This webinar is the second in a series of webinars that we will be conducting. Just a little bit of housekeeping before we get started. If you have any questions, please feel free to type it in the Questions box at the right of your screen. We will try to answer them in this session. However, if we don't get to it, please send your question to the [Assessment\\_Information@opm.gov](mailto:Assessment_Information@opm.gov) and we will respond accordingly. You'll have the opportunity to download the slides at the end of this presentation. Also, we're going to make this webinar as interactive as possible by polling you and learning about your experience with various assessment tools.



## Background

- ✓ Why use assessments?
  - Increases ability to predict performance
  - Reduces turnover
  - Cost saving for the organization
- ✓ Assessments
  - Occupational Questionnaire
  - Structured Interview
  - Situational Judgment Test
  - USAJOBSAssess
- ✓ Assessment Decision Tool



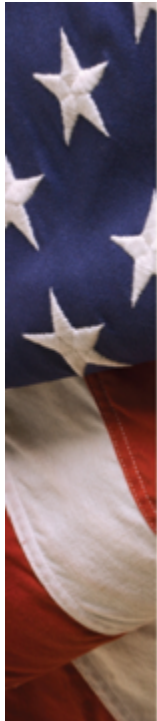
UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 3

Before we begin discussing different assessment tools, let's talk about what we mean by assessments and why we use them. When we talk about assessment, we're referring to measurement tools that we use to screen, rate, and rank job applicants.

Why do we use assessments? The quality of hires is dependent upon the quality of the assessment process. By taking the time to develop a sound assessment process in the beginning, we can ensure that we'll have a better opportunity of getting more qualified applicants. Valid assessments not only allow for hiring better performers, but they also increase the ability to predict performance, reduce turnover, and result in cost savings to the organization.

Not all assessment tools are appropriate for every job and organizational setting. Agencies must consider a number of factors in determining the most appropriate assessment strategy for a particular situation. Today, we'll give you a general overview of an Occupational Questionnaire, a Structured Interview, and a Situational Judgment Test.


We'll also talk about OPM's online testing platform – USAJOBSAssess. (\*\* Please note: USAJOBSAssess has since been renamed USA Hire. \*\*) And we'll conclude the webinar by showing you how to use OPM's Assessment Decision Tool, an interactive system for developing customized assessment strategies.



## Audience Poll

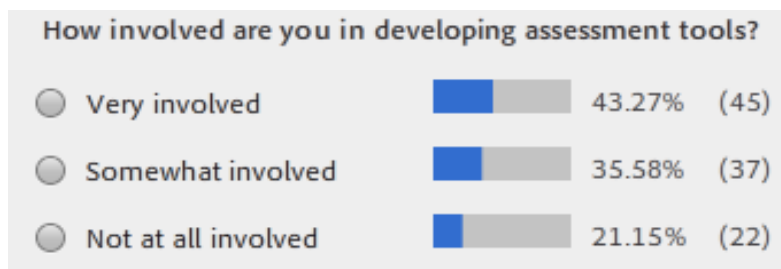
✓ How involved are you in developing assessment tools?

- Very involved
- Somewhat involved
- Not at all involved



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 4

This is our first audience poll. We'd like to know how involved you are in developing assessment tools. Are you very involved, somewhat involved, or not at all involved? Please take the poll and let us know!



I see that a majority of you are either somewhat (36%) or very involved (43%) in developing assessment tools.



## Audience Poll

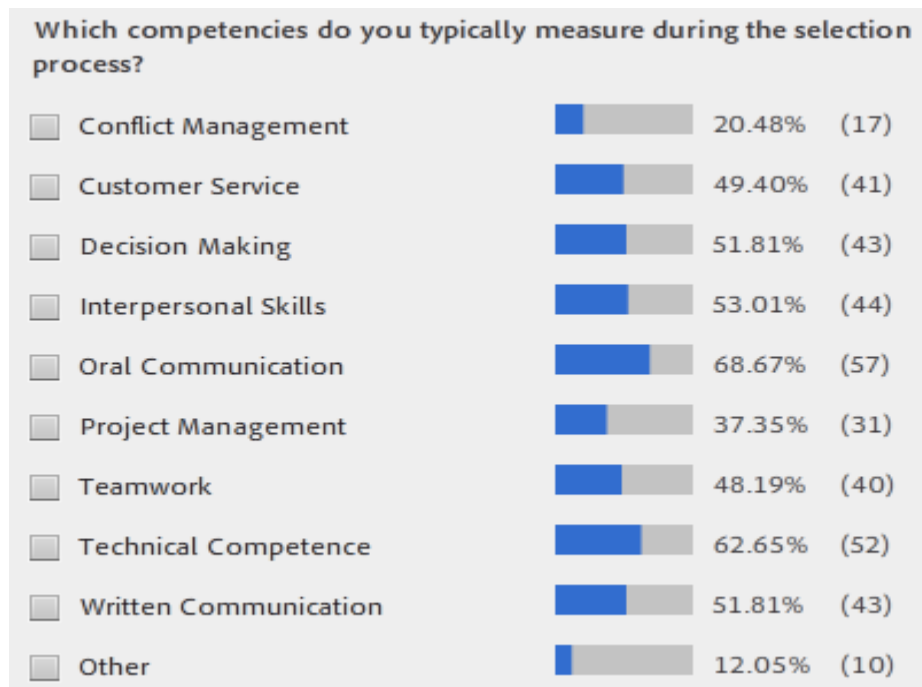
✓ Which competencies do you typically measure during the selection process?

- Conflict Management
- Customer Service
- Decision Making
- Interpersonal Skills
- Oral Communication
- Project Management
- Teamwork
- Technical Competence
- Written Communication
- Other



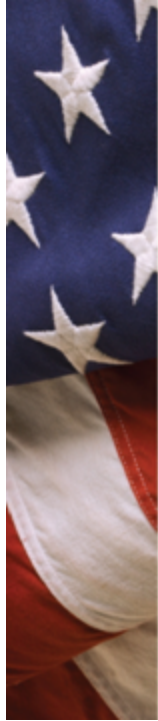
UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 3

This is our second audience poll. We would like to know what competencies you measure. Please pick any number of the following competencies: Conflict Management, Customer Service, Decision Making, Interpersonal Skills, Oral Communication, Project Management, Teamwork, Technical Competence, Written Communication, or "Other."



