

(SAMPLE) FITNESS-FOR-DUTY EVALUATION

Name: John Smith

Position: Sergeant

Assessment Procedures: Clinical interview;
Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2-RF
(*MMPI-2-RF*); *Profile XT*; review of records

Date of Assessment: 1/01/2013

Date of Report: 1/02/2013

Evaluator: Kurt W. Jensen, Psy.D.

Referring Agency: Mayberry Police Department

Introduction:

Confidentiality

Given the nature of appraisal information and the potential dangers of its misuse, this report should be kept confidential and its contents restricted to those who have direct responsibility for decision making. This Fitness-for-Duty Evaluation (FFDE) should not be shown to or discussed with any individual without first considering the findings enclosed, the potential benefits, and the ways in which the enclosed data may be misunderstood or misinterpreted.

How to Use This Report

The following report contains information that can aid you in making decisions regarding an individual's job placement, psychological wellbeing, and capacity to comply with work-related responsibilities. Since everyone has strengths and weaknesses, it is important that this report be viewed in its entirety. Be careful not to overemphasize specific statements, but rather consider this person's overall ability to assume the responsibilities of a particular position in your organizational environment.

Any work or job assessment should be based on a thorough examination of an individual's capabilities, experiences, and aptitudes, as well as organizational variables such as position requirements, management style, and company culture. To minimize chances of erroneous decisions, you should consider the contents of this report as well as information from other sources (for example, interviews, references, work history, job competence, work habits, personal background, etc.).

Occasionally, statements within this report may surprise you. Information gleaned from multiple sources can help to determine whether a statement reflects important work behaviors or attributes that are not important to, or readily observable, on the job. People and organizations change over time. If more than 12 months have passed since the date of this report, its findings should be considered in light of changes and developments that have occurred.

In reviewing this FFDE Report, please keep the following in mind:

- The results are based in part on the candidate's self-perceptions, along with the observations and impressions of others. Perceptions and ratings used as part of this report may be influenced by a variety of personal, social, and environmental factors.
- Raw scores from measures of ability and personality attributes were used as part of this report, and are often based on comparisons to a professional norm group (e.g., people who work in jobs which, for the most part, require education or training beyond the high school level). As you read statements and findings from this report, it may be useful to think "compared to most Police professionals" as you read each.
- Many of the characteristics described in this report could be assets in some circumstances and liabilities in others. For maximum benefit, results should be considered in the context of a particular job or work environment.



Confidential Report: Sgt. John Smith

Background/Observations:

John Smith is a Sergeant employed by the Mayberry Police Department, a position he has held since October of 2001. Sgt. Smith was referred for this Fitness-for-Duty Evaluation (FFDE) by the Chief of Police for the City of Mayberry, Mark Jones, following recent complaints concerning the Sergeant's behavior.

A review of records provided by the Department suggested that the following events took place:

- In October of 2012 two Patrol Officers from Mayberry – Officers Ann Jacobs and Bill Stevenson - filed written complaints regarding Sgt. Smith's behavior. Ptl. Jacobs's written complaint identified three incidents that Sgt. Smith was involved in, suggesting that he has consistently used poor judgment in his role as a supervisor and has acted improperly by failing to assist fellow officers in potentially dangerous situations. Ptl. Stevenson expressed similar concerns, noting that Sgt. Smith has "jeopardized the safety" of fellow officers and "failed to perform as not only a supervisor but as a police officer."
- In November of 2012 Chief Jones requested an internal investigation and referred the case to Commander Mary Adams who served as Investigating Officer on this case. In December of 2012 Cmdr. Adams conducted interviews with Officers Jacobs and Stevenson, Sgt. Smith, and several supporting witnesses.
- An Investigative Case Report completed by Cmdr. Adams, following a review of the evidence presented in this case, suggested that Sgt. Smith did not "...commit or omit acts contrary to the mission, goals, objectives and other pertinent directives and practices of [the Mayberry Police Department]." Nevertheless, Cmdr. Adams recommended that an external evaluation be completed to determine the degree to which, if any, there were justifications for Ptl. Stevenson's and/or Ptl. Jacobs's complaints.
- Chief Jones ordered Sgt. Smith to undergo a Fitness-for-Duty Evaluation to assess this individual's psychological well being and to determine his capacity to comply with his duties and responsibilities as an employee within the Mayberry Police Department, both as a supervisor and as a Police Officer.

For additional background information, please contact the Mayberry Police Department.

Sgt. Smith arrived on time for the interview and testing sessions, well groomed and appropriately dressed in his police uniform. He appeared to be of average height and weight, with medium-dark complexion and no remarkable facial features. This individual presented in what seemed to be a fairly open, straight-forward manner, sharing his observations, thoughts, and impressions with little in the way of hesitance or apprehension.

