Exhibit A:

Project Work Plan

This proposal will outline I/O Solutions' plan to develop and administer promotional assessment processes for the Sergeant and Lieutenant ranks of the Ann Arbor Police Department. Specifically, I/O Solutions plans to provide the following services:

- I/O Solutions will conduct a kick-off meeting at the onset of the project to discuss the project, timeline and expectations. We take a highly customized and flexible approach to all our projects, so we value the opportunity to meet with the client and offer options and solutions to ensure that you get what you expect from the testing process. At the same time, we value the opportunity to share best practices information and improve a process in any way possible. Consider this proposal an initial recommendation that can evolve and be refined based on your input.

- I/O Solutions will review the existing job analysis for Sergeant and Lieutenant to ensure it is comprehensive. We will also review the analyses with subject matter experts (SMEs) within the department to ensure that it covers all aspects of the job. This will be a relatively simple and swift process as the job analysis was updated early in 2010. There is no reason to conduct a new job analysis, but, because the job analysis is the foundation of a promotional testing process as far as content validity evidence is concerned, a proper vetting process is required. If significant deficiencies exist in the job analyses, I/O Solutions will take necessary steps to rebuild the analyses.

- I/O Solutions will develop distinct custom written job knowledge exams for the Sergeant and Lieutenant ranks. Each exam will contain 100 multiple choice questions and will be based on source material that is highly relevant to each position. I/O Solutions will work with SMEs to ensure the relevance of study materials and the appropriateness of each item in each of the two exams. While the RFP suggested that up to 20 percent of the test be based on the input of HR and the police department, we recommend that these entities have full contribution to the content of the tests, under the guidance of I/O Solutions. The content validation process favors the use of local subject matter experts and local test study content; therefore, the ideal test is one that is tailored to the local agency.

- I/O Solutions can administer the written exam or allow the City to manage this component. We are open to either option. Either way, I/O Solutions will provide test booklets and scannable answer sheets. The test can be scored onsite or at our offices following the administration. I/O Solutions will score the test and provide results in a manner that is acceptable to the City. I/O Solutions will also discuss options for handling candidate appeals/challenges. We take an active roll in responding to and resolving appeals.

- I/O Solutions proposes an assessment center model of testing. The RFP discussed both oral interviews and assessment centers; however, the assessment center model

is more powerful and can be designed to contain an oral interview component. In order to create cost saving and streamline the testing process, we recommend that an assessment center be used that may contain an interview component.

- I/O Solutions will recruit assessors from local police agencies outside Ann Arbor who are qualified to evaluate candidate performance. I/O Solutions will train these assessors prior to the administration of the assessment center to ensure standardization and reliable assessment. I/O Solutions will them manage the administration of the two assessment centers. We expect to use the same assessors for both assessment center processes and to conduct the assessment centers back-to-back. We expect that training will require one day, the Sergeant process for up to 20 candidates will require two days and the Lieutenant process for up to 10 candidates will require 1 day. In total, this assessment process will last three to four days depending on final candidate counts, exercise time limits, etc. We expect to use six to nine assessors to comprise two to three panels.
- I/O Solutions will score the assessment center and develop individual feedback reports for each candidate to provide developmental information for future assessments.
- Disparate outcomes among protected classes (e.g., race and gender) are always a chief testing concern. I/O Solutions will offer strategies toward minimizing these differences in the design of the testing process and methods for ensure that the process is highly defensible. Solutions such as using internal source materials for the written exam, applying accurate cut-off scores, using assessment centers that focus on management skills, and weighting the written exam and assessment centers properly are key considerations.
- I/O Solutions will manage the transfer of all test materials and will be responsible for ensuring the security of the testing process. I/O Solutions will discuss various testing models that are secure and assist the City in selecting administration systems that balance key considerations such as cost, efficiency, security and assessment validity.

This section will describe I/O Solutions plan for providing comprehensive assessment processes for the ranks of Sergeant and Lieutenant. The City expects approximately 10 Lieutenant candidates and approximately 20 Sergeant candidates to participate in the testing process.

Following is an explanation of the methods we plan to deploy to achieve the goals mentioned in the Executive Summary.

Job Analysis

Because job analysis data for the Sergeant and Lieutenant positions was produced as recently as February 2010, it is not necessary to conduct a full job analysis process again for these ranks. Rather I/O Solutions will review the job analysis data to ensure that all conventional Sergeant and Lieutenant job task, knowledge areas, skills and abilities are covered. We will also ensure that the method employed to collect data is appropriate (e.g., interviews/observations, job analysis questionnaire, linkage of tasks and KSA, etc.). After confirming the comprehensiveness of the job analyses, I/O Solutions will conduct a

meeting with subject matter experts (SMEs) to review the job analysis and determine if they are adequately and comprehensively describing the jobs of Sergeants and Lieutenants in Ann Arbor. If there are any suggested edits, additions, deletions or otherwise, these will be documented in a follow-up technical report and appropriate changes will be made to the job analysis data. The results of this process will serve as the guidepost for the development of the written exams and assessment centers.

Promotional Job Knowledge Examination Development and Validation

The promotional job knowledge examination is a written tool that is specifically designed to assess essential, job-related **knowledge**. To this end, exam questions will be drawn from relevant, job-related sources of knowledge (i.e., text books, policy, rules, law, etc.). The job knowledge exam will be supported by content validity evidence. This evidence will be established through a thorough linkage of essential knowledge areas identified in the job analysis to the measureable dimensions of the exam, and through subject matter expert involvement in the development of the exam plan and review of exam items.