It looks like most folks are measuring Oral Communication (69%), Technical Competence (63%), Interpersonal Skills (53%), Written Communication (52%), Decision Making (52%), Customer Service (49%), and Teamwork (48%).

Now that we know how involved you are in test development and what competencies you typically measure, let's talk about an Occupational Questionnaire.



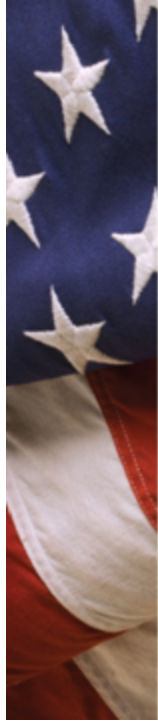
## Occupational Questionnaires (OQ)

### ✓ What is it?

- Task- and competency-based self-report questionnaires used to screen and rank applicants based on their job-related training and experience



Occupational Questionnaires (OQ) are task and competency-based self-report questionnaires that are used to screen and rank applicants based on their education and job-related training and experience.



## Occupational Questionnaires

### ✓ Why Use it?

- Narrow applicant pool
- Administered and scored online
- High face validity
- Low adverse impact



### ✓ Considerations:

- Applicant response inflation
- Requires SME involvement
- Less appropriate for entry level jobs
- Potential lack of discrimination between applicants

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

7

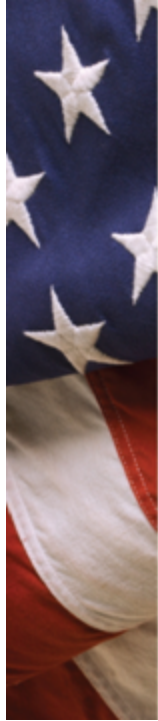
### **Why use it?**

Why should you include them in your assessment plan?

The OQ is a cost-effective tool in narrowing down large applicant pools. It's relatively inexpensive compared to more involved selection tools such as assessment centers or work samples. It can be administered and scored through an automated staffing system. Automated systems are easy to use and offer applicants the flexibility and convenience to complete the assessment questionnaire from their location of choice. Also, OQs have high face validity in that the questionnaire directly reflects what applicants would do on the job. OQs have low adverse impact and allow you to measure a wide variety of competencies at one time.

### **Considerations:**

In addition to benefits, there are challenges. When using an OQ, keep in mind that applicants may say that they have more training and experience than they really do. Later, we'll talk about ways to mitigate response inflation. Another challenge is that you need an adequate amount of time and subject matter expert (SME) input to review and develop sound OQs. Also, it's less appropriate for entry level jobs because the questions ask about experience. It doesn't mean that you can't use OQs for entry level jobs, it's just something to keep in mind. Lastly, scores may not be useful in making comparisons between applicants if the questions are not clear and if the response options are not well-defined.



## OQ: Competencies Effectively Measured

- Technical competencies (e.g., Employee Benefits, HR Information Systems, Data Management)
- Project Management
- Oral Communication
- Written Communication

**\*OQ responses should be verified**

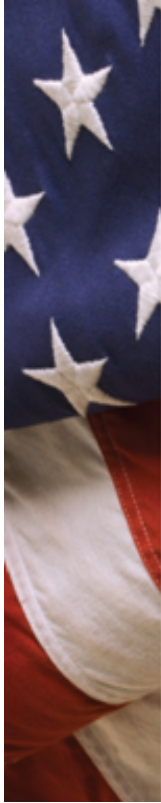
UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

8

Here are some competencies that are effectively measured using OQs: Technical competencies (such as Employee Benefits, HR Information Systems, and Data Management), Project Management, Oral Communication, and Written Communication.

Keep in mind that applicants may inflate their responses so we recommend that you establish a quality review procedure that involves comparing applicant responses and ratings to one or more independent sources. Sources can include information collected from résumés, college transcripts, former co-workers, or supervisors. The review should be conducted according to your agency's standardized procedures using all relevant supporting documentation. Each agency must determine for itself what documentation to require and when to require it.





## OQ: Sample Question

Indicate the extent to which you have communicated orally with various levels of employees to obtain and provide information.

- A. I have had no experience in performing this task.
- B. I have communicated orally with colleagues to obtain or verify information or to provide routine information.
- C. I have communicated orally with supervisors, managers, or office personnel to notify them of decisions, problems, or further actions needed, or to explain the organization's programs or services.
- D. I have given short oral presentations at departmental or organizational briefings and meetings to convey information on program activities or to describe the impact of new organizational policies on operational responsibilities.
- E. I have led briefings or taught courses on highly technical or complex material to audiences such as high-level managers or executives.

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

9

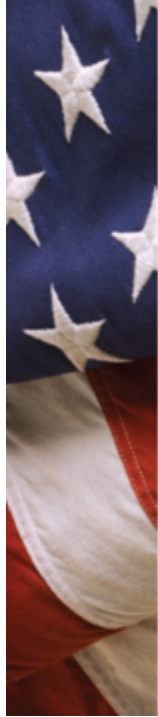
Here is an example of an OQ question. This question was designed to measure Oral Communication.

The question asks: **Indicate the extent to which you have communicated orally with various levels of employees to obtain and provide information.**

And the options are:

- A. I have had no experience in performing this task.
- B. I have communicated orally with colleagues to obtain or verify information or to provide routine information.
- C. I have communicated orally with supervisors, managers, or office personnel to notify them of decisions, problems, or further actions needed, or to explain the organization's programs or services.
- D. I have given short oral presentations at departmental or organizational briefings and meetings to convey information on program activities or to describe the impact of new organizational policies on operational responsibilities.

E. I have led briefings or taught courses on highly technical or complex material to audiences such as high-level managers or executives.



