

## How to Demonstrate Effectiveness Factors/Dimensions

I have found that candidates may understand the need to demonstrate the rated competency areas to assessors, but they do not know *how* to do it. The following material gives real examples, to show that it is merely a matter of articulating or verbalizing your thoughts. The most challenging part is having the maturity and experience to have developed those thoughts to the point of being comfortable expressing them.

The dimensions listed here may not all be used in your testing process. The titles may be different or there may be several additional concepts tested. However, these are some fundamental competencies for supervisors and managers.

**1. Job Knowledge:** This may be listed as Job and Task Knowledge, but for sure there will be Job Knowledge. The only way this can be shown solidly is to show that you know policies, procedures and rules, as well as names of resources, mission statements and vision statements or goals (at least part of them), as well as information about the city, county and department in general.

**What would impress you?** Think about it: If you were an assessor and you had to come up with a rating in Job Knowledge, what would it take for you to give someone a 9 or 10? It would take a *lot* of solid and significant job knowledge, applied throughout the exercise in a way that demonstrates real knowledge not just going through a memorized list.

**Know the components of the job or rank you seek--and say it:** "As a sergeant, I will be responsible for....." "Our procedures for the XXXX program requires a sergeant to...." "A lieutenant's role in these situations is to..." "My plan as his captain is to..." "Mr. Brown, my job as the sergeant for this sector is to...." "As a Dispatch supervisor I will be expected to...."

Look for ways to take the responsibility you know you are supposed to have. For example, instead of just saying, "I'll interview the officers.", you might say, "My first responsibility as a sergeant is to investigate the situation, so I'll interview the complaining officer, then the other officer." Yes, it's about the same thing, but it's not exactly the same thing.

**2. Judgment:** How can you be rated a 10 on judgment if there are no options for you to choose between? The Considerations part of PACTSFID can help remind you of that component. You can also show that you not what is NOT a good way to do something or what you do NOT want to do.

If you are working to solve a conflict between two officers, what would be the wrong way to handle it? Why are you choosing another way?

If you are trying to solve a crime problem in a neighborhood, what would show poor judgment? What is the better way?

### **Some ways to say it:**

“I definitely want to avoid the temptation to only direct more enforcement as the response to this concern about accidents.”

“The most obvious solution is to increase patrol, but I believe there are other things to consider.”

“It would be easy to tell the officer to stay busy instead of wasting time at the station, but that wouldn’t address the root cause of the problem.”

“Telling them....., would only alienate them. Instead, I will take the approach of.....”

“I’ve seen some sergeants try....., but the most successful sergeants have....., which is what I will do.”

“The department’s goal is.....(whatever) and I don’t think we can achieve that by (something you don’t want think is wise) . I think we can only achieve your goal by.. (something you’re going to suggest instead.)”

“In my judgment, this is the only way to.....”

**3. Leadership:** If you are being rated on leadership, you cannot get high ratings unless you say the words that fit that dimension. Assessors will recognize leadership activities as you describe them, but occasionally you should verbalize it more directly.

Keep in mind that initiative is part of leadership. Leadership can also involve directing people to do something, or talking with people and telling them a goal and the plan you have developed to help achieve it, then working with them to get the goal accomplished.

It shows leadership to use the ACTION ARROWS to be a liaison with many people and groups.

“I wouldn’t be providing leadership if I fail to address this.”

“I will provide leadership by going to the area myself during the first few days.”

“A leader won’t just give directions, then wait to follow-up and find out whether it worked. A leader will be watching at the beginning to make sure everyone is on the right path, then check back often to encourage and correct if needed.”

“As a first level leader, I will....”

“I want to take a leadership role with this, rather than only delegating it.”

“I want them to see me as a leader not just as someone who directs them.”

“I want those I lead to become leaders in their own groups.”  
“I’ll lead the way by making sure I.....”

**4. Planning and Organizing:** This can only be shown through definite plans and clearly described organizing. What is organizing? It’s providing structure by assigning tasks, keeping schedules, staying on track and on time, keeping records. Planning is thinking ahead, developing actions steps and knowing what must be done first and next (priorities), as well as being ready for changes and staying flexible.

“This plan will give us a good foundation, but I realize that even the best plans may need to change. Among the things that might have an effect on my plan will be.....”

\*There are three main steps

\*I have three reasons....

\*I’ll put this in my Outlook calendar and send a copy to the officer

\*Part of the training I will do as a sergeant will involve planning for a variety of “what if” situations.

\*A key issue in any plan is staffing and assignments.

\*Some people say plans aren’t used in a crisis, but my SWAT experience has taught me that people do what they’ve trained about and training is really just planning.

\*I’ll schedule this....

\*I’ll have the officer submit a plan to me within the next week, so I can review it. Having the officer develop a plan is great training.

