

## Prepare for an Assessment Centre

### What is an assessment centre?

An assessment centre is a way of letting candidates show all the great skills and qualities you can bring to a role. Our assessment centres aren't designed to catch you out – in fact the absolute opposite!! They are filled to the brim with exercises and games that allow you to show how you communicate, work as a team as well as work independently.

They are also a great opportunity for you to interview us! You will get to meet a number of people from across Story Homes which will give you the chance to understand us as an employer including our culture and values.

### What should I expect?

There will be a mix of activities dependant on the role that you are going for. These will typically involve small team tasks, whole group tasks, an interview or individual activities such as a presentation.

### What are we looking for?

#### Ultimately we want you to be yourself

However, we do look for candidates who demonstrate the Story Homes values which are:

**Founded on Family**– Our strong heritage creates a supportive community where everyone has a voice and can thrive. Demonstrate this by working well in a team and showing support and empathy to others.

**Defined by Quality**– We strive for excellence in all we do, to create a distinctive experience that positively sets us apart. Demonstrate this by excellent attention to detail and suggesting ways to make improvements to your own and others' work.

**Built with Passion**– Our motivation, commitment and enthusiasm drives us to do the right thing. Demonstrate this by approaching all tasks enthusiastically and encouraging others to do the same.

**Delivered with Pride**–Our attention to detail ensures we consistently exceed expectations to create an experience and homes that are admired. Demonstrate this by acting professional at all times and behaving safely at all times.

### Before the day...

Firstly, re-read the information that has been sent to you and let a member of the Story Homes team know if you need any special arrangements to help you complete the assessment centre process

- Re-read your application form or CV
- Check out our website, make sure you are up to date with what's happening in the business
- Plan your route, making sure you give yourself ample time to get to the assessment centre
- Talk to friends and family who may have had experience with assessment centres. Ask for their advice and views
- Take time to relax – you are half way to getting

### First impressions count!

Whilst we are not rating your sense of style, it's always great to look the part and create a positive first impression.

- Be Smart
- Be Early
- Smile!
- Eye Contact
- Stand up when met
- Firm handshake
- Positive Body Language

### Group exercises

Detailed below are some things to think about in advance of a group assessment exercise:

- Be yourself - Don't try to put on a façade or mask
- Keep a note of the finish time
  - Don't allow the group to over-run
  - Statements like "look we only have 5 minutes left so we need to get a move on" may help.
- Stick up for your opinions and argue persuasively and with logic for them, but also listen to the opinions of others and support those you agree with.
- Go for quality rather than quantity in your contributions.
- Try to move the group forward by your contributions e.g.
  - "Look this is now isn't progressing us further, why don't we move on and come back to this topic later"
- Summarising can sometimes help to clarify the position
  - Before we go on shall I summarise what we've agreed"
- If a dominant individual tries to "hijack" the group, don't be afraid to challenge them, but do this calmly, logically and diplomatically, not by attacking them. You could ask "What are your reasons for saying that?"
- Try to be creative - introduce new ideas or build on the ideas of others.

### Presentations

Detailed below are some things to think about in advance of a doing a presentation:

- Plan and prepare your presentation – read the brief that has been sent and take the time to plan it out. Rope family or friends in to watching you do your presentation to help you practice it prior to the day
- Show your passion – Be enthusiastic about your chosen topic, it really helps your audience engage with you and your content
- Start Strong – The first 2-3 mins are key. Make us listen by using a powerful picture or quote to help set the context for your presentation
- Keep focussed – you won't be penalised for finishing your presentation early if you have covered everything you need to. Keep to the brief ensuring that you are clear on what will be covered and in what order. Have some small cards with notes on to help prompt you through the presentation
- Make good eye contact – Everyone in the room will be willing you to succeed so take the time to look at your audience.

### Interview

Detailed below are some things to think about in advance of your interview:

- Re-read your CV or application form and have a think about:
  - What you gained for your work experience, volunteering or time in clubs/sports teams
  - What you are particularly proud off – key achievements
  - What you are good at and how you have worked on the things you could be stronger at
- Using our 4 key behaviours, think about times when you have delivered great results, developed a new skill or helped other students/friends with their work, provided excellent customer service or a time you have worked effectively as a team.
- Prepare possible answers that provide us with an understanding of the
  - **S**ituation: What were you asked to do
  - **T**ask: What you specifically did
  - **A**ction: What action you took
  - **R**esult: What was the result and what did you learn from it.

**STAR MODEL**