## Structured Interview (SI)

### ✓ What is it?

- Panel interview where all candidates are asked the same job-related questions
- Interviewers use detailed rating scales, evaluating all candidates according to the same standards

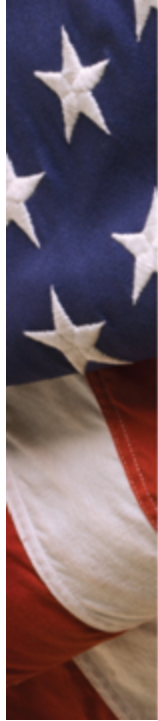
UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

10

A Structured Interview (SI) is a panel interview where all candidates are asked the same job-related questions. Interviewers use detailed rating scales and evaluate all candidates according to the same standards.

There are two types of structured interview questions: situational and behavioral. Situational interview questions ask applicants to describe what they would do or how they would behave in a situation similar to those encountered on the job. Situational questions are well suited for entry level jobs where the applicants may not have as much real world experience to draw on.

Behavioral interview questions ask applicants to describe a past behavior demonstrated in a situation relevant to the competency of interest. This type of interview is based on the behavioral consistency principle that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior. Behavioral questions are well suited for jobs where it's expected that applicants will have experience to draw on to demonstrate the competencies.



## Audience Poll

✓ Does your agency use structured interviews?

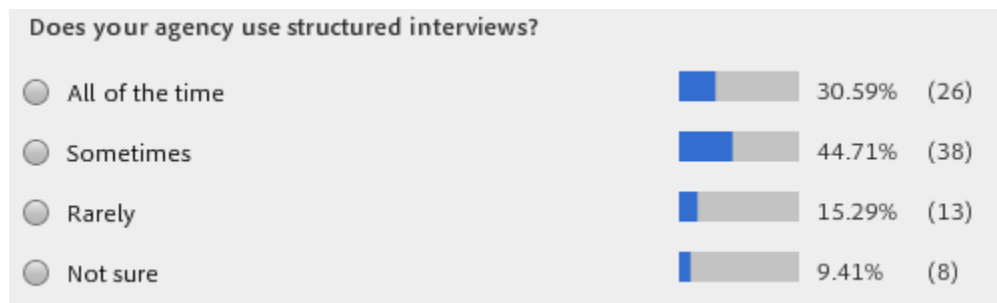
- All of the time
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Not sure



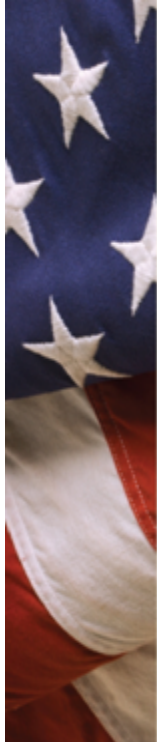
UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

11

We want to hear from you now! How often does your agency use structured interviews? All of the time, sometimes, rarely, or are you not sure?



I see that most of you use structured interviews some of the time (45%) or all of the time (31%).




## Structured Interview

✓ Why Use it:

- High validity between scores and performance
- Consensus leads to increased reliability
- Legally defensible

✓ Considerations:

- Requires extensive SME involvement
- Administration is resource intensive
- Assessors must be trained



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

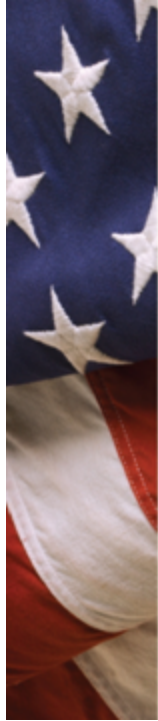
12

### **Why use it:**

Structured Interviews have demonstrated a high degree of reliability, validity, and legal defensibility. They show high validity between scores and job performance because situations presented in structured interview questions are highly representative of the situations encountered on the job. They are reliable because interviewers use standardized rating scales and are in agreement on acceptable answers. Candidates feel they are fair since all candidates are asked the same questions in the same order and are evaluated using a common rating scale. They are legally defensible when compared to unstructured interviews.

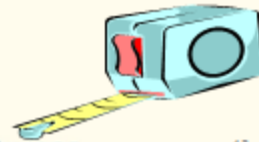
### **Considerations:**

It requires extensive SME input and review to develop questions and rating scales. Also, administration is resource intensive, an interviewer's guide should be developed, assessors will need to be trained, and, if possible, it's best to pilot test the questions and the interview process prior to using the Structured Interview.



## SI: Competencies Effectively Measured

- Change Management
- Creative Thinking
- Customer Service
- Influencing/Negotiating
- Interpersonal skills
- Oral Communication
- Planning/Evaluating
- Problem Solving
- Self-Management
- Teamwork
- Technical Competence

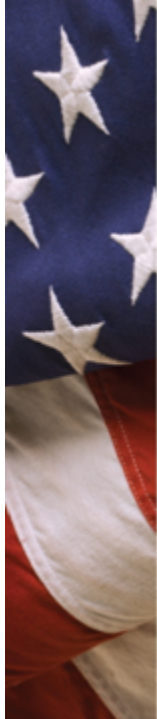


UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

13

Structured Interviews are more personal and interactive than other assessment methods, making them great for assessing "soft" competencies such as Customer Service, Teamwork, and Interpersonal Skills. Structured Interviews are also effective at measuring competencies like Change Management, Creative Thinking, Influencing/Negotiating, Oral Communication, Planning/Evaluating, Problem Solving, Self-Management, and Technical Competence.

Structured Interviews typically assess between four and six competencies unless the job is unique or at a high level.



## Sample Question

✓ **Competency: Customer Service**

Describe a situation in which you dealt with individuals who were difficult, hostile, or distressed. What was the situation, your role, and the outcome?

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

14

Here is an example of a situational question measuring Customer Service. The question asks:

**Describe a situation in which you dealt with individuals who were difficult, hostile, or distressed. What was the situation, your role, and the outcome?**



## Structured Interview: Scoring

Proficiency Level Definition	
1	The candidate can apply the competency in the simplest situations and requires close and extensive guidance.
2	The candidate can apply the competency in somewhat difficult situations and requires frequent guidance.
3	The candidate can apply the competency in difficult situations and may require occasional guidance.
4	The candidate can apply the competency in considerably difficult situations and requires no guidance.
5	The candidate can apply the competency in exceptionally difficult situations. The candidate has served as a key resource and advised others.

