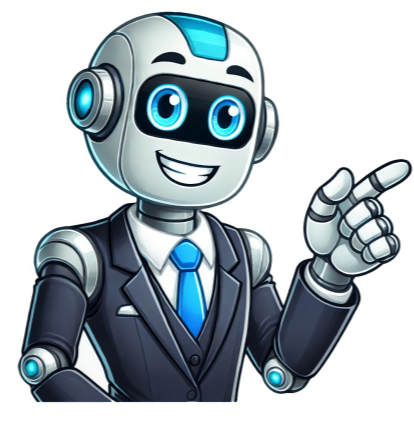


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explained the background to the User Group and the vital role it plays in Juguete's marketing department has recently been moved into a long, thin office space with a few windows at either end. This office was formerly a storage area and has a flat roof which is prone to leaking in wet weather. Over the weekend, two out of the four office PCs have suffered water damage and are beyond repair. Continued work on GERTIE needs Mac facilities and Roger Watly is the in-house Mac expert. Hints & Tips on How to Use the In-Tray Overview in 2025 1. Your Role and Key Organisation Issues As you read through the information provided, highlight the key organisational details, behaviours or responsibilities that will dictate how you decide to deal with the in-tray items. For example, in the scenario where you are Jamie Wong of Juguete, you should highlight the following items: Your role: You are responsible for the development of the UK market and have three... Your previous experience is in technology toys... Key issues: Project GERTIE has strategic importance for the company... .. the User Group and the vital role it plays in Juguete's new product launches You could even write these on one of your post-it notes and keep it visible all the time so that as you read each in-tray item you consider its importance against these key facts and use these in making your decision or arriving at an action. By using these as the basis for any decision you make, you will display the KSAs required to secure the job. 2. Organisational Chart In this exercise, you have been given an organisational chart. From this chart, you can see that your team is already one member short and this information may affect how you arrive at your decisions. In some exercises, these details are given as text within the general description of the organisation. If this is the case, then it is worth spending a minute at the start of the exercise drawing up your own organisational chart like the one supplied for Juguete. In this way, you can quickly see the role of a person and their relationship to you as you read through the in-tray items. As many of the items used in current in-tray exercises will be voice messages and emails, the title of the person sending this message is not always easily identifiable. The organisational chart makes it easier to see: Who the message is from Who the message is addressed to Who it involves Without a clear way of recognising these things, it would be very easy to miss the importance of a message. This could be because someone's name is similar to someone else's or because only the first name is given. 3. Making Notes As you go through each of your in-tray items, you should make short notes alongside each name concerned with that item so that you have a quick and easy reference point. This will be valuable and ensure efficient use of your time when you are making decisions. These notes will also serve as reminders when you are asked to justify or describe how you arrived at a decision by an assessor. Remember, you may need to recognise where you have insufficient information to make a decision. Certain information may be purposely not supplied, to test whether or not you try to fill in the gaps. Be mindful to use only the information you are supplied with. 5. Third-Party Details In our example, you are told about the third party involvement in Project GERTIE: Xu Shi Corporation, techno toy manufacturer Mr Lia Yu, Managing Director Mr Quan Chi, Finance Director Health & Safety Executive - Ms Clara Frost, Director Juguete User Group - Mrs Susan Wizbie, Chair Your boss, Maria Fernandez, also has explained to you the importance of the User Group: ... to the User Group and the vital role it plays in Juguete's new product launches You should create a draft third party organisational chart in which you can scribble down key information gleaned from items along with their reference numbers or letters. For this exercise, it could look something like:In-Tray Exercise: Third Party Details"This will help you quickly recognise and note any strategic or management issues as well as areas of potential conflict that may have been raised in the in-tray items. In many exercises, 'the public' or 'your customers' are important third parties that may not be mentioned explicitly, but you may need to consider what effect your decisions are going to have on them. 6. Calendar Details In some in-tray and e-tray exercises, you may be supplied with a blank three-monthly view in which you'll be able to add notes and key dates. If you are not supplied with a calendar, you may wish to quickly draw one up. This will help you to schedule resources or see bottlenecks that need to be addressed.In-Tray Exercise: Calendar DetailsIn addition to this three-monthly calendar sheet, you may wish to create a weekly calendar on a single sheet. You can use this to mark up the meetings, commitments and deadlines you have, as a result of reading the items in the in-tray. 7. Weekly Diary If you are