New & Updated Test Products

Our Customized Promotional Test Service now offers agencies the opportunity to create tests appropriate for the position of first-line supervisor within ANY organization. Agencies may choose questions from a variety of knowledge areas including, but not limited to, concepts of supervision, conflict management, and evaluating subordinate performance.

The PSUP Series and the PL 1.2 were updated to ensure the tests contain current information regarding the law, recent Supreme Court decisions, law enforcement technology, and new textbook editions.

Based on customer requests, IPMA-HR made the decision to increase the PDET 2.0 Test from a 95-question test to a 100-question test for ease of administration. This test is now called the PDET 2.1.

New Services

JOBS ANALYSIS SERVICE. Our web-based Job Analysis Service (JAS) allows customers to conduct a job analysis on any job within an organization using job analysis surveys and questionnaires that are completed by respondents over the Internet. The job analysis results are used to create a Job Analysis Report profiling the job being studied and outlining the important job requirements. This profile can be utilized for several purposes including, but not limited to, developing comprehensive job descriptions, creating a selection or promotional process, and creating an exam plan to develop a selection or promotional exam or other assessment tool.

TRANSPORTABILITY STUDY SERVICE. Our web-based Transportability Study Service (TSS) enables agencies to conduct a transportability study for most IPMA-HR public safety tests. Doing so would help ensure that the KSAPs assessed by the test are substantially similar to those necessary for success on the job. TSS is conducted through web-based job analysis surveys, which would be completed by agency personnel. The transportability study results would then be used to create a Transportability Study Report containing information linking the job to the one for which the test was developed. By conducting a transportability study, agencies will be better able to defend their testing processes in the event of a legal challenge.

BILLING MODEL. As of January 1, 2007, the Assessment Services Department implemented a new billing model. IPMA-HR test customers are now invoiced 60 days after their tests ship. Any unused tests for which customers are seeking credit must be returned by that date. For example, if the tests ship April 1, then any unused booklets must be returned by June 1. The invoice for that order would print on June 1, and would reflect all credits that have been applied. At this point, no additional credits would be provided.

As a result of the new billing model, the Assessment Services Department discontinued six-month rental agreements. Those agencies who took advantage of the six-month rental agreement are welcome to order sufficient quantities to administer over that same period of time. However, credits are no longer granted for tests returned more than 60 days from the shipment date.
Test Development Projects

IPMA-HR’s Assessment Services Department is conducting several test development projects. One project still requires the completion of a job analysis, while the job analysis phase for the other two projects has already been conducted with the results analyzed and used to develop exam plans for each test.

The next step of each study involves collecting criterion-based validity evidence to support the use of the exams in public safety agencies across the country. This step will include two phases: Administering the test to incumbents and having supervisors evaluate their job performance.

Data collected will be combined with that provided by other, participating agencies. An item analysis will be run on the data to determine the best questions to include on the test. The tests and performance evaluation data will then be used to conduct the statistical analysis to ensure that test performance predicts job performance.

Current Projects

Current projects include developing the Entry-Level Correctional Officer Test, the Entry-Level Public Safety Telecommunicator Test, and the Entry-Level Firefighter Test.

All current projects require at least 5 incumbents to participate. The firefighter test development project still requires participation in the completion of job analysis questionnaires. All current projects also require the administration of multiple choice tests to incumbents. Test administration should take approximately 2 ½ hours.

(Note: The Entry-Level Public Safety Telecommunicator Test includes an interactive listening subtest that requires a video.) All current projects require asking one to two first- or second-line supervisors to evaluate incumbent job performance. Each evaluation should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Upcoming Projects

Upcoming projects include updating the 901 Correctional Facility First-Line Supervisor Test, 801 Public Safety Telecommunicator First-Line Supervisor Test, A-4 Entry-Level Police Officer Video Test, 701/702 Fire Lieutenant Test, and the Administrative Assistant/Clerical Series. IPMA-HR also plans to develop a new Fire Engineer/Driver Test.

Each upcoming project will include job analysis studies which will require participation in the completion of job analysis questionnaires. All upcoming projects, except for the A-4, require the provision of 10 to 15 SME raters who will be responsible for reviewing and rating approximately 50 questions. The review should take around 60 to 90 minutes to complete. The A-4 project requires the administration of a multiple choice test to incumbents. Test administration should take approximately 2 ½ hours. The A-4 project requires having one to two first- or second-line supervisors evaluate incumbent job performance. Each evaluation should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Benefits of Participation

If participating agencies choose to administer the newly developed test as part of their selection process, they will be better able to defend their testing process in the event of a legal challenge. Significant cost savings may be gained from hiring public safety personnel who are more likely to succeed on the job. If an agency were to execute a validation project, or form a consortium to carry out such a project, the cost would probably exceed $100,000.