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

15

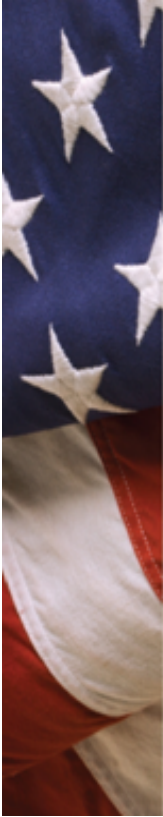
Once you created the interview questions with your subject matter experts, the next step is to develop a standardized rating scale with them. The use of a common rating scale for all candidates is a key component of the structured interview.

The first step in the development of a rating scale is specifying the range of proficiency for each competency. As an example, at OPM, we use a 5-level competency proficiency rating scale. The levels range from Level 1 (Awareness) all the way up to Level 5 (Expert). Each of those levels has a definition associated with it.

Level	Definition
1	The candidate can apply the competency in the simplest situations and requires close and extensive guidance.
2	The candidate can apply the competency in somewhat difficult situations and requires frequent guidance.
3	The candidate can apply the competency in difficult situations and may require occasional guidance.



4	The candidate can apply the competency in considerably difficult situations and requires no guidance.
5	The candidate can apply the competency in exceptionally difficult situations. The candidate has served as a key resource and advised others.



## Structured Interview: Scoring

### Behavioral Examples: Interpersonal Skills

1	Introduces new employees to co-workers.
2	Offers to assist employees in resolving problems with their benefits election.
3	Remains courteous and tactful when confronted by an employee who is frustrated by a payroll problem.
4	Identifies and alleviates sources of stress among a team developing a new automated HR system.
5	Presents shortcomings of a newly installed HR automation system in a tactful manner to irate senior management officials.

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

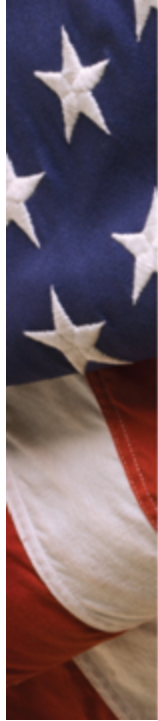
15

Once you have the rating scale, you and your SMEs will need to develop behavioral examples to go with each level. The purpose of these example behaviors is to clearly differentiate between proficiency levels for each competency. These examples are drawn from the job and will help the interviewers in making their ratings.

The goal is to identify elements of a range of behaviors from good, better, and best responses to the situation. This is a task that you will ask your SMEs to complete.

The table on the next page shows an example of a behavioral rating scale for a question based on the competency Interpersonal Skills. This rating scale has behavioral examples to illustrate differences between the proficiency levels.

<b>Behavioral Examples: Interpersonal Skills</b>	
<b>Level</b>	<b>Example</b>
1	Introduces new employees to co-workers.
2	Offers to assist employees in resolving problems with their benefits election.
3	Remains courteous and tactful when confronted by an employee who is frustrated by a payroll problem.
4	Identifies and alleviates sources of stress among a team developing a new automated HR system.
5	Presents shortcomings of a newly installed HR automation system in a tactful manner to irate senior management officials.



## Situational Judgment Test (SJT)

### ✓ What is it?

- Presents applicants with a description of a work problem or critical situation, and asks them to identify how they would deal with it
- Can be paper, computerized, or video-based format

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

17

I'm sure many of you have heard of Occupational Questionnaires and Structured Interviews, but some of you may be new to Situational Judgment Tests (SJTs). Think back to a situational structured interview question where you put the applicant in a realistic situation and asked them how they would respond if they were in that situation. SJTs are similar in that we put the applicant in a real-life situation. However, instead of asking how the applicant would respond, we provide response options and ask them to select the most and least effective actions in response to that situation. We will show you a couple of examples in a few slides.

SJTs can be both computer-based (with simulations) or text-based. We will see an example of both. The advantage of using a computerized or video-based simulation is that you force the applicant to read body language and tone as they respond to the situation, which mirrors real life more closely.

## Audience Poll

✓ Does your agency use SJTs?

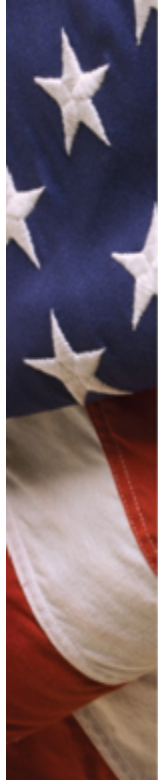
- Yes
- No
- Not sure

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Does your agency use SJTs during the selection process? Yes, No, or Not Sure?



It looks like some of you (22%) are using SJTs but many are not (52%).



## Situational Judgment Test

- ✓ Why use it?
  - High validity between scores and performance
  - Measures competencies that are difficult to measure
  - Uses real-life situations
  - Engaging
  - Difficult to fake
- ✓ Considerations
  - Requires extensive SME involvement
  - Requires measurement expertise
  - Can be costly
  - Limited number of response options



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

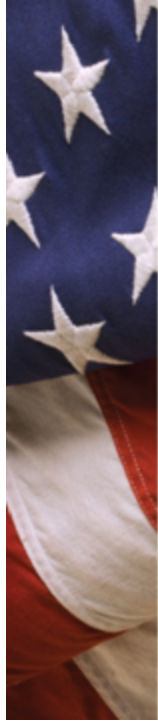
19

### Why use it:

Why use SJTs? Research has shown that scores on this assessment are a good predictor of job performance. In other words, high scores would indicate that the candidate will perform well on the job. Another advantage is that SJTs can measure some difficult-to-measure competencies. For example, you're able to observe how an applicant would respond in a situation that measures integrity or how they would choose to interact with others. SJTs present realistic problems because often they are built on situations that SMEs themselves have encountered on the job. SJTs are engaging for the applicant, and because it's hard to detect the "correct" answer, they are more difficult to fake.