Sgt. Smith's concentration, memory, and motivation appeared to be within normal limits. His speech was clear and easily understood; his answers to interview questions suggested a consistently composed, conscientious style of responding. His interactions with this examiner seemed genuine and forthright, with little evidence of any attempt to coerce or influence judgment. Sgt. Smith appeared to be of Above Average Intelligence and displayed a reasonably self-assured style of presentation.

This individual described himself as an easygoing, optimistic person, a person who attempts to give people the benefit of the doubt whenever possible. Sgt. Smith described his style of interaction, particularly with people from the Mayberry community, as being fairly even-tempered and unobtrusive. When situations involved conflict or altercations, he noted that he attempts to "slow things down" to give all parties a chance to carefully consider behavioral options and select the best alternative.

Sgt. Smith said that prior to an Officer's arrival at any given scene, "...the people we're called on are already having a bad day." He believed that his attempts to show some compassion and understanding might help to increase compliance and better the community's perception of the Police Department.

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In discussing the complaints made by Officers Jacobs and Stevenson, Sgt. Smith disagreed with their statements about his behavior during referenced events, as well as their conclusions regarding his fitness for duty. The Sergeant believed that the officers did not have access to all of the information he relied upon when making decisions about employee assignments and/or taking action during the calls in question. He said that he understood how others might not agree with some of his judgments and/or behavioral responses, particularly those made in crisis situations. However, in those circumstances he noted that “things happened very quickly” with little opportunity for careful consideration or a delay in responding. Despite this caveat, he continued to believe that he had made the right decisions in each situation.

Test Results and Conclusions:

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - 2 (MMPI-2-RF) is a psychological test used in the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders, and the assessment of employees working in the Public Safety sector. Results are determined by comparing an individual's test responses with those from a variety of psychiatric and non-psychiatric populations. Comparison of these response patterns is used to determine the test taker's level of adaptation, behavioral characteristics, and personality traits. When used to determine vocational suitability, measures of personal adjustment, social style, and possible employment problems are also considered. Research has shown this instrument to be a strong predictor of future problematic behavior in law enforcement personnel.

The results from this administration of the **MMPI-2-RF** suggest that this individual is a very well-adjusted, psychologically healthy person, with none of the test's primary subscales having a T-score above 57. Sgt. Smith's scores on the validity scales used to determine a test taker's candor indicates that he was forthright in responding to test items, doing little to put a “positive spin” on his appearance.

Overall, these results showed that Sgt. Smith is not suffering from a psychiatric condition or disorder that would preclude his continued employment in the Mayberry Police Department. The Sergeant's **MMPI-2-RF** profile implies good ego strength and an overall healthy personality; his performance on this test suggests that he is unlikely to exhibit symptoms reflecting somatic, cognitive, emotional, or behavioral dysfunction, and/or other signs of psychological illness or distress.

The ProfileXT is a test administered to employees to assess individuals' thinking and reasoning abilities, behavioral traits, and occupational interests. Employees' scores on these indices are compared to the scores of individuals identified as “high performers” in similar positions within a Department. These comparisons provide a measure of worker potential and performance, and predict the degree to which a person is well suited for the job in which they've been placed.

Sgt. Smith's performance on the **ProfileXT** suggests that he has many of the cognitive skills, behavioral traits, and vocational interests typically seen in individuals who succeed in the field of law enforcement. His overall match for the Job Pattern established for a supervisor in the Mayberry Police Department was 72%, a moderate score in comparison to others who pursue leadership positions. Sgt. Smith's *Distortion Scale Score* on this test was 9 out of 10, where higher scores suggest greater candor in responding to test items.

Consistent with his performance on the **MMPI-2-RF**, these results suggest that Sgt. Smith is capable of fulfilling the responsibilities of his position as a supervisor within the Department. Subtest scores from the *Thinking Style* section of this test suggest that his cognitive abilities fall within the Above-Average to Superior Range of Intelligence. Where this individual's scores were not in line with the “ideal” Job Pattern established for this position, results suggest that his cognitive skills are *greater* than is typically required to succeed in this role.

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Subscales from the *ProfileXT's Behavioral Traits* section for showed an overall 69% match for this position. These scores provide insight into Sgt. Smith's personality, particularly where behavioral subscales were not aligned with the pre-determined Job Pattern. For example, this individual's score of "2" on the *Energy* Subscale – with scores ranging from 1 to 10 – suggests that he is not inclined to project a high sense of urgency while performing tasks, particularly those that may not require a quick response. Sgt. Smith's score of "2" on the *Assertiveness* Subscale indicates that he prefers to consider his options carefully before taking action and feels little need to direct others when it does not appear necessary. The Sergeant's score of "1" on the *Decisiveness* Subscale indicates a preference to follow a practical, systematic, and disciplined approach when making decisions, rarely relying on instinct or intuition.