Exam Plan and Reference List Development
The first step in the development of a written job knowledge exam is the identification of the knowledge areas that should be assessed by the exam and the source, or reference materials from which this knowledge can be drawn. An I/O Solutions' consultant will review the target job description/job analysis to identify those knowledge areas that should be assessed by the written exam. I/O Solutions will provide a recommendation as to the knowledge areas that should be assessed. At this point, I/O Solutions can work with department subject matter experts to identify appropriate sources to assess the suggested knowledge areas, or the department can independently recommend sources that assess the suggested knowledge areas.

The following tables identify common knowledge areas that are assessed by public safety written examinations:

General Category	Law Enforcement Exams
Technical Knowledge	Field Operations
	Criminal Investigation
	CompSTAT
	Community Policing
	Ethics in Policing
	Multicultural Law Enforcement
Management Knowledge	Supervision
	Administration
	Leadership/Motivation
Internal Sources	Policy, Procedure, or Operating Guidelines
	Collective bargaining agreement
	State Law

Once sources are selected from which to draft examination questions, it is necessary to create an exam plan that identifies the percentage of items that will be drawn from each source/knowledge area, the specific content that will be focused on, and the information that will be provided to candidates in the reference/study list. A subject matter expert (SME) meeting will be arranged to review these recommendations and finalize the selection of knowledge areas and sources/references. During this Exam Plan Development Meeting, SMEs will be asked to assist in identifying the relative importance of the knowledge areas that will be assessed by the exam. These ratings will be used to establish the number of items that will be drafted to assess specific knowledge areas. In addition, SMEs will review reference/source materials and assist in identifying the chapters and sections that are most relevant for the target position. This step will ensure the test is as job-related as possible and will allow candidate to focus specifically on essential information contained in study materials. In short, this meeting will allow department subject matter experts to ensure that the exam plan and the candidate study/reference list meet their expectations.

Following the Exam Plan Development Meeting, I/O Solutions will generate the final exam study list that will contain a list of sources that will be used to create the exam and the specific chapters/sections that candidates should review. This list will be submitted to the department for distribution to eligible candidates. I/O Solutions will also produce a candidate preparation document that provides helpful strategies for study and preparing for the written examination. This document can be distributed to candidates or posted on the agency website.

*Note: The department may wish to develop the reference list on their own. In this case, I/O Solutions will be charged with ensuring that essential knowledge areas are being assessed via the chosen reference list. I/O Solutions may also still need to work with SMEs to identify the specific chapters and sections of source material from which to draw exam items.

Question Development and Review
Using the detailed examination plan that was developed, I/O Solutions team of highly-trained technical writers will draft exam questions from the identified source materials. Our technical writers take particular care in identifying the most important topics and concepts from source material and drafting questions that are highly job-related. In addition, the technical writers will draft questions of varying degrees of difficulty to ensure that the test is able to discriminate between candidates' levels of job knowledge. Approximately 125 questions will be drafted based on the examination plan. These questions will later be reviewed and distilled down to the best 100 questions. Each question will be drafted in multiple-choice format. Once test questions are developed, an I/O Solutions' consultant will review each item to ensure that it is job-related, in-line with the exam plan and is free from any apparent bias.

The development of good test items is a critical element to the success of any job knowledge exam. For this reason we take care to make sure the following criteria are met:

- Focus on essential information: Our item writers comb sources to identify truly job-related, important information from which to draft questions.
- Multiple-choice test items: 'Scan-form' style testing is efficient and easy to score but it has a potential weakness – if candidates can identify the correct response through deductive reasoning then they are demonstrating deductive reasoning ability rather than demonstrating the desired knowledge. This is why it is critical that answer options be well constructed and that there are enough answer options such that the candidate does not a stand a reasonable chance of guessing the right answer. True/false formats are simply insufficient. All tests should have at least four answer options.
- One correct response: We carefully craft questions such that there is one correct response and the remaining responses are incorrect.
- Avoidance of negatively worded stems/response options: Negatively worded questions and answer options are confusing. In order to ensure that we are measuring knowledge in a straight-forward manner, we try to avoid the use of negatively worded items.
- Avoidance of overly complex stems/response options: Again, we want questions to be simple and easy to understand. For this reason we avoid confusing or overly lengthy questions.
- Avoidance of "all of the above" or "c and d" style answer options: This style of questioning is generally overused and tends to reduce the psychometric quality of a test.

I/O Solutions will work with the department to assemble an SME panel to review test questions. The purpose of this review is to ensure that test questions are of high quality and to collect SME rating to support the validity of the test and to enable the determination of an appropriate test cut-off score. SMEs will be asked to review each item and offer any pertinent feedback/suggestions. In addition, SMEs will provide a Content Validity Ratio (CVR) Rating and an Angoff Rating. The CVR rating will provide evidence of the degree to which the content of the test mirrors critical content of the job. The Angoff Rating will identify the difficult of each test item, thus indicating the overall difficulty of the exam. The Angoff process allows for the selection of a cut-off score that equates to minimally qualified levels of job knowledge. While this review is optional, the data collected during this process is highly valuable to the defensibility of the written exam.