### Considerations:

There are some factors that need to be considered. First, developing SJTs requires extensive SME involvement as well as measurement expertise. Often you'll need a personnel psychologist to guide the development of an SJT. If you choose to use avatars or any other computer based simulation, the development can be both time consuming and costly. Finally, we limit the number of response options that the applicant can select. In other words, they may read the response options and find that the way they would've responded in real life isn't listed as an option.



## SJT: Competencies Effectively Measured

- Conflict Management
- Customer Service
- Decision Making
- Integrity/Honesty
- Interpersonal Skills
- Teamwork
- Problem Solving
- Reasoning

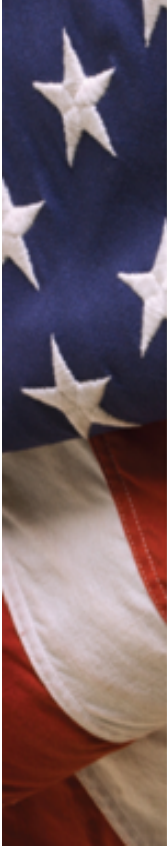


UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

20

Here are some competencies that can be measured using SJTs: Conflict Management, Customer Service, Decision Making, Integrity/Honesty, Interpersonal Skills, Teamwork, Problem Solving, and Reasoning.

For example, you can put the applicant in a situation where they have to work with two contentious colleagues and observe their conflict management skills. Or, put them in a situation where they have to consider multiple factors before making a decision.



## SJT: Example

\*One of your customers has arrived at your office and wishes to speak with your supervisor, who is not at her desk right now. The customer is frustrated because she has left several messages on your supervisor's voice-mail in the past week and has not received a call in return. You know that your supervisor is attending a meeting that will last for at least another hour. Which of the following actions are you most likely to take?

- Find out what the customer needs and interrupt the meeting.
- Find out what the customer needs and assure the caller that your supervisor will get the message.
- Tell the customer that your supervisor is not available.
- Ask the customer if someone else in the office can help her.

\*Source: [http://www.pmf.gov/media/38756/2012\\_pmf\\_assess\\_prep\\_guide\\_10-06-11.pdf](http://www.pmf.gov/media/38756/2012_pmf_assess_prep_guide_10-06-11.pdf)

Additional source: <https://www.fbijobs.gov/11215.asp>

Here's a sample question taken out of the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Assessment Preparation Guide. This question seems to be measuring "Customer Service". Let's take a look at it together.

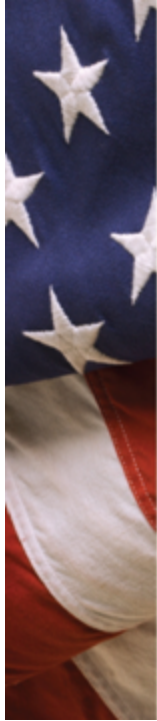
In this example, the candidate is asked: **One of your customers has arrived at your office and wishes to speak with your supervisor, who is not at her desk right now. The customer is frustrated because she has left several messages on your supervisor's voice-mail in the past week and has not received a call in return. You know that your supervisor is attending a meeting that will last for at least another hour. Which of the following actions are you most likely to take?**

- Find out what the customer needs and interrupt the meeting.
- Find out what the customer needs and assure the caller that your supervisor will get the message.
- Tell the customer that your supervisor is not available.
- Ask the customer if someone else in the office can help her.



In this example, the candidate is asked to pick the action they'd most likely take. Other times, SJT questions will ask the candidate to pick the action they are most likely to do AND the action they are least likely to do.

There are two links provided at the bottom of the page that have more examples of SJT items ([http://www.pmf.gov/media/38756/2012\\_pmf\\_assess\\_prep\\_guide\\_10-06-11.pdf](http://www.pmf.gov/media/38756/2012_pmf_assess_prep_guide_10-06-11.pdf) and <https://www.fbijobs.gov/11215.asp>). The first link is to the PMF Assessment Preparation Guide and the second link will take you to the FBI website where they have sample questions as part of their Special Agent selection process.



## SJT: Scoring Options

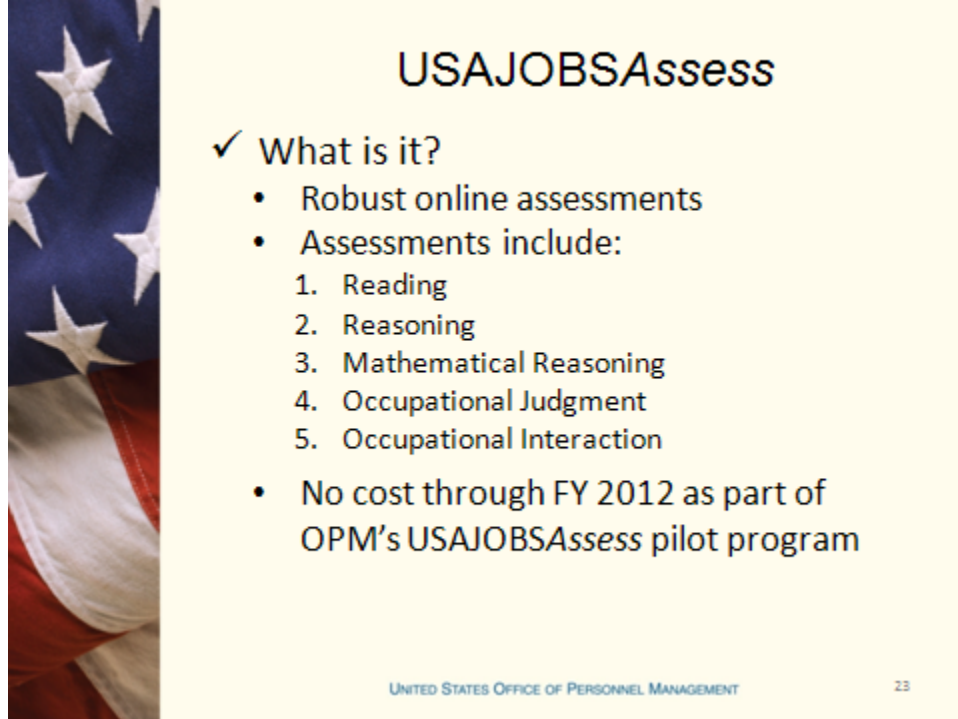
- ✓ Varied Scoring Options
  - SMEs review and select the most effective and least effective answer options
  - Applicants are scored based on identifying the least and most effective response options



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

22

There are different ways to score SJTs. One way to score SJTs is to "provide" points for when candidates pick the most and least effective action. During the development of the SJT, SMEs will review the response options and select the most effective and least effective answer. The applicants are then scored on how their responses match what the SMEs selected as the most effective and least effective action. For example, if the applicant selects the "most effective" answer correctly, they may receive a point. If they select the "least effective" option correctly, they would receive another point.

