

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.

Critical Business Planning

Target group	Fast-track graduates; management trainees; business consultants; middle managers; administrators
Skills measured	Tests the ability to discover concepts underlying critical business decisions and apply them in new situations
Time required	40 minutes, timed, in a supervised setting
Qualification required	BPS Level A

What is Critical Business Planning?

The Critical Business Planning test asks candidates to discover and learn for themselves the concepts and methods underlying information presented to them and to apply this to new settings.

How will candidates be assessed?

Critical Business Planning has been designed as an alternative version of Business Decision Analysis, of the ABLE Series, catering for candidates whose interests lie more in the area of business administration rather than of product development, production and marketing. They are not strictly parallel or alternate forms but should be fairly closely comparable.



The Critical Business Planning test is set in business demerger scenarios. An *information file* provides the candidate with details about different processes of demerger in different fictional companies. The facts provided explain how long the process lasted and whether it was smooth or had complications. From this information the candidate is expected to build up a pattern of knowledge that he or she must then apply in a new setting, with a new collection of fictional companies in the process of a demerger. The task is completed by answering questions, in a separate *question and answer booklet*, about the demerger in the new collection of companies.

What information will be provided?

The information provided in the Information File is presented in either a written, graphical or tabular form in the different tasks. There are a total of 12 questions in the *question and answer booklet* and 12 separate information sheets within the *information file*. Candidates are

assessed on their skill in reading and understanding concepts embedded within the *information file* and correctly applying the concepts to questions from a variety of different settings.

The test assesses learning and does not assume prior knowledge of the current business scenario; candidates with knowledge of this sector will not have an unfair advantage. A preparation leaflet is available which briefs candidates on what to expect.

What are the skills assessed?

- Ability to discover concepts and acquire skills without being taught
- Ability to analyse and reason with data in graphs, tables and charts
- Ability to discern apparent patterns masked by complexity
- Aptitude for finding structure in data

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:

- Undergraduates and Graduates registered in recruitment agencies
- Graduate applicants tested for technical roles with a UK Government Agency
- Internal applicants for senior management positions with a large public service organisation
- Information system trainee candidates and internal staff
- Internal applicants for promotion to the rank of Chief Inspector within a UK police force
- Internal applicants for senior management positions in a public service organisation

What are the business applications?

Critical Business Planning is aimed at candidates who will have to show a considerable degree of intellectual curiosity and independence in their work, finding effective concepts to operate with rather than working to pre-set patterns. It is likely that Critical Business Planning will typically be used with candidates for administrative and staff functions. The test is useful both within recruitment and selection and with more of a developmental focus to highlight strengths within people, and areas which may be desirable to develop.

How long does it take?

The test itself is timed and lasts for 40 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 **AB0904**
- Additional preview information for Candidates **JA0908** (10 pack)
- ABLE Series manual and users guide **AB0001**
- Questions and Answer Booklet (disposable) **AB0905** (pack of 10)
- Administrations Instructions (reusable) **AB0903**
- Score key (reusable) **AB0902**
- Information File (reusable) **AB0906** (10 pack)

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