

City of Jackson Michigan Fire Captain Promotional Assessment Process a Success

Objective

The City of Jackson's Fire Department needed Fire Captains. They wanted a validated, equitable examination process that would help them determine the best qualified individuals. The City hired CPS to conduct a full assessment process for the Fire Captain rank.

Solution

The strategy used by CPS consultants for the Fire Captain assessment process was designed with the City's internal recruitment process in mind. Initial meetings were held with all parties to determine client needs and expectations. CPS then began the job analysis phase of this project. Skilled analysts identified the information necessary to validate the assessment process in accordance with the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures*.

Next, CPS developed a written examination with careful review by departmental subject matter experts (SMEs). In order to better prepare applicants, CPS held a Candidate Orientation session. General strategies for taking written examinations, as well as a description of the assessment center process, were covered in this session. Eight candidates took the written examination.

The assessment center, which was held in November, 2006, included an incident command exercise, a structured interview exercise, and a presentation exercise. Assessors who were external to the Department were trained by CPS. The four-hour training session covered topics such as definitions of behavior and how to classify behavior under the appropriate assessment dimensions. This training was conducted immediately prior to the administration of the assessment exercises.

After completion of the process, candidates were given feedback reports detailing their individual performance as well as their performance in relation to the overall average of the candidate group.

Results

According to Fire Chief Bosell, "Everyone felt quite comfortable with the process and believed the testing process was professionally handled."

CPS did a superb job. The Department will probably get three Captains promoted off the list and that is a good return on our investment.

**Larry Bosell, Chief
City of Jackson, MI
Fire Department**