We recognize that agencies are often required to use a pre-determined cut-off score. In these cases, the Angoff process is still appropriate but must be used in a different manner. As a matter of legal defensibility, it is necessary to demonstrate that a cut-off score, even if mandated, equates to minimally qualified job knowledge levels. In a case where an agency is required to use a 70 percent cut-off score, for example, I/O Solutions will work toward selecting test items whose composite Angoff score is

approximately 70 percent. In this manner, the cut-off score will be in-line with the test's difficulty level.

Data from the item review meeting will be used to select the 100 test questions that will be included in the written exam. These questions will be professionally compiled into a test booklet. Questions from the same source material will be grouped together under a title heading such that candidates are aware of where the item was drafted from as they take the test. I/O Solutions will produce all necessary test booklets and scannable answer sheets.

Exam Scoring, Results Generation and Analysis
I/O Solutions will create an exam specification for the written exam that identifies the correct answer for each item, the source citation from which the question and correct answer are drawn and the knowledge area that the question assesses. This document will be used to generate a computer-based scoring program that will be used to score the exam.

Each completed exam answer sheet will be scanned and processed by an optically scoring machine. Data from this machine will be manually reviewed for accuracy and scored using a computer-generated scoring program.

The project consultant will conduct an item analysis process to ensure that each item of the test functions in a reasonable manner. Specifically, I/O Solutions will investigate the following:
- Adverse impact ratio
- Individual item data: item-total correlations, mean (p-value), standard deviation, frequency analysis to check for item with multiple correct responses, etc. If any items appear to be problematic (a large proportion of candidates get the item incorrect or there appear to be multiple correct responses based on candidate data), I/O Solutions will engage a discussion with the department and make a recommendation for resolving any issues.

Final test scores will then be calculated. Exam results will be presented in a database format such as Microsoft Excel® and submitted to the department per the department's specifications.

Test Challenge/Appeal Process
It is commonplace to vet an examination by allowing candidates to participate in a challenge/appeal process where candidates can scrutinize test items and draft appeals to the validity or accuracy of items. I/O Solutions generally handles appeals processes in one of two ways. The first option is preferable, but we work with the department to determine the best solution based on standard procedures, convention, circumstances, etc. Following are the two options for challenge processes:
1. Immediately following the administration of the written exam, candidates are provided with an answer key, their test booklet and a copy of their answer sheet. Candidates are allowed to manually score their exam while being

proctored by an I/O Solutions' representative. Candidates are instructed that this score is preliminary and that tests will be carefully scored at a later time. Following this scoring period, candidates are instructed that they will be afforded the opportunity to file appeals to test items if they so choose. As candidates have been able to review the questions (in the test booklet) and make a determination of which items they answered correctly, they can reasonably determine whether or not they wish to file any appeals at that time. Candidates will be allow a fixed period of time (usually one hour) to draft written appeal on appeal sheets provided by I/O Solutions. Candidates will be allowed access to the source materials as well as an exam specification that indicated a citation for each test item. I/O Solutions will collect all appeals and prepare a written response to these appeals. Appeal responses will be turned over to the agency with a recommended action for each item. I/O Solutions will engage a discussion with the agency to determine if any changes should be made to the scoring of test items. Once a determination is made, final scores will be calculated and submitted to the agency.

2. Within a few days of the test, candidates will be allotted a structured time period to review the test booklet, copy of their answer sheet, exam specification, answer key and test source materials. Candidates will be allowed to draft appeals which will be submitted, reviewed and responded to in the manner described above. The agency will likely be responsible for monitoring candidates during these structured time periods.

Assessment Center Development and Validation

The RFP highlighted the need for oral interviews and assessment centers. We propose that the City use only an assessment center. The assessment center, by definition contains at least three exercises, two of which are direct simulations of the job. The third could be a traditional oral interview. We propose a three exercise assessment center for each rank and believe that there will be little benefit gained from including a separate interview on top of a comprehensive assessment center. That said, we will provide pricing for the oral interview should the City wish to include it in addition to the assessment center.

An I/O Solutions' assessment center is a battery of job simulations/exercises geared toward measuring essential management and supervisory skills of promotional candidates. Common exercises include one-on-one role-plays, group presentations, tactical simulations, in-basket/in-box simulations, and written problem solving exercises. An I/O Solutions' assessment center exercise puts the promotional candidate in a situation that is similar to a function he/she will perform on the job. Assessors, who all have industry-specific management experience, rate the candidate on essential management and supervisory skills and abilities that will determine the candidate's success on the job. The assessors use specific rating criteria that were developed by experts in the industry. The result of the I/O Solutions' assessment center is a list of candidates in rank order according to who is most likely to perform at the highest level

in the target position. The assessment process also yields an abundance of feedback from the assessors about candidate performance that can be used for developmental purposes.

A comprehensive I/O Solutions assessment center will incorporate the following components:

- *Assessors who are experts in their industry and are specifically trained to assess candidate performance*
- *Identification of specific skill and ability dimensions with associated behavioral criteria*
- *A standardized administration schedule*
- *Relevant, simulation-style exercises*

I/O Solutions' assessment centers are simply the best way to predict how candidates will react to/handle specific job situations. The I/O Solutions' assessment center method also allows for a broad range of skill assessments. We are able to use a variety of simulations that assess many different skills and abilities. This is a desirable feature as your goal in promotions is to select the most well-rounded candidate. Candidates are also more prone to feel that I/O Solutions assessment centers are fair evaluations of their promotional suitability as it is readily apparent that the assessment center is a valid and comprehensive way of making a promotional decision. Finally, an I/O Solutions assessment center is also a developmental tool. The results of an assessment center can be tailored to assist an individual candidate toward improving performance in a specific area. Data from a large number of candidates can also be used to help agencies identify training needs.

