

# Traditional Versus Technology Enhanced Assessment Centers: Pros and Cons

**Just Because We Can, Should We?**

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# Panel

<b>Service Provider</b>	<b>Client End-User</b>	<b>Program Designer</b>	<b>Assessor</b>	<b>Chair</b>
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# Assessment Center Defined

## The 10 Essential Elements of an Assessment Center \*

- Job Analysis
- Behavioral Classification
- Assessment Techniques
- Multiple Assessments
- Simulations
- Assessors
- Assessor Training
- Recording Behavior
- Reports
- Data Integration

\* International Task Force on Assessment Center Guidelines, 2000

# Assessment Center Continuum

There is no single “best” type of assessment tool. The challenge is to determine the assessment tools that have the greatest impact within a larger selection framework and for specific needs or goals.

## Traditional

- Multiple candidates simultaneously assessed
- Typical duration of 1-3 days
- In a designated assessment facility
- Typical assessor-to-assessee ratio of 2:1

## Technology-Enhanced

- Utilizes technology to augment the exercises and overall simulation
- Shorter duration
- Assessor contact may or may not be face-to-face
- Data are distributed and gathered via technology

## Virtual

- There is no face-to-face interaction. All activity occurs via phone, internet or through other technology

# Moving From Traditional to Technology-Enhanced Assessment Centers

<b>Service Provider</b>	<b>Client End-User</b>	<b>Program Designer</b>	<b>Assessor</b>
Strategy	Manage-ability	Design	Evaluation

# Strategy

Service Provider	Client End-User	Program Designer	Assessor
Strategy	Manage-ability	Design	Evaluation

	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced
Culture	Typically used for leadership and management roles or roles requiring group interactions	Effective for tech-enhanced roles, technology forward organizations, leadership roles involving virtual teams, and global organizations, context can work for lower levels in organization
Resources	Relies on paper, warehousing of data and equipment, requires multiple days dedicated assessor & admin support	Requires technology resources at host and consultant facilities, instant archiving and retrieval, completely portable, can be linked to HRIS system, easier to resource
Build-Out	Faster and known implementation, generally occurs outside of physical company	Black box of tech development, Complex implementation requires internal and external coordination

# Manageability

Service Provider	Client End-User	Program Designer	Assessor
Strategy	Manageability	Design	Evaluation

	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced
Involvement	Increased stakeholder involvement and viewpoints, opportunities for social interaction, acculturation, and inclusion of other events	Opportunity to increase and danger of reducing client involvement, reduced social interaction, opportunity to serve a broader audience, process often a better representation of org culture
Time	Greater time commitment for all stakeholders and participants (e.g., duration of center, travel)	Shorter duration, just in time delivery, quicker report turnaround
Cost	Conference-like facilities and related T&E, consulting costs tend to be higher	Expensive to implement customized technology, relatively lower ongoing delivery costs

# Design

Service Provider	Client End-User	Program Designer	Assessor
Strategy	Manageability	Design	Evaluation

	<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Technology-Enhanced</b>
<b>Job Sample Construction</b>	Translate the relevant dimensions and role components to a realistic simulation that can be hosted live	Balance the capture of added dimensions and the loss of others, develop realistic technology that is fair to all candidates
<b>Admin Support</b>	Administratively heavy prior to assessment, requires on-site coverage, and dedicated staff trained in event planning	Different skill set required, comfort with technology and management via technology, requires dedicated technology support during assessment
<b>Assessor Training</b>	Training in the company, job, dimensions, simulations, observation, evaluation and feedback	Addition of training on technology

# Evaluation

Service Provider	Client End-User	Program Designer	Assessor
Strategy	Manageability	Design	Evaluation

	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced
Data Collection & Assessment	Face-to-face observation, depth of integration, visual cues, cognitive demands in simultaneous assessments, physically demanding	Harder to get a “sense” of candidate, no non-verbals, less extraneous info, rely more on own assessment, integrate data from virtual sources
Feedback Outcomes	Greater rapport, specificity and detailed feedback, may have more credibility, leverages multiple views	Limitations due to “virtual” observations, more difficult to build rapport, streamlined report writing
Assessor Qualification	Solid observational skills, well trained in assessment	Additional skills related to: rapport, reduced reliance on visuals, technology, less, yet more, targeted “hard” data