A presentation slide for USAJOBSAssess. On the left is a vertical image of the American flag. The main content is on a light yellow background. At the top right, the title "USAJOBSAssess" is written in a large, bold, black font. Below the title, a checkmark icon is followed by the text "What is it?". Underneath, there are two bullet points. The first bullet point is "Robust online assessments". The second bullet point is "Assessments include:", followed by a numbered list of five items: 1. Reading, 2. Reasoning, 3. Mathematical Reasoning, 4. Occupational Judgment, and 5. Occupational Interaction. A third bullet point is "No cost through FY 2012 as part of OPM's USAJOBSAssess pilot program". At the bottom of the slide, the text "UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT" is centered, and the number "23" is in the bottom right corner.

## USAJOBSAssess

- ✓ What is it?
  - Robust online assessments
  - Assessments include:
    1. Reading
    2. Reasoning
    3. Mathematical Reasoning
    4. Occupational Judgment
    5. Occupational Interaction
  - No cost through FY 2012 as part of OPM's USAJOBSAssess pilot program

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 23

**\*\* Please note: USAJOBSAssess has since been renamed USA Hire. \*\***

We are going to move on to talk about USAJOBSAssess. This is a great set of assessments that are available to agencies, free of charge, until the end of FY2012. The assessments include the following: Reading, Reasoning, Mathematical Reasoning, Occupational Judgment, and Occupational Interaction.

The assessments for Math, Reasoning, and Reading are computer adaptive assessments. This means the applicants start with one item and the next item they see will depend on whether they answered the first item correctly or incorrectly. In other words, it adapts to your performance. This offers increased test security because each applicant will likely see a different set of items.

The Occupational Judgment Test (similar to the Situational Judgment Test) presents realistic problems that can be encountered on the job. Applicants are asked to select the most and least effective ways to handle each situation.

The Occupational Interaction Assessment assesses a range of competencies and asks about interests and work preferences. Each question has five responses and the candidate selects the option that most accurately describes them.

The specific assessments the applicant will be asked to take will differ depending on the job they are applying for. Using USAJOBSAssess can save time and agency resources and manage large applicant pools as well as potentially identifying higher quality candidates.

A presentation slide with a yellow background and a vertical strip of the American flag on the left. The title is "USAJOBSAssess: Competencies Measured". It lists 15 competencies in two columns. At the bottom, it says "UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT" and "24".

## USAJOBSAssess: Competencies Measured

- Accountability
- Attention to Detail
- Customer Service
- Decision Making
- Flexibility
- Influencing/Negotiating
- Integrity/Honesty
- Interpersonal skills
- Learning
- Mathematical Reasoning
- Reading
- Reasoning
- Self-Management
- Stress Tolerance
- Teamwork

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

24

**\*\* Please note: USAJOBSAssess has since been renamed USA Hire. \*\***

USAJOBSAssess draws on existing OPM job analysis information when appropriate. The job analysis survey was administered to hundreds of thousands of incumbents and supervisors across over 50 agencies. The competencies that are measured using USAJOBSAssess are: Accountability, Attention to Detail, Customer Service, Decision Making, Flexibility, Influencing/Negotiating, Integrity/Honesty, Interpersonal Skills, Learning, Mathematical Reasoning, Reading, Reasoning, Self-Management, Stress Tolerance, and Teamwork. You'll notice that it does measure some more difficult-to-measure competencies such as Accountability and Integrity/Honesty.



**USAJOBSAssess:**

✓ Available for the following series:

- 0080 Security Specialist (GS5-GS15)
- 0201 Human Resources Specialist (GS5-GS15)
- 0203 Human Resources Assistant (GS3-GS10)
- 0303 Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant (GS3-GS10)
- 0318 Secretary (GS3-GS10)
- 0343 Management and Program Analyst (GS5-GS15)
- 0501 Financial Management Specialist (GS5-GS15)
- 0510 Accountant (GS5-GS15)
- 0560 Budget Analyst (GS5-GS15)
- 0962 Contact Representative (GS3-GS10)
- 1102 Contract Specialist (GS5-GS15)
- 2210 Information Technology Specialist (GS5-GS15)

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT


25

**\*\* Please note: USAJOBSAssess has since been renamed USA Hire. \*\***

USAJOBSAssess was developed to cover these 12 occupational series:

- 0080 Security Specialist (GS5-GS15)
- 0201 Human Resources Specialist (GS5-GS15)
- 0203 Human Resources Assistant (GS3-GS10)
- 0303 Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant (GS3-GS10)
- 0318 Secretary (GS3-GS10)
- 0343 Management and Program Analyst (GS5-GS15)
- 0501 Financial Management Specialist (GS5-GS15)
- 0510 Accountant (GS5-GS15)
- 0560 Budget Analyst (GS5-GS15)
- 0962 Contact Representative (GS3-GS10)
- 1102 Contract Specialist (GS5-GS15)
- 2210 Information Technology Specialist (GS5-GS15)

The positions listed above cover 33% of all civilian new hires and transfers.



