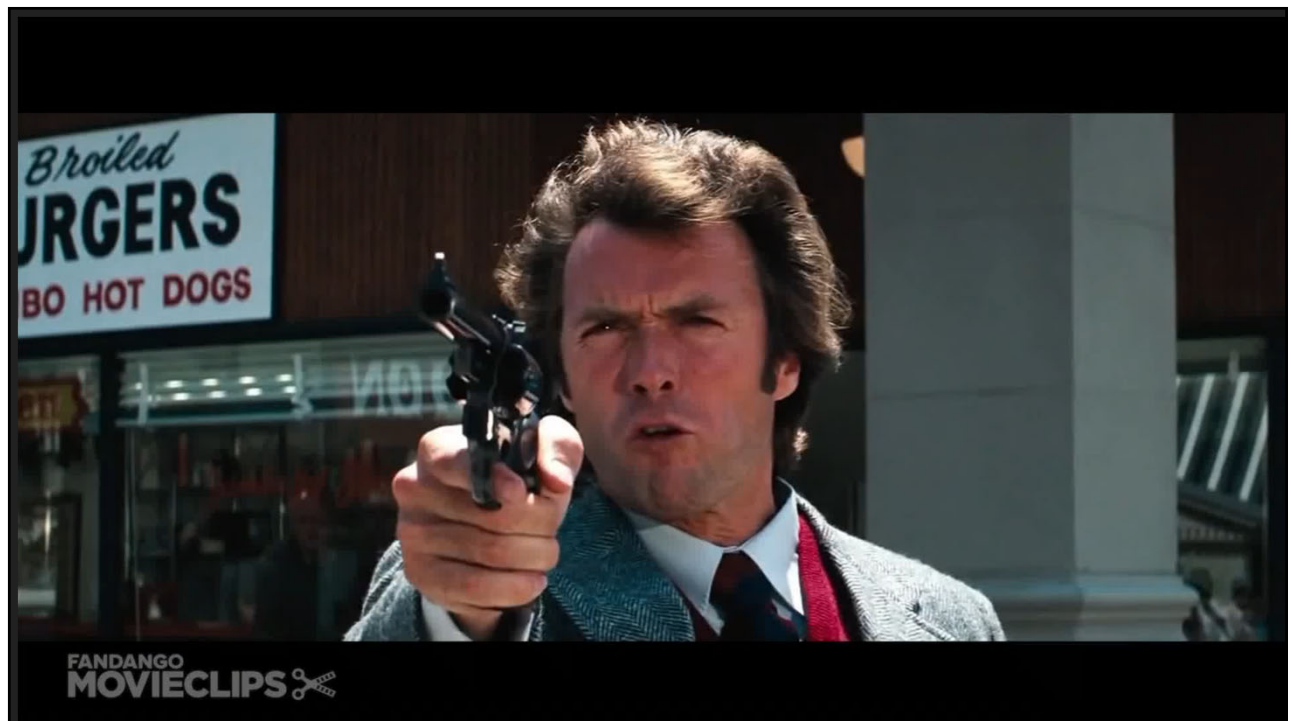


# Assessment Center Basics

Colleen Wilson, Public Safety Testing



## I'm in charge here.....

JUDGEMENT!!—in my experience the most difficult quality to assess

How do we weed out this guy and find those with what a new employee or supervisor/manager needs?

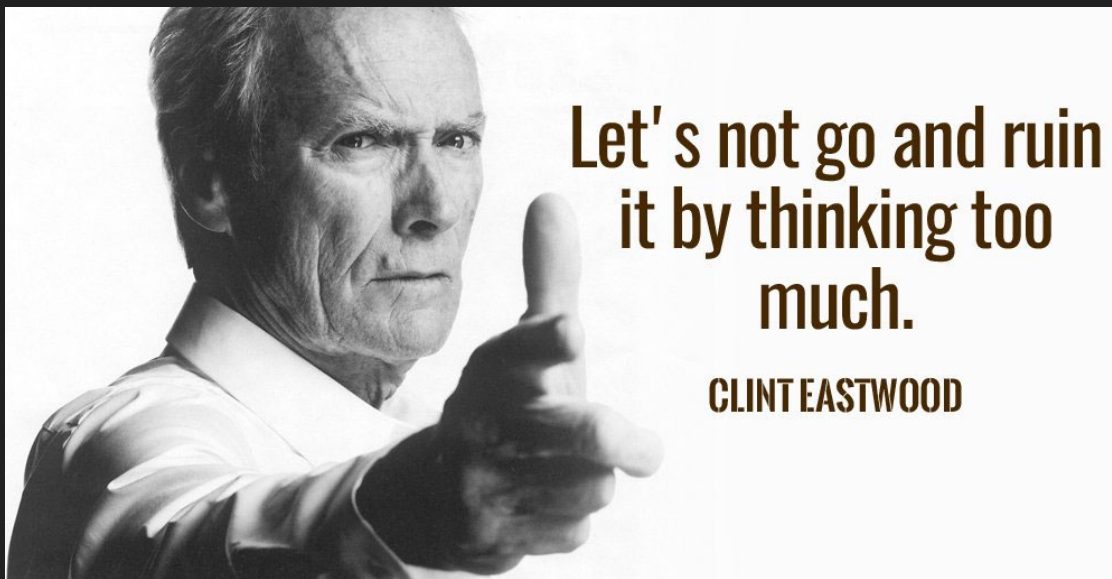
## Critical decisions: hiring & promotions

