



## Interrupted In Tray (iTray)

*An In Tray exercise where participants have to demonstrate flexibility and mental agility as they cope with new information, and manage the unexpected.*

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# Introduction

**This package contains an overview and two independent activities in which participants must work under time constraints to deal with a series of incidents or interruptions.**

The activities can be run either as individual written exercises or as group discussions.

This exercise is ideal when you want to:

- simulate a fast-paced working environment
- find out how participants react to stress and overload
- check how participants react when situations become unreasonably hectic.

There are two activities in this package, each of which can be used in either individual or group assessments:

Title	Level of difficulty*	Simulation content	Pages
<a href="#">Tropria Zoo</a>	Simple	Running a small zoo for a day	<a href="#">8-33</a>
<a href="#">Medanair</a>	Moderate	Supervising staff and running a regional airport	<a href="#">34-97</a>

\* The Level of difficulty is determined by how fast you choose to run the activity; you can decide how many interruptions they have to deal with in the time available.

Note: If one of your assessment factors is self-awareness, use the [participant self-assessment](#) sheet ([page 7](#)) instead of, or in addition to, the participant reports included with the specific simulations.

In the iTray exercise there are no absolute correct answers. The exercises are designed to find out how the candidate reacts to stress and overload and to see how they perform against a set of competencies. Assessors will therefore have to judge performances against professional and management competencies to determine how well they think that the candidates' performance reflects their ability to demonstrate those competencies in the workplace. On the next pages you will find typical competencies which can be used to assess candidates' performance.



# Interrupted In Tray

## Assessor guidelines for Professional Competencies (group)

Professional Competence	What to look for
<p>A. Absorbs information through reading bulletins manuals, trade press, etc. Presents information through proposals, reprints, letters etc .</p>	<p>How much have they absorbed from the details in the brief? (Refer to any notes made, and what they say during the discussions.)</p>
<p>B. Communicates to others via telephone and face-to-face, one-to-one and in meetings, and through presentations and demonstrations.</p>	<p>How clearly do they put their points across to others in the group?</p>
<p>C. Can track down sources of information. Knows who to contact. Keeps the appropriate people informed. Acts as a liaison between others.</p>	<p>Do they work <i>with</i> the others in the group? Do they check if others have relevant experience? Do they suggest networking with people inside or outside the organization in the simulation?</p>
<p>D. Anticipates difficulties and spots opportunities. Makes plans for self and others. Identifies potential resources Alerts management to issues to forestall problems.</p>	<p>Do they include plans for the rest of the day or afterwards? Do they anticipate problems? Do they consider the future implications of each decision?</p>
<p>E. Monitors progress, follows up, coordinates work done by self and others. Orchestrates. Initiates action to correct deviations from plan.</p>	<p>How do they keep up-to-date with progress through the day? Do they know who is working on what? Do they initiate actions or just respond to events?</p>
<p>F Gets on with others, individually and in groups. Deals with a wide range of people at all levels, with different styles inside and outside the organization</p>	<p>How well do they get on with others in the group? How do they deal with disagreements? Do they remember that they have staff working for them? How do they handle personnel issues?</p>
<p>G. Can work with or without interruptions. Sets priorities, meets deadlines.</p>	<p>How do they deal with time pressures? Can they keep up with interruptions? Do they judge level of detail possible in good time?</p>
<p>H. Can influence and get help and information from others. Handles problems without detriment to working relationships.</p>	<p>How much do they influence others in the group? Do they suggest how people within the simulated context might influenced?</p>
<p>J. Understands business of the customer and own organization. Identifies customer requirements. Matches these to available products and service. Recognizes resource and cost constraints</p>	<p>Do they remember the overall purpose of the organization? Do they identify constraints regarding staffing and budgets?</p>