The assessment center will be supported by content validity evidence. This evidence will be established through the clear linkage of the job description/job analysis to the skills and abilities that will be assessed in the assessment center and by the linkage of essential job tasks to the simulation exercises that are selected. Furthermore, SMEs will assist in reviewing each exercise and rating criteria to ensure local validity.

Exercise Selection and Development
I/O Solutions will first work to identify the skills and abilities that should be assessed by the assessment center by reviewing a current job description/job analysis for the target position. Based on this review, I/O Solutions will provide a recommendation concerning the skills and abilities that should be assessed and the types of exercises that should be used to assess these skills and abilities. In order to refine this recommendation, a consultant will meet with department subject matter experts (SMEs) who hold the target rank and/or supervisor the target rank to identify job duties and critical scenarios that would constitute valuable assessment exercises. I/O Solutions will use these ideas and suggestions to craft exercises that are locally specific. SMEs will also review skills and abilities that will be assessed to ensure that the assessment is comprehensive and addresses any concerns of the department.

While the specific content of the assessment center will be determined during the course of SME meeting, the following tables provide information about the types of exercises that can be created and common skills and abilities that are assessed by our assessment centers.

One-on-One Role-Play Scenarios

Exercise	Subordinate counseling (problem employee)
Description	The candidate plays the role of a supervisor who must meet with a subordinate employee (role-player) that has one of the following types of problems: a performance deficiency, a recent conflict with a citizen, personal problems or difficulty getting along with coworkers. The candidate will be given introductory information about the subordinate and the problem and will be allowed a brief period of time to prepare for the meeting. The candidate will then meet with the subordinate and attempt to deal with the issue at hand to the best of his/her ability. The candidate will likely meet resistance from the subordinate that will require him/her to exercise supervisory skills. The successful candidate will mitigate the problem and devise an appropriate solution. This exercise can be coupled with the citizen meeting exercise. This paring would require the candidate to gather specific information about a citizen conflict from the citizen and then use this information to deal effectively with the subordinate.
Themes	This exercise can deal with counseling subordinates on any of the following issues: performance deficiencies, a run-in with a citizen, employee dislike his/her job, depression, marital problems, drug/alcohol issues, or inability to get along with coworkers.
Time	There is a 10 to 15 minute preparation period prior to the 15 to 20 minute exercise.
Resources	This exercise requires one skilled role-player/actor to play the role of the subordinate and three qualified assessors. This exercise will occur in a small meeting room.
Dimensions	Interpersonal skills, problem analysis/problem solving, judgment and reasoning, decision-making ability, management and supervisory skills, composure, conflict resolution, oral communication.

Exercise	Citizen meeting
Description	The candidate plays the role of a supervisory officer that is meeting with a citizen. The meeting allows the citizen (role-player) to address a concern that he/she has about the department in general or more specifically about one of the candidate's subordinates. The goal of the meeting is to work effectively with the citizen to solve his/her problem or collect information toward bettering the department. The candidate will be given a preparation period to review the task at hand and to devise a game-plan. The candidate will then meet with the citizen. The citizen will follow a specific script that will cause the candidate to have to adapt his/her approach and to think on his/her feet. The successful candidate will gather necessary information, instill confidence in the citizen and set up a system to gauge progress and follow-up with the citizen. This exercise can be used as a precursor to the subordinate counseling role-play. This pairing would require the candidate to use this meeting to gather facts in order to guide the direction of the meeting with the subordinate.
Themes	The topic of the meeting can be: inappropriate treatment of the citizen by a department member (typically the candidate's subordinate), the citizen's specific concerns about recognized deficiencies in the operations of the department, or the collection of feedback from the citizen about proactive improvements that could be made to increase levels of customer service.
Time	There is a 10 to 15 minute preparation period prior to a 15 to 20 minute interaction.
Resources	This exercise requires one skilled role-player/actor to play the role of the subordinate and three qualified assessors. This exercise will occur in a small meeting room.
Dimensions	Interpersonal skills, problem analysis/problem solving, judgment and reasoning, decision-making ability, conflict resolution, public relations skill, oral communication.

Exercise	Subordinate performance review
Description	The candidate plays the role of a supervisor that is tasked with presenting a performance appraisal to a subordinate. Prior to the exercise the candidate will be provided with the subordinate's personnel file. The subordinate will typically have a number of performance deficiencies that have not improved over time. The role-player, playing the subordinate role, will be evasive and, at times, combative about apparent performance weaknesses. The candidate's objective will be to analyze the subordinate's personnel file in order to successfully identify and work through the subordinate's deficiencies. The candidate will have to demonstrate a large degree of assertiveness as he/she counsels the subordinate regarding deficiencies and identifies plans for improvement. The ideal candidate will exercise management skills while maintaining composure in a difficult situation.
Themes	The subordinate typically has a few areas of performance deficiency that must be addressed in the course of the performance appraisal. These may include: tardiness, improper completion of paperwork, poor attitude, and complaints from coworkers.
Time	There will be a 15 to 20 minute preparation period for the candidate to review the subordinate's personnel file and devise a structure for the performance appraisal meeting. The meeting will then last approximately 15 to 20 minutes.
Resources	This exercise requires one skilled role-player/actor to play the role of the subordinate and three qualified assessors. This exercise will occur in a small meeting room.
Dimensions	Management and supervisory skills, judgment and reasoning, decision-making ability, planning and organization, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, oral communication.

