

Why are aptitude tests used?

Employers are increasingly incorporating aptitude tests into assessment procedures – both for selection of personnel and for development and counselling purposes. There is good evidence that tests which are professionally used and evaluated can provide objective, reliable and relevant information concerning the likelihood of job success and satisfaction.

You may be asked to complete some aptitude tests in the context of an extended selection or development procedure. Assessment centres typically combine the information gained from aptitude tests with that obtained from other questionnaires and exercises such as personality and interest inventories, in trays, group exercises and interviews to build up a comprehensive picture of the person being assessed.

Whatever the context in which you are being asked to complete some aptitude tests, you may find this leaflet helpful. It has been designed to introduce you to two types of aptitude tests commonly used in graduate recruitment and professional and managerial selection and development. The leaflet should help you prepare for the test session.

Tests can help you

- to be fairly assessed in a competitive situation
- to find out more about your own strengths and weaknesses
- to select a career path for which you are suited
- to be comprehensively assessed for selection, development or counselling purposes.

Tests enable the employer

- to select people best suited to the demands of the job
- to identify areas of weakness for staff development
- to counsel staff appropriately
- to place personnel appropriately within an organisation

What sort of tests might you have to do?

The tests you are asked to do will measure skills relevant to the job, position or responsibilities for which you are being considered. While different jobs make different demands on individuals, extensive analyses of many managerial and professional jobs have shown that competence in verbal and numerical critical reasoning is a common requirement. This practice leaflet covers tests which require you to:

- evaluate the logic of given statements
- interpret data from statistical tables

In order to familiarise yourself with the type of questions that may be asked, read the instructions in each case, and work through the questions as quickly and accurately as you can, bearing in mind that the tests themselves have time constraints.

Instructions

The verbal and numerical questions which follow are multiple choice. For each question, you are given several possible answers. When you have selected your answer, you should fill in the appropriate circle on the answer sheet provided.

Verbal Test

In this test, you are given two passages, each of which is followed by several statements. Your task is to evaluate the statements in the light of the information or opinions contained in the passage and to select your answer according to the rules given below.

MARK CIRCLE A
if the statement is
patently **TRUE** or
follows logically,
given the
information or
opinions contained
in the passage

MARK CIRCLE B
if the statement is
patently **UNTRUE** or
the opposite follows
logically, **given the**
information or
opinions contained
in the passage

MARK CIRCLE C
if you **CANNOT SAY**
whether the
statement is true or
untrue or follows
logically **without**
further information

The big economic difference between nuclear and fossil-fuelled power stations is that nuclear reactors are more expensive to build and decommission, but cheaper to run. So disputes over the relative efficiency of the two systems revolve not just around the prices of coal and uranium today and tomorrow, but also around the way in which future income should be compared with current income.

- 1 The main difference between nuclear and fossil-fuelled power stations is an economic one.
- 2 The price of coal is not relevant to discussions about the relative efficiency of nuclear reactors.
- 3 If nuclear reactors were cheaper to build and decommission than fossil-fuelled power stations, they would definitely have the economic advantage.

At any given moment we are being bombarded by physical and psychological stimuli competing for our attention. Although our eyes are capable of handling more than 5 million bits of data per second, our brains are capable of interpreting only about 500 bits per second. With similar disparities between each of the other senses and the brain, it is easy to see that we must select the visual, auditory, or tactile stimuli that we wish to compute at any specific time.

- 4 Physical stimuli usually win in the competition for our attention.
- 5 The capacity of the human brain is sufficient to interpret nearly all the stimuli the senses can register under optimum conditions.
- 6 Eyes are able to cope with a greater input of information than ears.

Answer Sheet 1

Verbal Test

Last name

First name

Date

- | | A | B | C |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | (A) | (B) | (C) |
| 2 | (A) | (B) | (C) |
| 3 | (A) | (B) | (C) |
| 4 | (A) | (B) | (C) |
| 5 | (A) | (B) | (C) |
| 6 | (A) | (B) | (C) |

Numerical Test

In this test, you have to use facts and figures presented in statistical tables to answer the questions below. In each question, you are given either five or ten options from which to choose. One, and only one, of the options is correct in each case. Note that for questions which have 10 options you may have to fill in more than one circle to indicate your answer.

For some numerical tests of this nature you may be provided with a calculator – for some you may be required to work without one. You may try the following questions with or without the use of a calculator – as you wish. In addition, you may be provided with rough paper for your working out.