Participating agencies will receive a discount on future test products and will also be reimbursed for costs associated with compensating staff for participation. Participating agencies will receive a voucher that can be applied to one test order, upon receipt of completed study materials. All vouchers will expire two years from the date they are awarded. Discounts are structured on a sliding scale. Agencies with 5 to 10 participants will receive a 10% discount; those with 11 to 20 will receive 15%; those with 21 to 30 will receive 20%; those with 31 to 50 will receive 25%; and those with more than 50 will receive 30%. Agencies with fewer than 5 participants may participate and will be compensated based on a dollar amount and the exact number of participants involved.

Agencies that provide 11 or more participants can receive even greater savings. IPMA-HR offers your agency the option to administer the test to participants during their off time in a group setting to eliminate the need to pay overtime. These participants will receive a Visa Cash Rewards Card in the amount of $50.00. Furthermore, if an agency would be willing to provide 50 or more incumbents, IPMA-HR is also willing to travel to your location to administer the test to incumbents in a group setting.

Regardless of how many participants you provide, IPMA-HR will provide you with a pre-paid UPS label to the cover the costs of shipping and handling for returning completed test materials. Additionally, IPMA-HR believes you will gain satisfaction from assisting the public safety profession as well as the HR profession in developing tests that will assist in the selection of qualified public safety personnel.

If you have additional questions, please contact the Assessment Services Manager at (800) 381-TEST (8378).
Testing in the News  BY TINA CHIAPPETTA
Seventh Circuit Rules in Favor of City of Chicago on Testing Issue

The United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit ruled that the City of Chicago did not violate Title VII when it relied on a 1994 examination to promote officers to sergeant because the officers could not demonstrate the availability of an alternative method of promotion that was equally valid. Edward Adams, Peggy Adams, Helen Adams, et al. v. City of Chicago, Docket Nos. 05-4145/4150, November 16, 2006.

Black and Hispanic officers allege that it is discriminatory. The test consists of three parts; those who pass parts one and two are given the opportunity to take the third part. Part one is multiple-choice covering the law, department procedures and regulations, Part two is also multiple-choice and covers administrative functions. Part three is an oral exam based on a written briefing.

After receiving the recommendation, Chicago hired another expert to develop a new promotional examination and an appropriate merit selection procedure. The expert performed a job analysis and developed criteria for merit selection based on the skills necessary to the position. The resulting merit selection process involved training nominators who are held accountable for their nominations. This process was used in the August 1998 promotions, but not the February 1997 promotions.

The officers argue that after the task force made its recommendation in January 1997, the City was required to use merit in all future promotions because it now had an alternative method of promotion that was equally valid and less discriminatory. The court disagreed, finding instead that there was not enough time between the task force’s recommendation to include merit, made in January 1997 and the February 1997 promotions to incorporate the changes. The court pointed to the length of time it took the expert to analyze the sergeant position, to come up with the idea of trained nominators, and to train the nominators and implement the process. “Furthermore,” said the court, “the officers have not shown that a hastily adopted merit evaluation process would have been of substantially equal validity to the rankings resulting from the 1994 evaluations.”

The suit was brought by minority officers for the city of Chicago who claim that the February 1997 promotions, based on a 1994 examination, had a disparate impact and discriminated on the basis of race. The City has 10,000 law enforcement officers, including about 8,000 police officers and 1,200 sergeants. Lieutenants supervise sergeants who in turn supervise the officers.

Due to ongoing complaints about promotions, the mayor of Chicago appointed a panel in 1990 to make recommendations concerning future promotions. Based on the recommendations, the city hired an outside consultant to create a promotional exam and the resulting 1994 exam is the subject of this suit.

Each part was weighed equally and the scores ranked. The ranking generated a promotional list with high scores listed first. Both parties agree that this examination and the ranking had a disparate impact on minorities. Chicago made promotions to sergeant based on this ranking in 1994, 1996 and February 1997.

Only the 1997 promotions are challenged here and that is because a task force, appointed by the mayor, made recommendations in January 1997 that thirty percent of promotions to sergeant should be based upon merit, with the promotional tests used to assure a minimum level of competence. Merit includes the officers’ on the job performance and does not necessarily correlate to the exam scores.
ABOUT IPMA-HR: IPMA-HR has provided high-quality, reliable test products and services to the public sector since 1953. IPMA-HR provides more than 200,000 tests annually to public jurisdictions including the United States, Canada and the European Union. Developed by experienced psychometricians, IPMA-HR tests have been validated and are backed by more than 50 years of experience. Let us assist you as you make the difficult hiring and promotional decisions specific to your field. Our customers agree that we always provide excellent customer service, from the ordering process until long after test administration. IPMA-HR is your trusted source for test products and services.

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