Presentation-Style Role-Plays

Exercise	Training presentation
Description	The candidate will be tasked with preparing a training presentation to be delivered to a group of subordinates. If the candidate is a police promotional candidate, the training session will typically be a roll-call training brief. In the case of a fire promotional candidate, the training will be similar to in-service training. In either case, the candidate will be provided information about a topic that the subordinates must be trained on. The topic will be job related and will be something that the candidate can become familiar with in a short period of time. After a brief time to organize a training session and possibly create visual aids, the candidate will present the lesson to a group of three subordinates. The subordinates will either be role-players or the assessors. During the course of the training the candidate may interact with the role-players, or he/she may require the role-players to participate. The role-players will also be free to ask questions and respond as would be conventional in this type of setting. The successful candidate will deliver a well organized and thoughtful training presentation in a manner that is practical and engages the audience. Supervision skills and interpersonal ability will be critical factors as the candidate may have to deal with unruly subordinates.
Themes	Police supervisory themes include: use of force training, pursuit training, community initiatives training and policy training. Department-specific topics can also be used to further customize the process.
Time	There will be a 15 to 20 minute preparation period for the candidate to review the training material and outline the training agenda. The training session will then last approximately 15 to 20 minutes.
Resources	This exercise requires three qualified assessors and possibly one or two skilled role-players. The role-players will play the role of subordinates and will have a more interactive role than that of the assessors'. The use of role-plays will make the exercise more realistic and increases the quality of the assessor's ratings as they are not burdened with interacting during the exercise. Use of assessors as role-players is, however, a less expensive alternative. A dry erase board or flip chart will be provided to the candidate to enable him/her to better structure the training. This exercise will occur in a medium sized meeting room with chairs arranged in a classroom style setting.
Dimensions	Planning and organization, oral communication, interpersonal skills, management and

	supervisory skills.

Exercise	Community presentation
Description	The candidate is instructed that he/she must deliver a presentation about the department to a group of citizen who are interested in learning more about the department. The group of citizens will be played by either the assessors alone, or the assessors accompanied by additional role-players. The presentation is usually made before a group of citizens or at a city counsel-type meeting. The candidate is typically informed that the chief was scheduled to make this presentation, but he/she was called out of town and has asked the candidate to fill in for him/her. The candidate will be given a brief period of time to organize his/her thoughts and outline the presentation. There are no materials given to the candidate to assist in the development of the presentation. The candidate must develop and deliver a presentation on the specified topic based solely on his/her understanding of the department. The candidate will be able to use visual aids that he/she creates using flipcharts or dry-erase boards. The successful candidate will develop a well-organized and meaningful presentation that provides the audience with valuable information about how the department is operating within their community. Following the presentation the audience will ask questions related to the candidate's topic. His/her ability to answer questions in a professional and responsive manner will be part of the assessment.
Themes	The presentation can be related to: department operations, response capabilities, the services provided by the department, the goals/mission of the department, or a recent improvement made within the department.
Time	There will be a 15 to 20 minute preparation period for the candidate to review and to prepare an outline for his/her presentation. The meeting will then last approximately 15 to 20 minutes.
Resources	This exercise requires three qualified assessors. The assessors will serve as assessors but will play the role of citizens. They will ask questions of the candidate at the end of the presentation. Additional role-players may be used in this exercise, but it is not necessary. A dry erase board or flip chart will be provided to the candidate to enable him/her to better structure the training. This exercise will occur in a medium sized meeting room with chairs arranged in a classroom style setting.
Dimensions	Planning and organization, oral communication, interpersonal skills, management and supervisory skills, leadership.

Written Exercises

Exercise	Written problem-solving exercise
Description	This exercise requires the candidates to compose a written narrative related to an important departmental issue. The goal of this exercise is to outline the thought process that is used in solving a problem or reasoning through a difficult issue. This exercise is useful for evaluating basic problem solving skills, judgment and reasoning, and written communication. This exercise can also be administered to many candidates at the same time and does not require the use of role-players.
Themes	Following are optional topics that can be used: ▪ The candidate must identify critical issues facing the department and how he/she would handle these issues. ▪ The candidate is faced with a difficult personnel issue (subordinate performance deficiency or sexual harassment) and must outline in a narrative how he/she would handle this issue. ▪ The candidate will be asked to make suggestions for improving and better implementing a current departmental policy. The policy will be selected by the agency.
Time	The candidate will be allowed one to two hours, depending on the complexity of the questions, to complete this exercise.
Resources	A large classroom will be necessary to administer this exercise to a large number of

	candidates.
Dimensions	Judgment and reasoning, written communication, planning and organization, management and supervisory skills.

Exercise	**Incident report proof-reading exercise**
Description	This exercise uses copies of your agency's incident report to assess the candidate's ability to proof read an incident report for serious errors. A sample report will be created containing errors in documenting critical information and general grammatical and writing errors. The candidate will be asked to proofread the document, identify errors and suggest changes for improving the report.
Themes	Any standardized report can be used for this exercise.
Time	The candidate will be allowed 15 to 20 minutes to complete this assignment.
Resources	A large classroom will be necessary to administer this exercise to a large number of candidates.
Dimensions	Problem analysis/problem-solving, written communication.

