



# Planning and strategy report

Sample

Candidate Name: Sample Applicant

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## Planning and strategy report

The following report illustrates the candidates' planning and strategy profile based on their responses to the pick24 planning and strategy test.

The candidate is awarded an overall planning and strategic effectiveness score which is displayed next to the candidates' name. This score follows a normal distribution with an average of 40 and a standard deviation of 15. Individuals with a score of over 55 should be considered good strategic planners and problem solvers. Scores of over 70 represent excellent general strategic planning and problem solving abilities. When comparing between candidates it is important to realize that differences in scores of less than 10 represents no real difference in planning ability. To distinguish between candidates with scores within 10 it is important to read through the detailed planning response information.

Based around the score distribution and the candidates scores on particular sub-elements a general planning ability statement is displayed below. The general statement is then supplemented by information regarding the candidates planning tendencies with respect to seven planning sub elements. Each of these elements is first explained and then followed by a statement related to the candidate.

Sample Applicant

Score: 22.1 / 100 (Low)

## General statement

These statements are general indications of performance likely from particular levels of planning desirability. They do not relate to the participant. They are merely provided as an overview of the traits common to the performance band this individual sits within. Specific nuances of each individual are listed below these general planning statements.

### Overall Analysis - Low

Individuals with a strategic planning orientation associated with low performance demonstrate significantly different planning behaviour/dispositions. They are unable to comprehend or in some cases acknowledge the complexity of a problem situation. Important details are often omitted from planning or dismissed as they are too complex to comprehend. They do not consider the long-term consequences of their actions, or possible contingent options. Their plans will sometimes fail to plot a path forward resulting in a lack of action. The environment and problem are seen to be fixed and existing paradigms are applied even when are inappropriate.

Solutions are typically implemented in reaction to environmental feedback with minimal perceived control over the situation. Finally, individuals with a less desirable orientation have an inability to cope with multiple tasks simultaneously, opting to focus on one element of the problem. Behaviorally these individuals approach complex problems with caution and apprehension. They view negative feedback as a direct threat to their ability. Failure is often externalized to be 'someone else's fault' reinforcing a perceived lack of control.

## Certainty

Planning certainty refers to how certain a decision-maker is about the conditions and situation surrounding a problem. When an individual is uncertain they feel the need to question the conditions and elements of the problem situation they are facing. Certain individuals accept most situations on face value. This element is singularly the most important in determining strategic planning and complex problem solving success.

### Analysis - Certain

Sample shows a clear tendency towards planning in a certain fashion. He will always see situations as clear and fixed. He will typically view a situation, believe the problem is clear and act in accordance to solve the problem. Sample prefers to be more fixed and stable in his decision-making approaches. This approach to planning is the least preferable approach to complex problem solving that an individual can adopt. Sample demonstrates rigidity in his mindset and will often be unwilling to consider different approaches to solving problem situations. For individuals such as Sample every problem has a set solution and a set path to reaching that solution. Sample does not see the need to question his environment, viewing all stimulus and decisions as fixed. This can often lead to him being very passive in respect to the environment adopting an external locus of control.

## Control

Control refers to how an individual attempts to control a problem situation. Individuals are classed as proactive, reactive or passive. Proactive individuals actively seek solutions to a problem and are assertive in their approach; a problem does not need to be urgent for these individuals to address it. Reactive individuals only react to a situation when it is necessary, they do not seek solutions to problems which have a direct impact on themselves. Passive individuals do not try to actively influence their environments; accepting any situation as the best they can achieve. These orientations are particularly important in identifying how an individual will relate to subordinates as a leader, or respond to directives as a subordinate.

