

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 Information Analysis

Target group	Management level jobs; graduates; management trainees; middle- senior managers; supervisors; sales staff
Skills measured	Applicants have to extrapolate from the information they have learned in order to decide what further information they need in order to make a decision
Time required	40 minutes, timed, in a supervised setting
Qualification required	BPS Level A

What is Critical Information Analysis?

Critical Information Analysis asks candidates to identify the minimal subset of items of further information that would be sufficient to allow a specified decision to be made. Applicants have to extrapolate from the information they have learned in order to decide what further information they need to make a decision.

How will candidates be assessed?

The tasks are set within the context of product marketing and advertising, in a fictional cosmetic and health products company.

An example task

In one example, the task is to work out what information would be needed in order to come to a decision about an advertising project. The decision is based on a selection of statements about a budgeting decision for advertising jars of body massage cream. An *information and question booklet* provides the candidate with details about the company's rules for advertising, amount of jars sold in total in a campaign, margin on a sale, selling price and total costs for a product. From this information the candidate is expected to build up a pattern of knowledge that he or she must then apply to evaluate what additional information is required to be able to make a decision about the advertising project.

The task is completed by indicating, in a separate *answer booklet*, what information the candidate would need in order to come to the right decision.

What information will be provided?

The information provided in the *information and question booklet* is presented in a written way. In the *answer booklet* there is a grid with six different items of information for each question. The answers are indicated by selecting the smallest number of items that would allow the candidate to come to a decision. There are a total of 12 separate information sheets within the *information and question booklet* and 12 grids with items of information in the *answer booklet*. Candidates are assessed on their skill in recognising when they have enough information to make a decision.

No prior knowledge of the cosmetics and health industry is required and candidates with knowledge of these sectors will not have an unfair advantage; the test assesses learning, not prior knowledge. A preparation leaflet is available which briefs candidates on what to expect.

What skills will be assessed?

- Ability to recognise adequacy of information
- Ability to learn business concepts and understand policies
- Logical reasoning and decision-making
- Numerical and verbal reasoning in a business context
- Information-seeking and extraction of key 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:

- Applicants for professional technical or managerial positions within a financial services organisation
- Applicants within a large UK bank
- Graduate job applicants to a UK bank
- Police officers
- Applicants for a Test Analyst Role with an Electricity Company
- Undergraduates and graduates
- Applicants for Area Business Manager positions in the pharmaceutical industry
- Internal applicants for Senior Manager and Service Manager posts in local government
- Applicants for Trainee Analyst positions in a large Public Sector Organisation



What are the business applications?

Critical information analysis is intended for management-level jobs where recognising when information is adequate to support a decision, and not wasting resources pursuing unnecessary further support, is important. It also involves the ability to grasp abstract concepts and deploy them in practical contexts. 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 **AB0304**
- Additional preview information for candidates **JA0308** (10 pack)
- ABLE Series manual and users guide **AB0001**
- Answer booklet (disposable) **AB0307** (10 pack)
- Administrations Instructions (reusable) **AB0303**
- Score key (reusable) **AB0302**
- Information and Question Booklet (reusable) **AB0305** (10 pack)

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