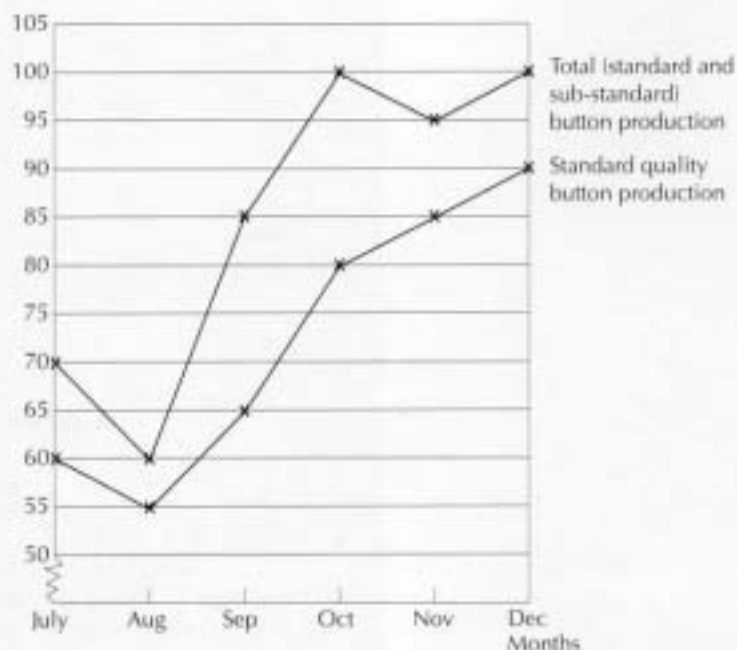
Statistical Tables

Population Structure 1985

	Population at start of year (millions)	Live Births per 1000 population (Jan-Dec)	Deaths per 1000 population (Jan-Dec)	Percentage of population at start of year aged	
				under 15	60 or over
UK	56.6	13.3	11.8	19	21
France	55.2	13.9	10.0	21	19
Italy	57.1	10.1	9.5	19	19
West Germany	61.0	9.6	11.5	15	20
Spain	38.6	12.1	7.7	23	17

Production of 15mm Buttons, July-December

Production in thousands



Sales price: Standard quality buttons \$5.70 per 100

Sub-standard quality buttons \$2.85 per 100

Numerical Test – Questions

- 1 Which country had the highest number of people aged 60 or over at the start of 1985?

A	B	C	D	E
UK	France	Italy	W. Germany	Spain

- 2 What percentage of the total 15mm button production was classed as sub-standard in September?

A	B	C	D	E
10.5%	13%	15%	17.5%	20%
AB	AC	AD	AE	BC
23.5%	25%	27.5%	28%	30.5%

- 3 How many live births occurred in 1985 in Spain and Italy together (to the nearest 1000)?

A	B	C	D	E
104,000	840,000	1,044,000	8,400,000	10,440,000

- 4 What was the net effect on the UK population of the live birth and death rates in 1985?

A	B	C	D	E
Decrease of 66,700	Increase of 84,900	Increase of 85,270	Increase of 752,780	Cannot say

- 5 By how much did the total sales value of November's button production vary from October's?

A	B	C	D	E
\$28.50 (Decrease)	\$142.50 (Decrease)	\$285.00 (Increase)	\$427.50 (Decrease)	No change

- 6 What was the loss in potential sales revenue attributable to the production of sub-standard (as opposed to standard) buttons over the 6 month period?

A	B	C	D	E
\$213.75	\$427.50	\$2,137.50	\$2,280.00	\$4,275.00

Answer Sheet 2 Numerical Test

- | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | A | B | C | D | E |
| 1 | (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) |
| 2 | (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) |
| 3 | (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) |
| 4 | (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) |
| 5 | (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) |
| 6 | (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) |

You will find the correct answers on the back page of this leaflet
Don't be discouraged if you found the questions difficult: there are several things you can do to improve your performance.

Verbal Tests:

Read newspapers, reports, business journals
Do verbal problem solving exercises, eg crosswords

Numerical Tests:

Read financial reports in Newspapers
Study tables of data
Practice your mental arithmetic

And finally, be prepared for the test session

Get a good night's sleep before the tests
Give yourself plenty of time to get to the assessment
If you wear glasses or a hearing aid, be sure to take them with you

At the session

Listen carefully to the instructions
Don't be afraid to ask questions
Read each question carefully before answering
Work quickly and accurately – most tests have time limits

Remember – the outcome of most assessments is based on the combination of data from different sources. Even if you don't feel confident about your performance in the tests, you may have other strengths which will be taken into account. Employers often offer the opportunity to obtain feedback on test performance. This may help you to understand your own relative abilities and may aid you in your career thinking.

Results obtained from professionally used tests will be kept confidential.

The answers
to the
practice
questions
are:

Verbal Test

	A	B	C
1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
2	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
5	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Numerical Test

	A	B	C	D	E
1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
6	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



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