



Candidate Care Throughout Virtual Assessment Centres

Given the current climate, most organisations have looked towards designing virtual assessment centres to accommodate the increasing volume of applicants, especially at the graduate level. Typically, a significant portion of the process is already delivered online (for example personality and cognitive assessments, or situational judgement tasks), however, several key assessment centre components, namely activities such as a behavioural interview or group-based activity, have traditionally been completed in-person and face-to-face. It can be reasonably assumed that these more traditional elements will, and are, being shifted to a virtual platform. So, in a virtual landscape, how can organisations ensure that they continue to balance the need for streamlined operations and robust technological solutions with all important candidate care?

Here are several considerations to enhance candidate experience that are crucial to keep in mind during the design phase:

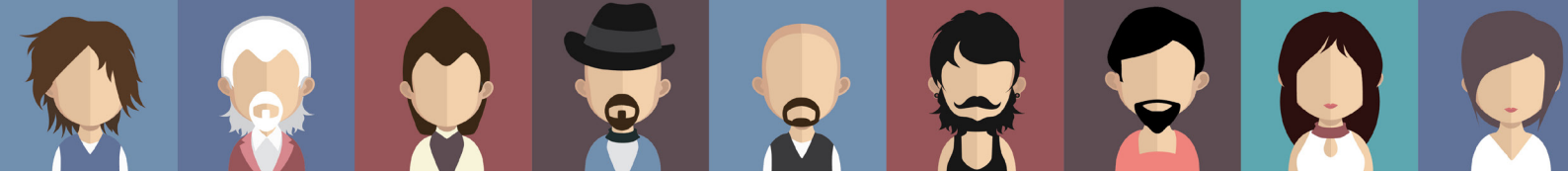
1. Overall Candidate Experience

As we are now losing the personal touch of face-to-face assessment centre activities, a focus on candidate care and experience is paramount. Both successful and unsuccessful candidates come through the candidate process with an impression that will either accelerate or inhibit their role as a brand ambassador.

Eighty-three percent of candidates say that a negative interview experience can change their mind about a role they once wanted. The candidate experience does not start at the interview, it begins with the planned pre-engagement and other virtual activities. Be transparent with your candidates, let them know it is a new platform and thank them for being a part of a new way of working. The aim should be for your candidate to feel like you value their time, not that they should be competing for yours. Ninety-four percent of candidates want interview feedback and are 4 x more likely to consider that company for future opportunities when they are offered feedback. Ensure that you enhance their sense of value by asking for feedback on the process and assessment centre experience.

2. Reasonable adjustments

Ensuring reasonable adjustments are in place for candidates is not only a legal and ethical requirement but also key in ensuring you get the best person for the role and strong diversity of candidates. Virtual delivery makes this a bit trickier (but not impossible) and we need to get a bit more creative in how we achieve this.



Think about the reasonable adjustment you have provided in the past and how you can do this in a virtual environment.

As part of the candidate experience, early and clear communication is vital. On all possible forums (Application stage, Pre-assessment centre activities notification, Pre-assessment centre instructions) ask candidates how you may best support them for any reasonable adjustments. As candidates are home, ask if they have a comfortable environment that will allow them to perform at their best. With candidates that require reasonable adjustments, provide solutions and support. Check-in and change your approach if required. Explore technology platforms that will allow your organisation to “walk the talk” when it comes to accessibility and hiring for diversity.

3. Other adjustments

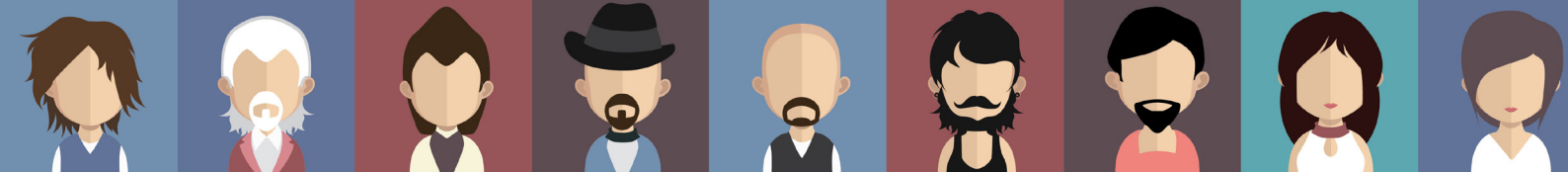
Moving to virtual assessment centres means that reliable phone and internet access is essential. Some of your best candidates may not have access to these, so alternative options on how your organisation can ensure that these candidates still have the best opportunity to demonstrate their skills will be required. These might include having a private room in an office where the individual has access to a telephone and/or computer as needed. Clear social distancing measures should be in place and candidates will have the opportunity to experience the assessment centre in the same way as other candidates.

4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates

Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates are being considered in the attraction and selection strategies is essential in any selection process and a greater focus in particular must be placed when moving to virtual assessment centres. Ensure that you build the cultural competence of people involved in the recruitment process, including HR, hiring managers and assessors. Consider how your new (and potentially fully digital) marketing strategy will be targeted towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates – have you targeted specific Indigenous media or networks? Be flexible in your assessment centre methodology and as much as possible, incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives on the selection panel. Finally, create a culturally safe assessment environment and ensure you are aware of relevant cultural protocols.

5. Communication through different mediums

With the difficulty of fostering a personal touch online, make sure communications with candidates are regular and informative. Provide an option where they can speak to someone over the phone or video conference if they are trouble shooting, asking for next steps or providing feedback. Consider leveraging live video feeds at the beginning and end of your assessment centres, giving ample opportunity for candidates to ask questions through live chat functions or audio/visual means.



Concluding Thoughts

Don't feel like you, or your organisation, need to be an expert in attending to all adjustments. Reach out to organisations that understand the needs of your key demographic populations and who can provide you with the right resources and training on how to best care for your candidates.

Remember that, in a world focused on operational efficiencies, flashy technology and value for money, your organisation's brand and reputation lies in the candidates you engage with – successful and unsuccessful. Don't let your focus on candidate care take the back seat – valuing people will always provide the greatest return on investment.

For more information on our [Virtual Assessment Centre Solutions](#) and how to [Support and Develop Managers of Remote Graduates](#), please visit our website.

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