### Analysis - Passive

Sample shows a tendency towards planning in a passive fashion. He will only focus on issues that he believes are being emphasised by the environment. This approach leads Sample to believe that his actions are largely determined by the environment. Sample is often highly susceptible to focusing on issues that are creating noise in the system, this can lead to easy distraction from core problems. Passive planning can be very easily lead to inaction or decision paralysis if the problems confronting the individual are complex or challenging. As a leader, Sample will demonstrate little ability to inspire subordinates and will often be unwilling to give set direction and delegate activities. In some ways he is unwilling to accept the responsibilities of leadership. As a subordinate he will have a high tendency to avoid activity that represents any degree of challenge.

## Priority

Priority relates to the order of consideration and number of problem elements addressed by a decision-maker. Individuals are classed as singular, sequential or simultaneous. Individuals who structure their plans in a singular fashion focus on only one problem element and solution. Individuals who structure their plans in a sequential fashion focus on multiple problem elements and solutions but in a staged/serial sequence. Simultaneous individuals consider multiple problem elements and solutions in parallel. This element of planning is particularly important in identifying the efficiency and comprehensiveness of the individuals approach to strategic planning.

### Analysis - Singular

Sample shows a clear tendency towards planning in a singular fashion. He has indicated an ability to only focus on and resolve a single issue related to the problem situation. Sample appears to solely focus on the most obvious or immediate issues in the problem situation and only plan for its resolution. A singular approach to planning will often result in a quick, incomplete and inadequate plan. As a leader, Sample will be viewed as absent minded of key problem elements, this can lead to subordinates being distrusting of his competence. As a subordinate, Sample will lack awareness of the activities of other business units largely focusing on the requirements of his area of responsibility.

## Complexity

An individual's ability to disseminate, comprehend, consider, and determine an appropriate course of action when faced with a complex and unstructured problem is partially reliant on their ability to manage a significant amount of unfamiliar information. The degree of complexity incorporated in a plan, has a noticeable influence over an individuals ability to grasp the complex relationships of any presented problem, having a direct influence over their ability to solve the problem effectively.

### Analysis - Low

Sample has shown demonstrated a low ability to consider or acknowledge complexity in problem situations. In a complex planning or problem solving situation Sample is unlikely to acknowledge or understand the depth, dynamism and interrelationships of problem variables. He is likely to omit key details and will be limited in his ability to develop a relevant or structured plan. This can lead to an interesting polarisation in problem solving behaviours in this individual. One behavioural type will be to approach decision-making in a slow and cautious fashion, almost amounting to decision paralysis with no final decision being made. This will occur when the problem is seen to be too difficult to comprehend. The other behavioural type is a quick and impetuous approach to problem solving decisions. This is symptomatic of not understanding the true importance and complexity of the problem.

## Detail

An individual's ability to determine direct courses of action in complex planning situations is controlled somewhat by their ability to plan specific activities in detail. The degree of detail incorporated in a plan, has a noticeable influence over an individuals ability to determine the most appropriate courses of action to resolve a problem. A high degree of planning detail exemplifies individuals who have an ability to consider the nuances of a situation.

### Analysis - Low

Sample has demonstrated a low ability to consider or acknowledge detail in problem situations. In a complex planning or problem solving situation Sample is unlikely to acknowledge the need to specify potential implementation methods for his plan. He is likely to make general planning statements with little regard for practicality or time required to implement planning measures. Plans can often be developed that require individuals and resources to be in two places simultaneously. Subordinates are likely to find plans developed by Sample vague and confusing.

## Depth

An individual's ability to consider and structure the stages required to solve complex problem situations. The degree of depth incorporated in a plan determines how many stages the individual sets out in their plan. The higher the level of planning depth, the more an individual will think through the likely consequences of their initial actions and plan for subsequent activities.

### Analysis - Low

Sample has demonstrated a low ability to consider or acknowledge the need for planning depth. In a complex planning or problem solving situation Sample is unlikely to consider the consequences of his initial planning stages or plan beyond these actions. He is unlikely to plan for the future resources required and will often suggest that problems can be resolved in one step. Plans conceived by Sample are likely to stop abruptly leaving subordinates to apply improvised strategies to complete the problem solving process.