- How do we make these decisions?
- Who makes the decision?
- What is the process?

## The ideal hiring & promotional testing

### INCLUDES:

- A job analysis of the target position
- Specific dimensions to evaluate
- Representation of the unique situations and challenges of the organization



**Let's not go and ruin  
it by thinking too  
much.**

**CLINT EASTWOOD**

## What is an Assessment Center?

- **A series of simulated on-the-job challenges to gauge a candidate's ability to perform the target job.**
  - Provides in-depth information and insight on strengths, weaknesses and overall performance potential.
  - Performance of candidates is evaluated by trained assessors.
  - Provides information unattainable from written tests, interviews or any other source.

## International Congress on Assessment Centers

An assessment center consists of a **standardized evaluation of behavior** based on **multiple inputs**. Any single assessment center consists of **multiple components**, which include **behavioral simulation exercises**, **within which multiple trained assessors** observe and record behaviors, **classify them according to the behavioral constructs** of interest, and rate behaviors. Using either **a consensus meeting among assessors** or statistical aggregation, assessment scores are derived that represent an assessee's standing on the behavioral constructs and/or an aggregated overall assessment rating (OAR).

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0149206314567780>

# International Congress on Assessment Centers

- Guidelines consistent with:
  - American Educational Research Association
  - American Psychological Association
  - International Test Commission
  - The human resources program-evaluation handbook
  - Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Civil Rights Commission, Department of Labor, & Department of Justice
  - Uniform guidelines on employee selection procedures



**We boil at different degrees**

*Clint Eastwood*

## Definitions

### **Simulation exercise:**

- An exercise or technique designed to elicit behaviors related to behavioral constructs of performance on the job, requiring the candidate to respond behaviorally to situational stimuli.

### **Task:**

- A segment of work to be accomplished, including the setting, behavior called for, and the outcome desired.

### **Dimensions:**

- A group of behaviors that are specific, observable, and verifiable relate to job success. Sometime used synonymously with competencies.

## Definitions

### **Integration:**

- Methods for combining behavioral observations and ratings from multiple assessors, behavioral constructs, and/or exercises; may be accomplished via a consensus discussion among assessors or a statistical combination approach.

### **Integration discussion:**

- A method of aggregation in which assessors meet to talk about observations and ratings made within the assessment center.

# Definitions

## **Job analysis:**

- The process used to determine the tasks and KSAs linked to success or failure in a job, job role, or job grouping (as well as their linkages). Typically interviews with and observations of incumbents, interviews with upper-level managers/executives and other subject matter experts, review of existing job documentation (job descriptions, training manuals, etc.), and surveys.

## **Validity:**

- The extent to which the inferences made based on scores produced by a measurement tool or process, are defensible.

# Purpose

## ○ **Selection**

- To predict future behavior for decision-making
  - Promotions
  - Hiring
  - Assignment

## ○ **Diagnosis**

- To diagnose development needs

## ○ **Development**

- To develop candidates on behaviors (dimensions; KSA's of interest)
- Succession planning

## Ten Essential Elements

1. Systematic Analysis to **Determine Job-Relevant behaviors**
2. Behavioral Classification
3. **Multiple Components**
4. Linkages Between Behaviors and Assessment Center Components
5. Simulation Exercises
6. Assessors knowledgeable about the behaviors and the agency
7. **Assessor Training**
8. Recording and Scoring of Behaviors
9. **Data integration** across assessors and behaviors
10. Standardization for all candidates

## What is NOT an Assessment Center

- No demonstration of behavioral response
- Panel interview as sole technique
- A test battery without behavioral simulation
- Single assessor evaluation
- Several simulations with multiple assessors; but does not pool data

