

Sample Performance Exercises

Performance Exercise: Case Study Performance Exercise 1

Case study performance exercises are used to simulate real-world challenges candidates may face in the role. These exercises assess candidates' critical thinking, problem-solving, communication skills, and ability to align their solutions with the university's mission and priorities. Each case study provides insight into a candidate's approach to strategy, creativity, and responsiveness in a time-sensitive setting.

Objective

To evaluate candidates' problem-solving abilities, critical thinking skills, communication capabilities, and creativity when addressing realistic, role-specific scenarios.

Procedure

1. Candidates are provided with a case study relevant to the department or role. The case study outlines a specific problem or challenge faced by a university office, program, or initiative.
2. Candidates are allocated a set amount of time (e.g., 1 hour) to analyze the case and develop a proposed solution or strategy.
3. Each candidate prepares a brief presentation (approximately 10 minutes) summarizing their approach, key insights, and proposed plan of action.
4. Following the presentation, candidates respond to follow-up questions from the evaluation panel to defend their approach or clarify specific points.

Example Case Study for a University Communications Role

Scenario:

The university is experiencing a decline in student engagement with institutional newsletters and event announcements. Data shows low open rates and feedback suggests students feel communications are not relevant or timely.

Candidates are tasked with developing a communications strategy to improve student engagement with digital newsletters and event promotions, taking into consideration the diversity of the student population and preferred communication channels.

Evaluation Criteria

Candidates will be assessed on the following elements:

- **Organization and clarity** of thought in the proposed strategy
- **Creativity and innovation** in addressing the communication challenge

- **Alignment with the university's mission, goals, and student-centered values**
- **Effectiveness of communication and presentation skills**
- **Responsiveness and adaptability** during the Q&A session

Performance Exercise: Case Study Performance Exercise 2

Objective

To evaluate candidates' ability to strategically assess program challenges, develop actionable plans, think creatively, and communicate effectively in a university environment.

Procedure

1. Candidates are provided with a case study describing a real-world program management challenge.
2. Candidates are given a set amount of time (e.g., 1 hour) to analyze the situation and prepare a response plan.
3. Each candidate delivers a brief presentation (approximately 10 minutes) summarizing their assessment, proposed actions, and rationale.
4. Following the presentation, the evaluation panel asks follow-up questions to assess deeper reasoning, adaptability, and practical application of ideas.

Example Case Study for a University Program Management Role

Scenario:

A university's student leadership development program has seen a 30% decline in enrollment over the past two years. Feedback from students suggests scheduling conflicts, lack of awareness, and limited perceived value are key factors. The program also struggles with measuring and communicating its outcomes to stakeholders.

Candidates are tasked with proposing a plan to revitalize the program, increase student participation, and develop methods to better track and demonstrate program impact to university leadership.

Evaluation Criteria

Candidates will be assessed on the following elements:

- **Strategic planning and problem-solving** in proposing solutions
- **Creativity and practicality** in increasing program participation

- **Ability to align proposals with student needs and university priorities**
- **Effectiveness of communication and presentation skills**
- **Analytical thinking and use of measurable outcomes**
- **Responsiveness and adaptability** during the Q&A session

Performance Exercise: Example 3

Example for University Management Role

Exercise Title

Team Prioritization and Communication Memo

Objective

To assess candidates' ability to prioritize competing demands, apply strategic thinking, communicate clearly with internal audiences, and demonstrate leadership in decision-making.

Procedure

1. Candidates are provided with a list of five incoming departmental projects or tasks, each varying in deadline urgency and resource needs.
2. Candidates are allocated 30 minutes to:
 - Review the task list
 - Rank the projects in order of priority with a brief explanation for each
 - Draft a one-page internal memo to their team communicating the prioritization and outlining the next steps.
3. Candidates submit their completed memo for evaluation.

Skills Being Assessed

- Decision-making and prioritization
- Strategic thinking
- Written communication for internal audiences
- Leadership communication
- Analytical reasoning