

# SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT TEST

for European institution competitions

A methodology  
and  
60 questions with answers



  
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# CHAPTER 2 - GENERAL COMPETENCIES REQUIRED

European competition SJTs do not aim to assess specific employment competencies. They are designed to test candidates' general behavioural competencies.

The information in this chapter is taken principally from information published by EPSO on its web portal.

## 1. COMPETENCIES IDENTIFIED

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The selection process put in place by EPSO aims to assess the following competencies:

- analysis and problem solving;
- communicating;
- delivering quality and results;
- learning and development;
- prioritising and organising;
- resilience;
- working with others;
- leadership (for administrators only).

## 2. DEFINING GENERAL SKILLS

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**Analysing and problem solving:** being able to determine the key points in complex questions and draw up concrete and creative solutions.

**Communicating:** being able to communicate clearly and precisely both verbally and in writing.

**Delivering quality and results:** being able to assume responsibility and take initiatives in order to provide high quality work in line with established procedures.

**Learning and development:** being able to develop and improve personal competencies and one's knowledge of the organisation and the work environment.

**Prioritising and organising:** being able to determine priority tasks, work flexibly and organise one's own work effectively.

**Resilience:** being able to remain effective when faced with a heavy workload, overcome organisational problems positively and adapt to changes in one's work environment.

**Working with others:** being able to cooperate with one's immediate colleagues and those in other departments and respect individual differences.

**Leadership:** being able to manage, develop and motivate people to get them to achieve set objectives.

### 3. NOTES ON THE GENERAL SKILLS REQUIRED

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The skills described above are quite obviously useful in a professional framework. However it is difficult to deal with them effectively in an MCQ selection process or at an assessment centre.

It is indeed difficult to imagine someone being recruited if they are not communicative or result-orientated or are unreceptive to team work!

This is why we suggest that candidates prepare for the competition in a number of ways:

- by careful reading of the description of general competencies in order to familiarise oneself with the vocabulary used;
- by using the method of analysis we provide for MCQs: life positions;
- by understanding the functions of European Institutions and the general working rules in force;
- by using a practical method for problem analysis based on verbal logic for situational judgement MCQs.

**Performing successfully in SJTs requires candidates to master different approaches.**

**18. You are in charge of an ambitious and complex project. Your team has been working hard for a month and tensions are beginning to mount. An argument breaks out between two colleagues who are in agreement about the content of a document but not about its form.**

- a) You send your two colleagues on a document drafting and presentation course.
- b) You decide between the two proposals, time is short and you need to get on.
- c) You take the time to see both those involved so that they can express their points of view. You ask them to find a solution themselves.
- d) You arrange a friendly meal with the whole team to ease tensions.

**19. It is Thursday evening, it is imperative that the response to the question from the new presidency goes out on Monday morning. You can't manage on your own. You will have to get one of your subordinates to work with you on this. There's only one solution: that he works on it tomorrow and Saturday. You call him.**

- a) We have to give the response to the new presidency on Monday; you will have to work on it with me tomorrow and Saturday.
- b) I know it's late notice but I need you tomorrow and Saturday; can you come and work on Saturday?
- c) You have to come and work overtime on Saturday; you can make it up the following week.
- d) Do you have something important planned for Saturday?

### Question8:

#### Most effective is c)

This option allows each person to express themselves and discuss their concerns. It is also an opportunity to see if there really is a problem or if you have exaggerated your colleagues' reaction.

#### Least effective is d)

This option does not resolve anything. On the contrary, you are blaming your colleagues and are likely to increase the tensions associated with the arrival of a new colleague.

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### Question 9:

#### Most effective is c)

It is in fact the line manager's job to do this.

#### Least effective is d)

Shows withdrawal into oneself and failure to communicate.

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### Question 10:

#### Least effective is b)

This is a positive response. You need to gather information before you let things go or give up.

#### Least effective is c)

Trying to impose your ideas on an already existing team is risky. Suggesting rules before you have really experienced the situation is hardly credible.

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### Question 11:

#### Most effective is b)

You are putting a rapid and pragmatic solution in place.

#### Least effective is d)

This is a purely emotional reaction that doesn't resolve the initial problem.