not provided with a weekly diary sheet then produce your own, as it will aid the speed and accuracy of your decision-making during the exercise.In-Tray Exercise: Weekly Diary DetailsThis will make it easy for you to see all of your clashing commitments and double bookings. In-Tray Exercise Practice Tests Once you have read through all the items in practice test 1, you will be asked a series of questions on how you would respond to the problem(s) or issue(s) each one presents. The questions are designed to test a variety of skills and abilities: How you make decisions Your approach to problem-solving How you allocate your time and resources Your capability to plan and prioritise How you apply, simulate and respond to information You will find several alternative answers are presented for each question. What you are required to do is to consider each of these options and then select which answer most closely matches how you would act if you were Jamie Wong, the UK Marketing Manager.Credit: Psychometric SuccessTake Another Free In-Tray TestCredit: Psychometric SuccessTake Another Free In-Tray TestFrequently Asked QuestionsAn in-tray exercise is a pre-employment screening tool that is used by recruiters to assess a candidate on their organization and prioritization skills. Presented as a business-related simulation, candidates are presented with several emails, messages, phone calls and tasks to complete. Sometimes this is a paper-based exercise, while other times it might be online instead. To be successful in an in-tray exercise, you will need to be able to quickly read and understand all the information, tasks, and details so you can decide which tasks need the most immediate attention, which need to be delegated to another colleague, and what order to complete them in.Each in-tray exercise is different, so the number of in-tray items will differ between tests. The Wikijob practice in-tray/e-tray exercise is designed to simulate a real in-tray aptitude test. This practice assessment includes 37 questions, and you should aim to complete it within 40 minutes. In this test, you must read through seven in-tray items before answering the questions. In most cases, you will be presented with between 12 and 30 in-tray items to prioritize and action.For roles where organization, prioritization and negotiation skills are needed, in-tray exercises are used to assess a potential candidate on their decision-making. The in-tray exercise focuses on skills that cannot easily be assessed through other means - from complex problem solving to analytical skills, as well as communication and delegation. Putting the candidate under pressure in a scenario-based exercise replicates the pressure to perform that they might encounter in the workplace. Dealing with time constraints, multiple members of staff, different tasks and an overall goal, the in-tray exercise is a simple yet effective assessment of the working style and behavior of the candidate.The idea of the in-tray exercise is to make reasoned and logical decisions about what order daily tasks should be dealt with. For paper-based exercises, you might be able to bring stationery items in to help - such as post-it notes, highlighters, or colored pens and pencils. As you work through the emails, messages and other information, mark them in order of importance. Read everything thoroughly - there might be a message that makes a previous task redundant, and there might be more important tasks at the end of the items. You can expect there to be a mix of information that is serious and important, and other details that are not significant or in some cases pointless. Keep notes about the decisions you make in prioritizing - you might have to justify them in a debrief after the test is completed. Describing why you made the decisions you made is easier if you have reference material. With some of the tasks, you might be delegating to a colleague or communicating with a customer, so make sure the tone of any messages matches the person you are talking to, whether in person or through writing. Tone is an important part of getting your point across, and if you want to make the most of the exercise this should be an important strategy - not too familiar, but not too robotic either. You need to be empathetic, clear, and concise.When completing an in-tray exercise, you need to show that you have the appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes to succeed in the job role. Remember that the assessor will only be able to award credit for the attributes you have shown during the exercise. Taking some stationery to the assessment can be helpful, for example, colored pens, sticky notes, pencils, highlighters, and a calculator. You might choose to mark urgent items in a particular color or categorize the tasks using sticky notes. Completing practice tests will allow you to develop a system that works for you. Focus on prioritizing the tasks, highlighting key information, keeping detailed notes, and considering potential problems that you might face.An in-tray exercise is designed to assess your ability to