## USAJOBSAssess: Process

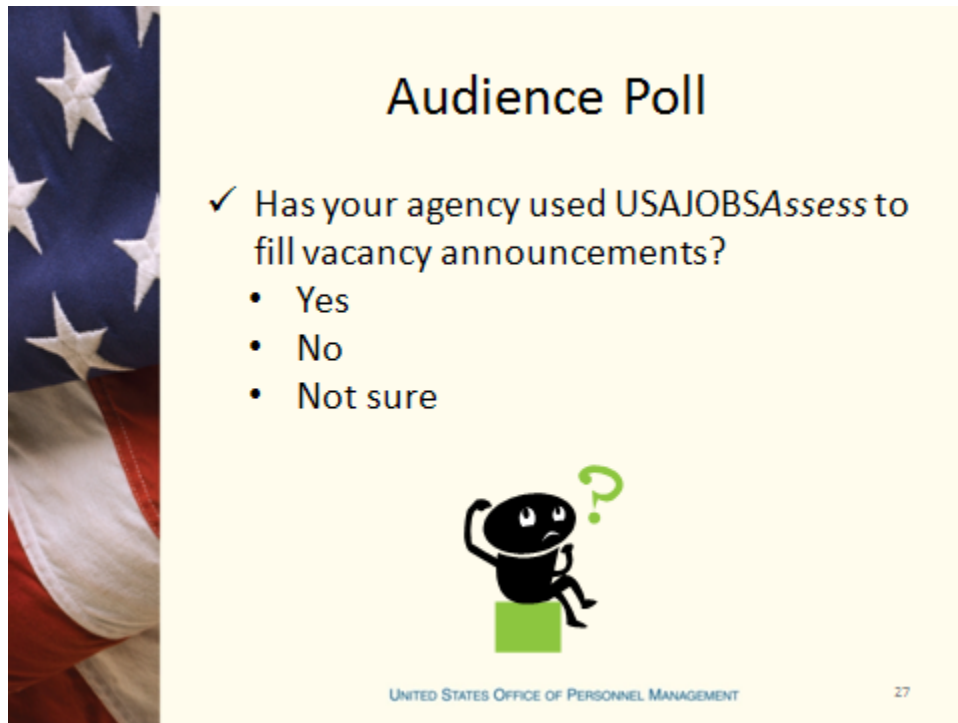
1. Identify job within 12 occupations (listed on prior slide)
2. Contact USAJOBSAssess at:  
[Charles.Thompson@opm.gov](mailto:Charles.Thompson@opm.gov)
3. Agencies provide OPM with relevant information (open/close date, position series/grade)
4. OPM works with agencies throughout the remainder of the process (e.g., review/set up announcement, send agencies applicant data, etc.)

Note: USAJOBSAssess is available to both USA Staffing and non-USASTaffing clients

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 25

\*\* Please note: USAJOBSAssess has since been renamed USA Hire. \*\*

To get the ball rolling on using USAJOBSAssess, first identify a job within the 12 that we just mentioned. Next, contact Charlie Thompson ([Charles.Thompson@opm.gov](mailto:Charles.Thompson@opm.gov)) and his team will take it from there. They will ask you for some more specific information, such as when the job opens/closes and the position and series that you're hiring for. Additionally, they'll provide some relevant information for you such as language required in the job opportunity announcement and a reasonable accommodations questionnaire. They will then work with you to review/set up the announcement. After the applicant takes the assessment, the data will be provided to the HR specialist.



## Audience Poll

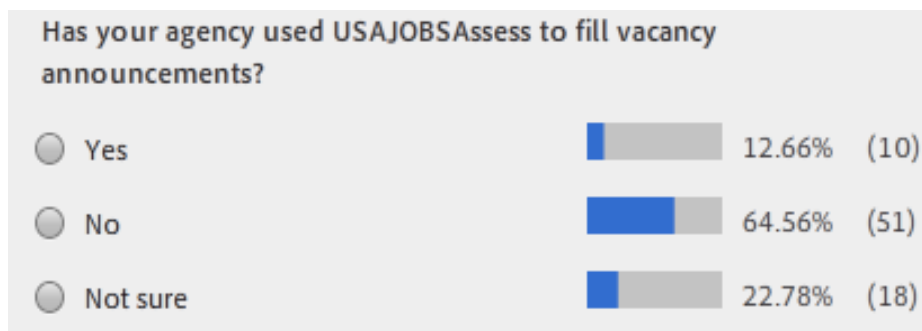
✓ Has your agency used USAJOBSAssess to fill vacancy announcements?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 27

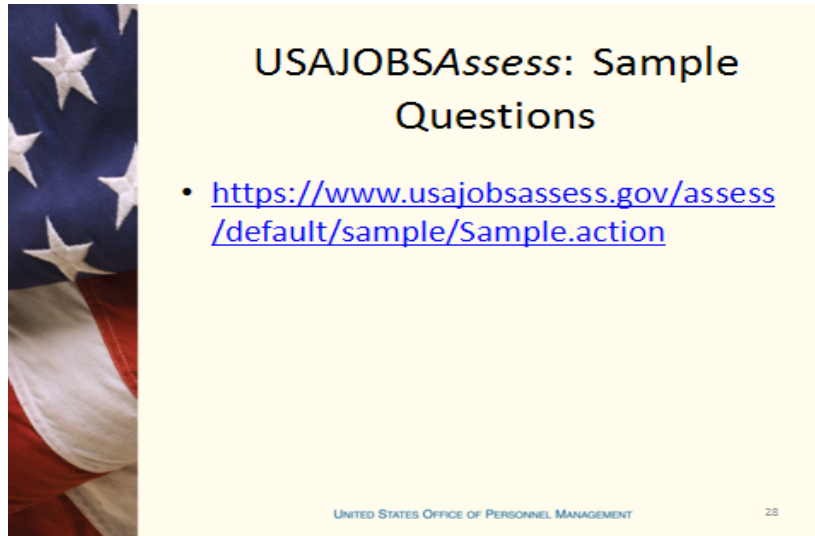
\*\* Please note: USAJOBSAssess has since been renamed USA Hire. \*\*

Has your agency used USAJOBSAssess to fill vacancy announcements? Yes, No, or Not Sure?



It looks like most of you haven't used USAJOBSAssess (65%).



A presentation slide with a yellow background. On the left side, there is a vertical strip showing a portion of the American flag (stars and stripes). The main text is centered and reads "USAJOBSAssess: Sample Questions". Below this, there is a bullet point with a blue hyperlink: "https://www.usajobsassess.gov/assess/default/sample/Sample.action". At the bottom of the slide, there is small text that reads "UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT" and a small number "28" in the bottom right corner.

