

The ABLE® (Aptitude for Business Learning) Series of exercises combines the richness of a work simulation with the objectivity of a psychometric instrument. Ground-breaking contextualised exercises that teach, then test to give a dynamic measurement of ability to learn.

Commercial Reasoning

Target group	Graduates; commercial management positions; business consultants; middle managers; sales staff; team leaders; project management staff; resourcing and co-ordinating managers
Skills measured	Test the ability to understand and apply commercial priorities and resourcing decisions
Time required	45 minutes, timed, in a supervised setting
Qualification required	BPS Level A

What is Commercial Reasoning?

The Commercial Reasoning exercise asks candidates to demonstrate their ability to understand and apply commercial priorities to resourcing decisions.

How will candidates be assessed?

Applicants have to discover for themselves the concepts that underlie the interpretation of various sorts of management information, and identify how these interpretations determine the priorities that should be given to different sales activities. The tasks in the test are set within the context of selling electrical goods.

An example task

An example of a task is described where Mr John Snell sells different types of hi-fi systems in the North East. A *guidance booklet* provides the candidate with fictional notes about the premises and conditions for making sales calls. Details about Mr Snell are provided in a *question and answer booklet* and cover average time for sales calls, average travel time between customers, the different priorities between the products and his expected time to spend on sales calls. The candidate is expected to calculate how many sales calls Mr Snell is expected to make for each product in a month. The task is completed by indicating the number of calls for each product, given 12 different alternatives for each product, in the separate *question and answer booklet*.

What information will be provided?

The information provided in the *guidance booklet* is presented in either a written or tabular form in the different tasks. There are a total of 20 questions in the *question and answer booklet* and five separate *guidance notes* within the *guidance booklet*. Candidates are assessed on their skill in understanding and using information to determine commercial priorities.

The test assesses learning and, therefore, no prior knowledge of the electronic industry is required; candidates with knowledge of this sector will not have an unfair advantage. However a fair degree of numeracy is required for this exercise. Applicants have to be able to handle percentages, ratios and the proportion as well as some fairly straightforward arithmetic and the interpretation of data presented in tables. A preparation leaflet is available which briefs candidates on what to expect.

What are the skills assessed?

- Ability to prioritise and plan workloads
- Ability to discover decision-making rules
- Ability to recognise when information changes business priorities
- Verbal and numerical reasoning
- Mathematical problem-solving
- Project planning

What comparison groups are available?

In occupational testing we interpret individuals' scores by comparing them against samples of applicants, incumbents etc. The following samples or norm tables are available:

- Applicants for professional technical or managerial positions within a financial services organisation
- Applicants for Department Manager roles in a large food retailer
- Engineers/ Senior managers at an engineering company
- Corporate Sales Executives and Account/ Project managers
- Regional Sales staff, Head of Sales and Business Development managers
- Applicants for a Senior Manager position within a public sector organisation



What are the business applications?

Commercial reasoning relates to junior or middle management roles where planning, setting priorities, deciding workloads, allocating human resources and budgets are important considerations. One particular group in mind are people currently filling operational,

technical or specialist roles who are being considered as managers of sales departments.

How long does it take?

The test itself is timed and lasts for 45 minutes. Practitioners should allow up to fifteen minutes beforehand to brief the candidate as part of the administration and to account for two practice questions which the candidate is asked to work through before the start of the exercise. A suggested allocation time for one full assessment, including briefing, completion of the timed test and collection of the test would be one hour.

What materials do I need?

- Manual and users guide **AB0704**
- Additional preview information for candidates **JA0708** (10 pack)
- ABLE Series manual and users guide **AB0001**
- Questions and Answer Booklet (disposable) **AB0705** (10 pack)
- Administrations Instructions (reusable) **AB0703**
- Score key (reusable) **AB0702**
- Guidance Booklet (reusable) **AB0706** (10 pack)

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