In-Basket Exercise

Exercise	**In-basket/In-box**
Description	The candidate is told that he/she was recently promoted and has inherited the former incumbent's in-basket. It is imperative that he/she go through the in-basket and prioritize and respond to as many items as possible. There are approximately 10 to 20 memos, letters, email messages, phone messages, and other correspondence of varying importance and urgency that deal with personnel issues, scheduling, citizen concerns, planning and development, departmental issues, etc. The successful candidate will properly prioritize the items and provide appropriate written responses for how the issue at hand would be dealt with. In some cases the candidate may have to write a letter and in others simply detail an action-plan that he/she would follow to deal with the situation. There may be an additional follow-up period when assessors question the candidate regarding his/her chosen course of action.
Themes	There are a variety of in-basket items that are part of this exercise; however, depending on the role of supervisors in your department, more items of the following variety can be incorporated into the exercise in greater quantity: employee misconduct issues, citizen complaints, service-oriented requests, employee counseling issues, or scheduling/administrative issues.
Time	There is a 10 to 15 minute instruction period prior to the start of the exercise and, depending on the number of in-basket items, this exercise will last one to two hours.
Resources	The in-basket exercise is rated by two or three assessors following the administration period. This exercise requires a classroom-style room for administration to multiple candidates.
Dimensions	Planning and organizing, problem analysis/problem solving, judgment and reasoning, decision-making ability, management and supervisory skills, written communication.

Situational Structured Oral Assessment

Exercise	**Situational oral assessment**
Description	The situational oral assessment is a panel-style interview that requires the candidate to consider how he/she would respond to a variety of situations that he/she might encounter on the job. During the interview assessors will pose a variety of job-related questions to the candidate and will rate the candidate's response using behavioral rating criteria. The questions can cover a variety of job-related scenarios or interpersonal situations. This exercise is not intended to be a role-play, but certain questions can be converted into role-play scenarios to maintain the "simulation" feel of assessment centers.
Themes	The questions contained in the oral assessment can cover three to four of the following topics: dealing with a problem employee, controlling a tactical situation, managing operations of the agency, or improving ones own skills.

Time	This exercise typically lasts for 20 to 30 minutes.
Resources	A small meeting room will be required for this exercise.
Dimensions	Depending on the questions used, any performance dimension can be assessed in this format.

Performance Dimensions

The assessors that are used to rate candidate performance are guided by specific performance dimensions with behaviorally anchored criteria. These criteria allow the assessor to look for certain behaviors, actions and thought processes. This method of rating performance ensures consistent and fair ratings. I/O Solutions has constructed a comprehensive performance model through years of experience developing and conducting assessment centers for public safety agencies of all sizes. Following is a comprehensive list of the performance dimensions that can be assessed. The behaviorally anchored criteria that accompany these dimensions are specific to the exercises that are used in the assessment center. This information is provided to demonstrate the model that I/O Solutions commonly uses. We expect that the performance model will be modified based on the job description for the target rank.

General Management Dimensions

Composure: The ability to work under stress and perform in unpleasant or traumatic circumstances. The ability to remain calm in stressful situations. The ability to handle stressful situations appropriately, remaining poised and professional. The ability to maintain emotional control in stressful situations.

Conflict Resolution: The ability to de-escalate tense situations and quiet potential disturbances. The ability to mediate interpersonal or physical conflict between individuals.

Decision-Making Ability: The ability to understand when a decision must be made and the willingness to make a decision. The ability to quickly and efficiently determine an appropriate course of action to target a particular situation.

Honesty and Integrity: The ability to act in an honest and fair manner. Willingness to accept responsibility for actions when things go wrong. The ability to display a high degree of integrity and professionalism in action and word.

Interpersonal Skill: The ability to listen to others and be considerate of the concerns of others. Ability to successfully and appropriately handle interpersonal interactions with others to gain trust, respect and mutual understanding. The ability to act with tact and diplomacy in dealings with the public - keeping public-relations concerns in mind when interacting with citizens, other agencies and the general public. The ability to counsel, support and be empathetic toward others. Ability to maintain positive work relations with others and interact with people of diverse backgrounds. The ability to use appropriate nonverbal cues to better convey intention of message.

Judgment and Reasoning: The ability to accurately perceive the important elements of a situation, evaluate the situation and determine plausible courses of action that would bring about a desirable result. The ability to reason through a particular problem and decipher a logical course of action. The ability to use common sense and intelligence in handling day-to-day activities, problems and decisions.

Leadership: The ability to set a proper tone for the functioning of the organization. Ability to serve as a role model in behavior, practice and word. The ability to motivate the organization as a whole to achieve greater efficiency and a higher level of purpose.

Management and Supervisory Skills: The ability to direct and guide personnel in the accomplishment of goals and tasks. (Includes skill in monitoring activities and evaluating results. Expectations and standards are clearly communicated, and consequences exist for insufficient performance.) The ability to assert proper authority and be assertive while maintaining the trust and respect of subordinates. The ability to motivate and counsel employees to greater performance. Skill

in prioritizing and delegating the work of others.

Oral Communication: The ability to speak in a clear, concise, understandable and appropriate manner. The ability to deliver a message in such a way that others clearly understand its meaning. Appropriate use of nonverbal cues such as good eye contact, posture, etc.