## Width

An individual's ability to consider or acknowledge contingencies in their planning processes. Planning width indicates whether an individual is aware that their actions are likely to have multiple outcomes. Width is also indicated by individuals acknowledging that there are often multiple strategies available to resolve any given situation.

### Analysis - Low

Sample has shown an inability to incorporate or consider planning width. In a complex planning or problem solving situation Sample shows little awareness that his actions can often have multiple consequences. He will therefore encounter significant issues when the problem situation changes in a manner not accounted for in his plan. Sample will typically plan in a very rigid manner and show little awareness for the volatility of environmental concerns.

## Ambiguity tolerance

The tendency to perceive ambiguous situations as desirable. Ambiguous situations are generally defined by a lack of sufficient information emerging in under three conbolds: (1) “a completely new situation in which there are no familiar cues,” (2) “a complex situation in which there are a great number of cues to be taken into account,” and (3) “a contradictory situation in which different elements or cues suggest different structures-in short, situations characterized by novelty, complexity, or insolubility.

### Analysis - Low

Sample demonstrates low AT and therefore perceives and interprets ambiguous situations as a source of psychological discomfort and a threat. When faced with ambiguity, he will experience stress, react prematurely and engage in avoidance behaviour. This type of avoidance behaviour will likely lead Sample to arrive at “black-and-white” judgments to solve complex and uncertain problems in an attempt to reduce his view of the situation to certain, simple and familiar cues.

Sample has a strong tendency to defend himself through rigid, stereotyped behaviours; often leading to undesirable or suboptimal solutions. Sample is highly uncomfortable when handling interpersonal ambiguities and has trouble accommodating for difference and inconsistencies in peoples behaviour in his decision making. Sample cannot cope with problem-solving or work situations which do not have clearly defined goals/objectives and paths identified to achieve these.

## Self efficacy

Self-efficacy (SE) can be best defined as an individual's belief in their capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to perform across a variety of complex problem-solving situations. SE does not relate to confidence or self-esteem. It instead relates to an individuals underlying belief in their own ability to successfully perform tasks in their day-to-day life. Research has proven that while there is some relationship between confidence and SE, it is very common for ‘confident’ individuals to use outward confidence to mask a low SE. These individuals are people who interview well but perform poorly once on task.

### Analysis - High

Sample exhibits a high SE and has a strong underlying belief in their ability to solve problems and achieve their goals. He demonstrates a tendency to self-set ambitious goals and apply appropriately structured analytic decision-making strategies to achieve these goals. Effective reactions to discomfort and uncertainty are managed effectively and treated as acceptable and sometimes useful emotions. He views failure as part of a learning process and useful in refining future decision-making. It is likely that Samples' high SE stems from past successes, positive encouragement and witnessing others succeed through perseverance. An individual with high SE views complex decision-making problems as challenging, but within their capability to resolve given adequate effort is expended (and specific technical competencies are present).

## Resilience

Resilience relates to an individual's ability to cope with and recover from psychological stressors, adapt to environmental demands, and apply corrective measures to decision-making routines when confronted with situations of adversity and stress.

### Analysis - High

Sample demonstrates a high level of RES. By possessing a high level of RES Sample is likely to be more adaptive to complex or stressful problem situations. He is able to apply a positive affective approach to their social interactions, are extroverted, and maintain close interpersonal relationships and social support networks. Situations of adversity are seen as a challenge or opportunity rather than a threat by Sample. Sample is likely to apply structured and task-orientated problem-solving approaches to cope with adversity and demonstrate a broader and more effective thought action repertoire.

He is likely to have a good sense of purpose and meaning (commitment), see change not as a burden but as a bold aspect of life (challenge), and feel that he can influence life events (control). Sample possess an ability to transform complex life events cognitively to make them less stressful. Dominant personality characteristics of Sample are likely to include: positivism, focus, and proactivity. As a result of these factors Sample presents favourable traits for cognitively solving and managing the emotional responses associated with complex, uncertain or dynamic problem solving situations.