organize and prioritize work-related tasks. With a fast-paced, scenario-based nature, the in-tray exercise replicates a real workplace environment to see how you would behave - and there are a few ways you can prepare yourself for what is to come. One of the best things that you can do to prepare is to practice in-tray exercises, so you can get familiar with the structure and what is expected of you. The practice tests can put you under similar pressure so that you know what it will feel like in the 'real thing' and will help you identify if there are any parts of the assessment that you might need to work on. As with any pre-employment assessment, you must look after yourself in the run-up to the test. This means getting a good night's sleep, eating healthily, and staying hydrated on the day. Your brain will work more reliably and deal with the pressure if you give it the fuel it needs.In an in-tray exercise, you are acting in a role for a company and you will need to deal with a volume of work based on that. The daily tasks could include telephone calls, emails, messages, tasks and any other number of items, and there will be a specific aim of the day's work that you will be told about. All the information you need to make the decisions about which tasks to prioritize will be provided at the beginning of the assessment. When it comes to making the right decisions in the assessment, you need to know what is expected of you and follow the rules. Take your time to read all the information, think logically and creatively when ordering the tasks, and be aware of the time limit - these will all help you solve the problems.There are several different ways you can practice an in-tray exercise online. Look for the publisher of the tests that you will be taking - often, the in-tray exercise is part of a broader spectrum of aptitude tests, so you might be able to find out who is publishing the test, to practice on the publisher's website. In many cases, the in-tray exercise will be bespoke, created for the company itself. This means that the best way to practice is with a range of different in-tray exercises - like the one in this article, or through a test preparation site like JobTestPrep.Preparation for in-tray exercises comes from knowing what to expect and how to do well - and there are several websites that you can use to prepare for this. You can find information in this Wikijob article, including practice test questions and detailed information about the right way to approach the assessment. For excellent preparation advice, including resources for revision and practice tests, the Prep Packs that you can find at JobTestPrep will help give you all the information you need to feel confident when you are approaching the test - whether you are completing it as part of an assessment center or online.The way you prioritize the emails, messages, and tasks in the in-tray exercise are evaluated depend on the needs of the business and the role you have applied for. For example, if you are looking for a management position, you might be expected to deal with staffing issues as well as customer inquiries. As this test is assessing your organization, decision making and problem-solving skills, you will be evaluated on the way you approach the tasks to prioritize them. The way you complete the exercise will be compared to an 'ideal profile' of the candidate that they are looking for, and you might be asked to justify your reasons in a debrief after the assessment.If you do not deal with the tasks that are presented in the in-tray exercise in the right way, you can fail the assessment. To give yourself the best chance, be thorough, organized, and logical in the way you approach each task, whether it is an email, telephone call, or something that needs to be completed. Remember that you do not always have to deal with everything yourself - you'll have other colleagues that you can delegate some tasks to, and other items might not need any action, too.As most in-tray exercises tend to take place as part of an assessment center - so you will be completing them in person - it is not simple to cheat an in-tray exercise. If you are taking an online version at home, you could cheat by getting someone else to take the assessment for you - but this is not recommended. The scenarios presented in the assessment are usually designed to be like the challenges you might face in the real assessment - and if you are unable to complete the exercise, it might mean that you are not suited to the role. Even if it seems that the job you have applied for is perfect for you, cheating on an assessment could lead to long-term disappointment in a role that does not suit you and the way you enjoy working.In-tray and in-basket exercises are two names for the same assessment. Sometimes these are given to candidates during the application process as a part of the assessment center, to be completed in person and using paper-based information. The in-tray exercise might also be given as an online test, taken either in person or remotely. Sometimes this is referred to as an