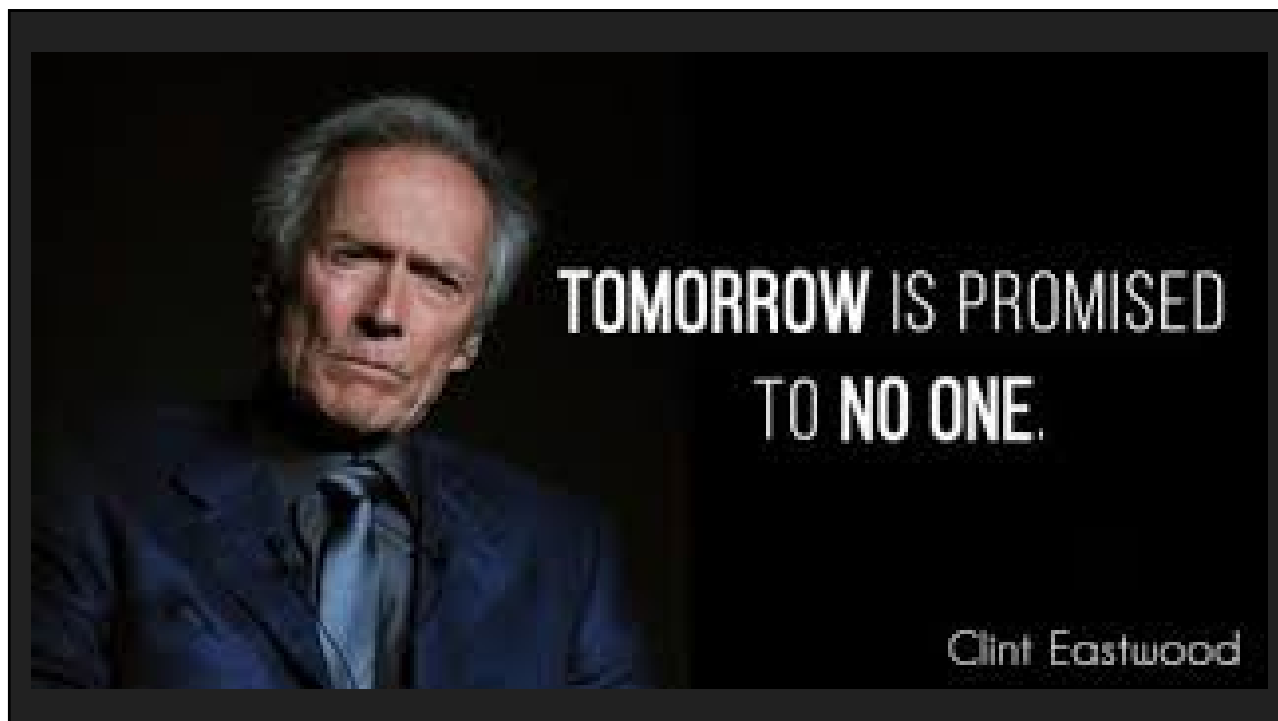


## Ethical Considerations

- Informed participation
- Candidate rights
- Respect for copyrights
- Data protection
- Compliance
- Single purpose

## Best Practices

- Fairness & appearance of fairness
- SME's are critical
- Multiple trained assessors
- Multiple exercises providing multiple views of the candidate
- Value the debrief
- Learn from others; stay current
- Consider current issues; agency building as well as candidate evaluation



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**Colleen Wilson**

## **Promotional Testing & Executive Services Manager**

### **Veteran law enforcement leader**

Colleen joined the Public Safety testing in 2016 having retired as one of the most experienced law enforcement executives in the northwest. She led three different police departments during her 23 years as a police chief. Her 40-year public safety career includes rising through patrol ranks of one department to the Chief's position, leading small and medium size police agencies as well as time as the Peace Officer Certification Manager for the State of Washington, developing the WAC's that implemented licensing for police officers.

### **Public safety trailblazer**

Colleen became the first female police chief in the state of Washington, the first female president of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) and chair of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission. Appointed by three governors and a Supreme Court Justice as the law enforcement representative to various task forces, Colleen has helped make many legislative and policy changes for Washington state, and is recognized for her training and leadership expertise.

### **Skilled in transforming organizations and changing culture**

As a Police Chief, Colleen twice took the reins of organizations in chaos. She inherited large numbers of labor grievances, employee litigation and high profile criticism, including frequent complaints against officers. In each case, within a year, grievances abated and citizen complaints turned to praise. All the organizations led by Chief Wilson have excelled in customer service, as evidenced by 90% of citizen surveys rating police service as good or excellent in all three agencies she led.

### **Commitment to training and partnerships**

Wilson's four-decade public safety career includes protecting small rural communities and some of the State's most significant infrastructure. Always an advocate of community-police relations, Wilson has been recognized for partnership by local chambers of commerce, State victim's organizations and nationally by the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA). Most recently Wilson took a leadership role in bringing the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) leadership curriculum, "Leading Police Organizations" to Washington State and their Women's Leadership Institute to the Seattle area.

### **Education**

Gonzaga University

University of Southern California's Delinquency Control Institute

University of Washington's Cascade Program for Executive Excellence

FBI National Academy, Session #172

FBI Executive Leadership Program