Planning and Organization: Skill in establishing a course of action for oneself and others to accomplish goals. Skill in properly planning assignments, work duties and tasks; appropriate allocation of resources to ensure efficient, timely and smooth department operations. The ability to anticipate future needs and plan for the allocation of resources to meet those needs.

Problem Analysis/Problem Solving: The ability to quickly perceive problem areas, identify options and the potential impact of various solutions. The ability to determine courses of action or solutions to problems. The ability to implement targeted solutions.

Public Relations Skill: The ability to deal with the public in such a way as to protect the image and reputation of the department while providing the public or individuals with necessary or requested information. The ability to deal prudently with information such that the integrity of individuals or the department as a whole is not compromised.

Self-Motivation: The ability to remain motivated to perform one's job despite difficult circumstances, distractions or monotonous work. The ability to take charge when necessary and conduct tasks without being told to do so. The ability to work without supervision and accomplish tasks without prodding.

Teamwork Orientation: The ability to work with others in a positive, goal-oriented manner. Willingness and ability to accept a particular role in a team and selflessly carry out that role. Willingness to actively support command staff policies and decisions.

Written Communication: The ability to convey written messages in a clear, concise and easy-to-read format. The ability to clearly express ideas in writing to convey intended meaning. The ability to use correct spelling, grammar, syntax and proper subject-verb agreement.

Exercise Review
I/O Solutions will develop the selected assessment exercises in their entirety, including candidate instructions, role-player scripts (if applicable), assessor rating guidelines, scoring scales, etc. Once exercise development is complete, I/O Solutions will work with the department to convene an SME meeting to review each exercise and its rating criteria. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that the details of each exercise are specific to the organization and operations of the department and to ensure that rating criteria are consistent with performance expectations of the department. During this review SMEs will also provide input to help define minimally acceptable performance on each exercise. This input will assist in the calibration of rating scales and will be critical during the training of assessors.

Assessment Center Scale and Scoring
All assessment center scores will be compiled in scoring booklets used by assessors during the course of the assessment process. These booklets will contain all behavioral rating criteria for each exercise as well as the scoring scale that will be used by assessors. The scale normally used by I/O Solutions is a 10-point scale that defines '6' as minimally qualified. The 10-point scale is used because it easily translates into a percentage score. The minimally qualified designation creates an effective cut-off score. During assessor training, assessors are informed that any score below '6' is considered less-than-qualified. Therefore, the assessment process has a built-in cut-off score that

assessors are keenly aware of and use to distinguish qualified candidates from unqualified.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Exceptionally Poor	Very Poor		Poor	Below Average	Adequate	Above Average	Strong	Very Strong	Exceptional

I/O Solutions' personnel enter all score data collected from the assessment center process into a database. This process is performed once and then independently verified to ensure accuracy. Then, scoring equations are applied to the data set and subsequently, independently evaluated for accuracy. Obviously, it is of paramount importance that scores be correctly calculated and assigned. Given the vast number of data points collected in an assessment center, we take great care in compiling and calculating scores.

Candidate Orientation
Preparedness plays a large role in creating fair promotional processes. Because many candidates that will compete in an assessment center have previously experienced assessment centers, it is helpful to provide an orientation process that allows first-time participants to gain the insight that seasoned candidates have obtained through experience. Further, assessment centers from year to year are often conducted by different consulting firms that often conduct assessment centers differently. It is important to clearly communicate to candidates how the assessment center will be conducted and how they will be evaluated. By supplying candidates with an opportunity to learn about and prepare for the assessment center, we will increase the reliability of candidate scores and reduce the risk of group score differences in the assessment center process.

I/O Solutions advocates the uses of a candidate orientation to create transparency and to provide helpful information to candidates. Specifically, we recommend that a live orientation presentation be delivered. This presentation can be video-recorded for presentation to candidates who were not able to attend the original orientation. Should additional sessions be necessary, these can be conducted based on the need of the individual agency. The following are common components of our candidate orientation guide:

- A general introduction to assessment centers
- A review of the assessment center development process
- Review of the types of exercises that can be included in the assessment center
- An in-depth discussion regarding the nuances of individual exercise types
- Review of the performance dimensions assessed
- Review of the scoring system used for the assessment center
- A discussion concerning assessors and assessor training
- Advice for preparing for assessment centers
- A brief discussion of common mistakes and misconceptions related to assessment centers (these will not cover specific performance expectations)
- A review of the rules governing the assessment center
- Question and answer session

Assessor/Role-player Recruitment

Assessors are recruited based on a recruitment plan that is accepted by the department/agency. This plan include the target geographic (national vs. state), the acceptable rank/level of assessors, gender and race diversity goals, personal qualifications, and any other criteria valued by the department.

Following are the common rules that I/O Solutions imposes on assessor recruitment:
- All assessors must be one rank/level above the rank for which the assessment center is being administered.
- All assessors must possess at least two years tenure at the minimally required rank.
- All assessors should be from a similarly sized agency that is organized in a substantially similar manner.
- Racially diverse assessors will be sought to participate in all assessments. Our standard goal will be that one third of all assessors be classified as racial minorities.
- We will seek maximum gender diversity in assessor recruitment.