# Tradeoffs

## Service Provider

### Traditional

- I/O Practice and Comfort
- High End Intervention
- Control over Resources

### Technology-Enhanced

- Dependence on Technologist
- Competitive Advantage
- Scalability

# Tradeoffs

## Client End-User

### Traditional

- Cost
- Stakeholder Involvement
- Involvement

### Technology-Enhanced

- Quality
- Time
- Speed to Execution

# Tradeoffs

## Program Designer

### Traditional

- Comprehensiveness
- Group Interaction
- Administrative Demands

### Technology-Enhanced

- Time in Assessment
- Portability/Practicality
- Technology Demands

# Tradeoffs

## Assessor

### Traditional

- Face-to-Face Interactions
- Rich Integration Process
- Event Participation

### Technology-Enhanced

- Streamlined, Targeted Performance Samples
- Greater Reliance on Own Evaluation Skills
- Volume

# Moving From Traditional to Technology-Enhanced Assessment Centers

## Service Provider

	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced
<b>Culture</b>	Traditionally used for leadership and management roles or roles requiring team interactions	Effective for tech-enhanced roles, technology forward organizations, leadership roles involving virtual teams, and global organizations. Can be used at lower levels of organizations
<b>Resources</b>	Relies on paper, warehousing of data and equipment, basic admin requirements from support	Instant archiving and retrieval, can be linked to HRIS system, requires technology throughout organization and of admin support
<b>Build-Out</b>	Faster, fewer implementation needs, occurs outside of physical company	Complex implementation, requires internal coordination at many levels

## Client End-User

	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced
<b>Cost</b>	Conference-like facilities and related T&E, consulting costs	Expensive to implement customized technology, relatively low cost to run
<b>Time</b>	Greater time commitment for all stakeholders (e.g., duration of center, travel)	Shorter duration, Just in time delivery, quicker report turnaround
<b>Involvement</b>	Increase of multiple stakeholder & viewpoints, opportunities for social interaction, acculturation, and opportunity to include other events	Opportunity to increase and danger of reducing client involvement, reduced social interaction, opportunity to serve a broader audience, often a better representation of culture

## Program Designer

	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced
<b>Job Sample Construction</b>	Moving the relevant role components to a realistic simulation that can be hosted live with assessors, role players, etc.	Virtualizing the unique role components in a manner that creates the greatest realism. Need to transfer best practices in assessment design to web enhancements that is fair to all candidates
<b>Admin Support</b>	Administratively heavy prior to assessment, requires on-site coverage, admin level staff trained in event planning	Different skill set (e.g., tech), training in program management via technology, requires dedicated technology support during assessment
<b>Assessor Training</b>	Training in observation and evaluation	Addition of training on technology

## Assessor

	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced
<b>Feedback</b>	Greater specificity and rapport, deeper and additional level of data capturing	Ease of recording, fewer extraneous distractions
<b>Assessor Qualification</b>	Solid observational skills, well trained in assessment, report writing and feedback delivery	Additional skills related to comfort with technology, ability to "let go" of need for visuals, additional questions to capture info the visuals might reveal

# Tradeoffs

Service Provider		Client End-User		Program Designer		Assessor	
Traditional	Technology-Enhanced	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced	Traditional	Technology-Enhanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ I/O Practice and Comfort</li> <li>▲ High End Intervention</li> <li>▲ Control over Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Dependence on Technologist</li> <li>▲ Competitive Advantage</li> <li>▲ Scalability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Cost</li> <li>▲ Stakeholder Involvement</li> <li>▲ Involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Quality</li> <li>▲ Time</li> <li>▲ Speed to Execution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Comprehensiveness</li> <li>▲ Group Interaction</li> <li>▲ Administrative Demands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Time in Assessment</li> <li>▲ Portability/Practicality</li> <li>▲ Technology Demands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Face-to-Face Interactions</li> <li>▲ Rich Integration Process</li> <li>▲ Event Participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Streamlined, Targeted Performance Samples</li> <li>▲ Greater Reliance on Own Evaluation Skills</li> <li>▲ Volume</li> </ul>