Individuals with similar profiles, particularly those in supervisory posts, are likely to be viewed by others as agreeable, unhurried, or even lackadaisical. Sgt. Smith appears to rely on his considerable cognitive and analytic skills when planning a course of action. This style, combined with his careful, methodical manner and his rather subdued, sometimes indirect method of exercising authority, may be considered by co-workers to be inappropriate or ill-advised.

Two additional Subscale scores may add to the uncertainty and perhaps misunderstanding that Sgt. Smith's supervisors, peers, and subordinates may experience in observing his behavior:

- First, his *Attitude* Subscale score was a "9," just above the range of scores that is typically seen in high-performing *supervisors* ("5-8"), but significantly higher than the "4-6" range that is common for high-performing *Patrol Officers*. As a group, Patrol Officers tend to be more subdued, pessimistic, and guarded when compared to Police supervisors. This suggests that Sgt. Smith's typically upbeat, positive, and optimistic demeanor will be out of sync with the attitude exhibited by most of the Sergeant's subordinates.
- Second, his *Independence* Subscale score of "3" suggests a lower-than-average need to exercise self-directed behavior, and Sgt. Smith is likely to rely on team-driven planning and activities when managing his work groups.

These traits are inconsistent with the bureaucratic, "top-down" style of leadership that many Public Safety professionals often experience and come to expect in their career, and may be viewed by some as improper or ill-advised for those working in the field of law enforcement.

Findings and Recommendations:

Results of this evaluation are consistent with the conclusions reached by Cmdr. Adams following her investigation: Sergeant Smith appears to be capable, willing, and ready to continue his work within the Mayberry Police Department as a supervisor. Results of this assessment suggest that he is an intelligent, upbeat, and confident individual who possesses the skills necessary to comply with the demands of his position.

At the same time, the Sergeant's behavioral tendencies and predispositions may lead others – particularly *Patrol Officers under his command* – to question his leadership style and ways of exercising authority. Sgt. Smith's managerial approach is very much in line with the recommendations of experts in the Industrial/Organizational Psychology and Human Resource disciplines. Researchers in these fields report that team-based efforts typically lead to better performance; studies have shown how managers' use of empathy and open communication can inspire workers, and how a positive, caring, and open style of supervision can lead to better performance.

New police recruits and Patrol Officers are often eager for praise and open dialogue with their supervisors; studies show that the use of positive reinforcement with "early career" officers leads to significant improvements in morale, productivity, and commitment. Nevertheless, this style of leadership is fairly *uncommon* in the field of law enforcement and is likely to require a carefully-planned, step-by-step implementation if it is to be accepted as a "best practice."

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Given these findings, it is recommended that Sgt. Smith participate in a leadership training program and/or receive coaching so that he might better address the beliefs and concerns of Officers Jacobs and Stevenson, and/or other supervisees. In particular, training/coaching efforts should consider the following:

- Assist the Sergeant in identifying situations in which assuming a more assertive, directive role might be appropriate, settings in which his doing so may improve supervisees' confidence in his leadership skills, as well as improve their performance.
- Encourage Sgt. Smith to assume a more directive, engaging style in groups and work settings. Given his substantial intellectual and problem-solving skills, he is likely to be a strong contributor whose ideas will add significantly to superior outcomes.
- Help this individual to assess and identify workers who are likely to benefit from a more directive, "hands-on" leadership style. An appreciation of individual differences will assist Sgt. Smith in his efforts to develop mutually beneficial working relationships with each subordinate under his charge.
- Support the Sergeant's efforts to take greater risks in his decision-making, particularly when situations require that results or outcomes be achieved in a timely manner. Build this risk acceptance by having him participate in low risk situations, then building the potential for risk as he adapts.
- A review of interview records showed that Sgt. Smith's subordinates sometimes view him as having opinions about policies and procedures that are not in line with those established for the Department. Inconsistent communications regarding these matters can significantly impact Officers' understanding, attitudes, and ultimately, performance. Rules and regulations should be uniformly implemented; when differences of opinion arise, these matters should be discussed with Departmental leadership so as to develop a commonly accepted set of rules and regulations, guidelines that are consistently supported and implemented.
- Individuals supervising Sgt. Smith should be made aware of the events leading to his investigation and this FFDE. Although the Sergeant disagreed with the claims lodged against him and the findings of this report support this conclusion, the complaints made by the two Officers (see above) should be taken seriously. Reports of acts or behaviors considered to be contrary to what is expected of Sgt. Smith should be immediately brought to the attention of Department supervisors and assessed in light of the findings of this report.
- Chief Jones should review the findings from this report with Sgt. Smith and a copy should be placed in his personnel file.



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