USAJOBSAssess: Sample Questions

- <https://www.usajobsassess.gov/assess/default/sample/Sample.action>

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT 28

**\*\* Please note: USAJOBSAssess has since been renamed USA Hire. \*\***

We're going to take a look at the USAJOBSAssess sample questions page so you can get a feel for what the questions and the platform looks like (<https://www.usajobsassess.gov/assess/default/sample/Sample.action>). The first sample question we see is a math item. In this section, applicants can use a calculator to solve math problems that ask about percentages, fractions, decimals, proportions, algebra, basic geometry and basic probability.

The Occupational Judgment Assessment is just like the SJT we talked about earlier. It presents the applicant with a series of videos that depict scenarios Federal employees could encounter on the job. For each scenario, the applicant will be presented with four courses of action in response to the video. Notice there are four response options below the video and the applicant must select the most effective and least effective course of action.

The Occupational Interaction Assessment asks about the applicant's interests and work preferences.

The Occupational Reasoning Assessment asks the applicant to draw logical conclusions based on the information provided. They will also be asked to analyze scenarios, and evaluate arguments.

Finally, the Occupational Reading Assessment measures the applicant's reading comprehension skills. They will be asked to read a passage or table and answer questions based on the information provided in the passage or table.



## Assessment Decision Tool

- ✓ Automated tool designed to help HR professionals develop assessment strategies
  - Targets specific competencies and other situational factors relevant to their hiring situation
  - <http://apps.opm.gov/ADT>

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

29

Finally we are going to talk about a tool that OPM has on its website. It's called the Assessment Decision Tool (<http://apps.opm.gov/ADT>). The tool is designed to help HR professionals develop their assessment strategies by balancing the competencies that you are trying to measure with the situational factors such as your budget or time restraints.

On the main screen, on the left hand side, there's a link to the Assessment Decision Tool (or ADT). When we select that, it takes us to a page that gives us instructions as to how to use the ADT. In the first step, we'll learn more about a particular assessment method or assessment strategy.

Let's say I have an HR specialist position that I need to fill in 6 months. Here are the steps I'd take in using the ADT to determine what my best assessment strategy would be.

Step 1: I would like to know what my assessment options are [*Select: Use the tool to develop an assessment strategy specific to my hiring needs*].

Step 2: Because I've already completed my job analysis, I would like to focus on the competencies of interest [*Select: Identify Competencies for my job of interest*].

Step 3: I know that I'm looking for (an HR Specialist) so I would like to search by the occupational series. You'll notice that you can use this tool to search by job group or for leadership positions [*Select: Based on a specific occupational series number or title*]. [*Select 0201*].

Step 4: Specifically, I need someone who will be working in labor relations [*Select: labor relations*] and the job analysis revealed that I need someone who has strong decision making,

interpersonal skills, oral communication, and problem solving skills [*Select: decision making, interpersonal skills, oral communication, and problem solving skills*].

Step 5: I plan to develop my own customized assessment [*Select: I plan to develop my own customized assessment*].

Step 6: I need to complete the assessment development in 6 months [*Select: 3-9 Months*].

Step 7: I have a medium level of technical expertise in assessment development [*Select: Medium*]

Step 8: I'm expecting more than 100 applicants [*Select: More than 100*]

Step 9: I'll have a medium amount of resources at my disposal [*Select: Medium*].

The output shows me the competencies I selected with their definitions. Further down the page, it shows me the assessment methods I can use to measure these competencies. For example, the preferred way to measure problem solving is by using Accomplishment Records, Assessment Centers, Cognitive Ability Tests, SJTs, Structured Interviews, or a Work Sample. If I'm not sure what some of those assessments are, I can view a description of it. For example, let's look at the description on a Work Sample [*Select: View description of: Work Samples and Simulations*].

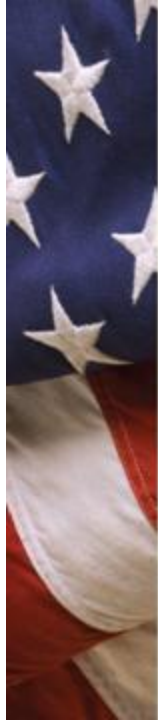
This next table shows me what the preferred assessment methods are. In this case, Accomplishment Records, Assessment Centers, Reference Checking, and Structured Interviews are most preferred.

Since I know that I'll need the assessment to be developed within 6 months, I want to sort this next table by timeframe [*Select: Sort by: Timeframe- Sort Ascending*]. You'll notice this table lists your requirements as you identified them on the previous page, and the requirements of the actual assessment. For example, my level of technical expertise is "medium" and the expertise needed to develop an accomplishment record is also "medium". When there is a match between your requirements and the assessment requirements, the words will appear in green. You'll notice that there are some items that are red and asterisked. This occurs when my situational responses does not meet the assessment method requirement. In other words, I said that I expect to have over 100 applicants but it would be impractical to conduct a structured interview for that many candidates. Perhaps we can use a structured interview later on in the in the selection process when we've narrowed down our applicant pool.

I can also look at some other important factors, such as the validity of the assessment, subgroup differences, and development and administration costs. For example, I see that

Structured Interviews have high validity, low subgroup differences, and moderate development and administration costs.

At the bottom I can deselect assessments that I will not consider. For example, I can deselect assessment centers, biodata, cognitive ability, emotional intelligence, personality, SJT, and work samples because they would take too long to develop [*Deselect: assessment centers, biodata, cognitive ability, emotional intelligence, personality, SJT, and work samples*]. Lastly, we can create and save a report in PDF or HTML format. The output shows us relevant information that we can consider when we're making a decision about our assessment strategy.



One-on-one agency assistance available!

[Assessment\\_Information@opm.gov](mailto:Assessment_Information@opm.gov)

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

30

Finally, we want to mention that OPM provides one-on-one agency assistance. We seek to provide technical guidance to agency HR professionals and hiring officials on assessment strategy and development. If you want more information about training or assessment-related services, email us ([Assessment\\_Information@opm.gov](mailto:Assessment_Information@opm.gov)) and we will put in your in touch with the right people.