Role-players will also often be required during the assessment center process. I/O Solutions prefers to use professional actors to perform this function. Many consultants tend to use law enforcement of fire service personnel to serve as role-players. While we understand the convenience associated with this practice, we disagree with the appropriateness. Professional actors are far superior for a number of reasons:
- Consistency/standardization: A professional actor is able to play the same role over and over again without altering presentation. This is a difficult task that requires training and endurance, but it is absolutely essential to the standardization and reliability of the process that each candidate experience the same scenario.
- Role-fidelity: Assessment roles are scripted to accomplish a very specific goal. Professional actors are able to aptly model the role that was intended. Often, amateur actors will morph the role to a persona that better suits their personality. This practice can be detrimental to the assessment process as the primary performance dimensions may not be assessed as reliably in this instance.
- Realism: Simply put, professional actors do a much better job of making the scenario 'real' for the candidate. Given the challenge of role-playing, most candidates find it difficult to treat a scenario as 'real.' A gifted actor will help draw the candidate into the process by making the exchange high-fidelity.
- Reliability: Ultimately, the superior performance of professional actors, increase the accuracy of candidate performance/scores and give us more confidence that we have fairly and accurately assessed the true ability level of the candidate.

I/O Solutions will recruit role-players from professional acting guilds and talent organizations. We have established partnerships with talent agencies in various part of the country from which we recruit actors that have been used in past assessment centers. Where it is cost prohibitive to bring actors in from distant locations, we will contact local acting guilds to recruit role-players.

Assessor Training
I/O Solutions will conduct in-depth assessor- and role-player-training workshops to prepare each assessor and role-player to participate in and score the assessment-center exercises. We will require approximately six to eight hours to train the assessors and role-players. This training is generally conducted the day prior to the administration of the assessment center to candidates. I/O Solutions will provide multiple consultants to facilitate training multiple panels at the same time. Following is an outline of the training that is provided:

Role-Players: During this time role-players will be briefed on their characters and the requirements of the roles. Role-players will be allowed ample time to ask questions concerning their roles and to practice their roles with I/O Solutions' consultants. Standardization and consistency of presentation will be reinforced during the training session. The culmination of this training will be a mock assessment center that will combine the assessors and role-players.

Assessors: Prior to the administration of the assessment centers, assessors will receive an in-depth training session that focuses on a thorough description of the target rank and its responsibilities within the department, the assessor's role, the dimensions that are measured for the exercise with which the assessor will be involved, careful note-taking, behavioral observation, scoring, common rating errors, reliability of assessment, providing candidate feedback comments and specific assessor duties. Ideally, a representative of the department can be present to answer any specific questions that may arise. This training will also allow ample time for assessor questions and for practice with mock candidates. This training session will end with a mock assessment center that involves the role-players.

Assessment Administration
I/O Solutions oversees the administration of the assessment center process. We send sufficient personnel to conduct all essential functions of orienting candidates, moving candidates throughout the assessment process, answering candidate questions, etc. We may request minor administrative support from the agency to assist in candidate sign-in or to monitor candidates.

Prior to mapping out a final assessment administration plan, I/O Solutions will meet with agency personnel to discuss administration options. There are two competing interests in any assessment center administration process: length and test security. In order to have the most robust and convenient testing process, it is ideal to use one assessor panel to rate each exercise (every candidate is seen by the same assessors per exercise). This means that the assessment center can only process approximately 15 candidates per day, requiring that the assessment center span over multiple days when there are more than 15 candidates to process. While this system allows for many advantages, the one major concern is that this system allows for a potential breach of security should a candidate from day 1 inform other candidates in subsequent days of the content of the assessment. Certainly, this concern can be preempted by requiring candidate confidentiality agreements, but these are not a perfect protection. Therefore, we seek

to inform agencies of the strengths and weakness of various models and select the system that best meets the needs and concerns of the agency.

Normally, we expect that a single assessor panel is able to process 12 to 15 candidates per day during a live assessment center (candidate perform the assessment and are rated by assessor who watch the live performance). In order to process 12 to 15 candidates through a 3-exercise assessment center in a single day, three panels of assessors are necessary.

We plan to use 6 to 9 assessors and process candidates for both ranks over a period of three to four days. There are other options for conducting the assessment that can be discussed. A mutually agreeable plan will be produced.

I/O Solutions will produce all exercise materials needed for the administration of the assessment center and will develop an administration schedule that allows for the efficient processing of all eligible candidates through the assessment center in the most secure manner possible. I/O Solutions will work with the department to ensure that the administration schedule is effective based on personnel staffing and manpower concerns and any specific concerns that the department may have about test security.

While I/O Solutions will oversee the administration of the assessment center, candidates will actually be rated by assessors from outside agencies that hold a rank at or above the level of this target process. One of I/O Solutions primary jobs is to monitor assessor performance and to ensure standardized and reliable ratings are being obtained.

Candidate Feedback
I/O Solutions will be responsible for providing candidates with a written feedback report. This report will provide information about the candidates' performance on each assessment center exercise, each dimension and on the assessment overall. The report will also highlight assessor observations. Finally, the report will provide information about candidate strengths and developmental needs.

During the assessment center, assessors will be required to document the candidates' primary strengths and developmental needs for each assessment exercise. During assessor training, assessors will be instructed as to what information to include as feedback. Assessors will also be encouraged to highlight points for each assessment exercise that increased the candidates' performance for that scenario or decreased the candidates' performance. All comments will be screened to ensure that assessors are identifying behaviors that will be understandable to the candidate. This screening will also ensure that there are no inappropriate comments included in the candidates' feedback reports. Candidates will also be offered normative information so that they can compare their performance with that of the rest of their peer group. This information will assist the candidates in understanding the scale and how other candidates faired as a group.