

CASE STUDY



BESPOKE ASSESSMENT DESIGN

BACKGROUND

As one of Britain's leading supermarket chains, ASDA (a wholly owned division of Wal-Mart) prides itself on being different from other retailers – not just in a handful of ways, but in everything they do. So when it came to their recruitment process, the HR colleagues at ASDA House were keen to reflect that philosophy. Building on the success of the “ASDA Olympics” assessment centres in reflecting their culture and providing a fun day for all, it was time for a change. ASDA were looking for a new type of assessment centre for their management recruitment that would:

- Offer candidates a greater sense of the reality of the individual job roles
- Be short in length and be flexible enough to fit into the candidates' assessment days
- Be adaptable to different areas of the business – e.g. for graduates, retail management and distribution management
- Showcase ASDA culture while also reflecting the reality of working on the shop floor – especially for those without prior retail experience.
- Require minimum administration for the 16 Store of Learning (SOL) Resourcing and Development Managers that oversee management recruitment across the UK

Following the development of the hugely successful 'Supersifter' – an online assessment system that provided a range of ability and personality assessments and integrated with ASDA's applicant tracking system - ASDA felt that the consultants at Criterion Partnership were ideally placed to design a new assessment centre process.

What Asda say:

“Having worked with Criterion for a number of years, we felt that they really understood our business and our culture. They had shown that they could produce flexible and adaptable solutions, which was ideal for our purpose.”

Claire Fuller

Resourcing Manager – Retail & Distribution, ASDA

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OUR APPROACH

Members of the Criterion team consulted with key ASDA stakeholders, assessing what the new process should look like. Given ASDA's principle of always striving to be the best, Criterion recommended a bespoke solution; which, like the Supersifter, would be based on values-based assessment.

The design would include:

- Assessment centre exercises
- Activities linked with the Supersifter online assessment system
- A toolkit for assessors

A core set of exercises were designed that could be tailored to the needs of different areas of the business and reflect the specifics of each role. Activities were included that would continue assessing the same Leadership Behaviours measured in the Supersifter, streamlining the recruitment process as a whole. The assessment day also included spending time on the shop floor to really give the candidates a chance to absorb the ASDA environment.

A toolkit was designed for the SOL managers containing all the materials required for conducting the assessment centres. These toolkits were designed as small easy-to-carry cases, complete with handle and full ASDA branding. Comprehensive training was also provided by Criterion Partnership advising on the best practice of assessing in the new process.

To finish, the process was branded as "ASDA Reality" – to illustrate the emphasis on truly reflecting the reality of working for the organisation.



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THE RESULTS

Return on Investment

The new ASDA Reality assessment centres were a big success; combining realistic job previews with values-based assessment within a single, elegant process for a diverse range of roles.

Resource requirements were significantly reduced – the centres were shorter in length and resulted in less paperwork; requiring fewer assessors for less time. The candidate's journey from online assessment (Supersifter) to assessment centre was seamless and contained more meaningful and relevant material.

The assessor toolkit was a hit with the SOL managers, being less costly and completely portable – a perfect solution to the heavy administration load they had previously worked with.

Conversion rates from ASDA Reality assessment centres to concrete job offers were also increased, indicating the effectiveness of Criterion's values-based approach to recruitment in finding better quality candidates.

What Asda say:

“The ASDA Reality assessment centres have greatly improved our recruitment process. It's wonderful to see the candidates chatting to colleagues on the shop floor as part of their assessment day.”

Claire Fuller

Resourcing Manager – Retail & Distribution, ASDA

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