e-tray exercise, but in principle, this is the same thing as an in-tray or an in-basket exercise. Many large graduate recruiters (particularly financial institutions and accountancy firms) use in-tray and e-tray exercises during their candidate selection process. Many people find the in-tray to be the most difficult of all of the assessment centre exercises. If you have been asked to complete an in-tray exercise, you ought to carry out as much preparatory work as you can beforehand. If you prepare properly, follow the tips in this article, remain calm throughout and apply common sense, there is absolutely no reason why you cannot complete a successful and strong in-tray exercise as part of the selection process. In-tray exercises are used by various sectors and industries for different roles. Some key industries that use in-tray tests are: Consulting & Professional ServicesHealthcareHospitalityPublic Sector & Government BankingLegalFinancial Services & AdministrationSalesMarketing Some multinational companies that often have used in-tray exercises as part of their recruitment process include: AmazonMicrosoftDeloitteGoogleNestleEYMcKinsey & CompanyPwCAccenture Good to know: In tray exercises for interviews are ideal for industries that require people who can efficiently manage multiple tasks, analyse information, and demonstrate strategic thinking in a time-sensitive environment. Now you know several global companies use in-tray aptitude tests, you may start wondering why. Let's find out below. In-tray exercises are commonly used by employers as part of their assessment centre phase for several reasons. Below are some of the key reasons why employers use in-tray assessments: Assess Prioritisation and Workload Management: Employers use in-tray tests to evaluate how effectively candidates can organise and prioritize tasks under realistic conditions. Test Decision-Making and Problem-Solving: In-tray aptitude tests help employers properly measure the ability to analyse information and make sound decisions. Gauge Performance Under Pressure: In-tray assessments simulate time-sensitive scenarios to see how well candidates handle stress under pressure. Evaluate Communication Skills: Employers assess written professionalism and clarity when responding to tasks during an in-tray assessment test. Simulate Workplace Challenges: In-tray exercises help employers easily replicate job-specific scenarios to evaluate real-world capabilities. Observe Multitasking Ability in Action: Your performance in handling multiple, competing priorities is closely monitored by employers as this is a crucial skill for most roles. Highlight Job-Relevant Competencies: In-tray tests ensure employers can identify skills like attention to detail, strategic thinking, and organisation. Identify High-Performing Candidates: Employers use in-tray assessment tests to pick individuals best suited for demanding and daily task-oriented roles. In-tray Prioritisation Example Source: Freepik Since many employers from different industries tend to use in-tray exercises to hire, what do they look for? Read on to find out. Employers use in-tray exercises to measure several skills and competencies to evaluate your potential performance in a given role, such as: Task Prioritisation Employers look for your ability to quickly assess which tasks are most important during in-tray tests. They want to see if you can efficiently manage multiple priorities. Decision-Making Employers want to evaluate how you make decisions, especially under pressure. They expect sound judgment that aligns with the company's goals and values. Problem-Solving Employers are interested in how you handle unexpected challenges or complex issues, seeking practical and effective solutions. Time Management Employers use in-tray aptitude tests to assess how well you allocate your time, ensuring that you complete tasks efficiently within the time given. Written Communication Employers will focus on how clearly and professionally you respond to emails and tasks during the in-tray assessment. Attention to Detail A crucial aspect of in-tray assessments is paying attention to each detail and employers want to see that you can carefully manage information and avoid overlooking important details. Adaptability Employers value candidates who can adjust to changing priorities or tasks, demonstrating flexibility in a fast-paced environment and in-tray tests help to identify them. Now we've covered what employers look for during in-tray exercises, let's check out how these employers assess your skills in an in-tray exercise. In-tray exercises are based on your task prioritisation, decision-making, time management, written communication, problem-solving, attention to detail, and handling multiple tasks under pressure while aligning with company goals. Good to know: In an in-tray assessment test, the recruiter may treat the in-tray exercise as a role-play scenario where you assume a role typically what you applied for. Now that you know what employers look for in in-tray exercises, let's check out an example In-tray question and answer.