\*I’ll work with the officers to develop a plan, then submit it to my lieutenant for approval.

\*It’s important for me to consider who the officers are who will be responding and what experience and skill they have.

\*As a shift progresses, I’ll make an effort to keep a mental picture of where the officers are located.

\*I’ll make a computer and hard copy file folder for each officer, so I can keep a record of everything that involves them. That’s the only way I can be sure to have complete information when I do a performance evaluation every year.

\*Since that wouldn’t fit with our priorities I wouldn’t approve it.

\*As priorities change, I’ll re-think our staffing.

**5. Problem Identification and Analysis: It’s nearly always safe to say you need to find out more or investigate further.** The exercise may require you to decide about something immediately, but even then you can say you want to find out more, in case you have to change some aspects of the decision.

This is also the component that allows you to prioritize and decide why one thing is more vital or crucial than another.

\*I need to investigate further

\*I need to find out more

\*The key to this will be getting more information

- \*I want to find out not only who is having problems but who is not
- \*This requires more in-depth analysis than just saying there is a problem and we need to fix it.
- \*Our first priority is safety for citizens, so this item about (whatever) is the first thing I will handle.
- \*Although this is frustrating for officers, it's not something that must be changed right away, so I will put it further down on my list of things to get done. I'll make a To Do note though, so I don't forget it.
- \*The first step to solving a problem is making sure we're working on the right problem.
- \*I want to know the who, what, when where, why and how.
- \*I don't want to make assumptions, I want to find out the details first.
- \*This concerns me, because.....
- \*This is important, because.....
- \*When I see a problem, I think about the other problems this one thing can cause.
- \*If it distracts officers from their focus on officer safety and good work, it's a problem that has to be fixed.
- \*There is a surface problem but I think there may be a deeper problem.
- \*I immediately need to get more information from witnesses.
- \*Before I advise him I have to find out more.

**6. Decision Making:** Be able to explain the reasons for your action and let the assessors know that you know when you can and can't make a decision on your own. It also helps to say specific words that show you have decided and will act.

I'll be guided by our policy that says.....  
 At that point I'll decide the best approach.  
 There are several decision factors to consider  
 I will....  
 I will direct....  
 I will tell.....  
 After I consider the options, I'll make a decision and implement my plan of action.  
 Our procedures require me to.....  
 The three steps in our procedure are.....  
 We have a new policy that will have an effect on my decisions.  
 I don't want to rush to a decision, so I'll tell the officer I will talk to him at some point during the shift.  
 This is a decision I can't make on my own. Our procedure requires me to get approval from my Commander.

**7. Interpersonal Skills (Relationship and team thoughts will go here.)**

- \*Listening and letting them talk about it will be an important way for me to get more information.
- \*It's all about relationships.
- \*If I want to mentor and guide I can't let my ego get in the way.
- \*I intend to be easy to talk to and one way to do that is to not respond critically right away, no matter how tempted I am.

\*One way I'll be easy to talk to is that I'll be available and I'll be interested in the things that interest them.

\*I want every officer to feel that they are important to the team.

\*This concerns me because of the impact it has on an individual, the team, the organization and ultimately on our ability to serve the community optimally. Those relationships are my responsibility.

\*In this case I will have to be sensitive to the fact that it's difficult to. Those relationships are my responsibility.

\*In this case I will have to be sensitive to the fact that.....

\*All of us at the scene need to show sensitivity to the fact that.....

\*Giving honest feedback is a way to build trust and credibility.

\*If I want to have influence with my team, I have to be valuable to them and they need to trust me.

\*In a Role-Play you would be more direct: "I'm concerned about you." "How do you feel about that?" "You're important to the team." "I'm not going to let you distance yourself from the team—we all need to be part of the effort and I want you to be included."

### **Oral Communication**

This factor is demonstrated through an engaging manner where you act as though you care about the listener and his or her ability to fully understand you. It is also demonstrated by self-control, command presence, verbal organization and eye contact.

Listening is also part of oral communication. One way to demonstrate effective listening is to look at the person talking and *look* like you are listening. This is something many people should remember when they're listening to their children or their spouses, friends or partners!

Another part of Oral Communication is clarifying what you have heard.

"Tell me more about being afraid to talk at roll call."

"How did you mean that?"

"You resent doing the task or you resent feeling that you're being ordered to do the task?"

"I'm sorry, I may have said that differently than I intended. Let me rephrase it."

**The Bottom Line:** How do you get your ratings? What will give you a 9 instead of a 6—or a 6 instead of a 9? It's all in the quality and quantity of the things you say and do that demonstrate the competencies upon which you are being rated.

If you know your assessment center will involve other rating areas (dimensions, factors, KSAs, competencies) take those apart just like these and decide what would fully demonstrate them. What words, what phrases, what knowledge and skills?

Keep the faith!