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# Selection and Recruitment

A practical overview for managers

# Session 1 - Introduction & Context



# Context: Why This Course Matters

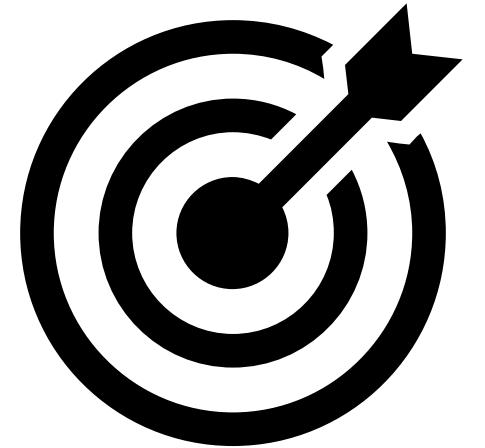
- Interviews are now the decisive human moment
- Recruitment quality shapes organisational culture
- The selection process relies on effective teamwork - the panel should operate as a «project team»



Who has recruited in the last 12 months?

# Course Aim

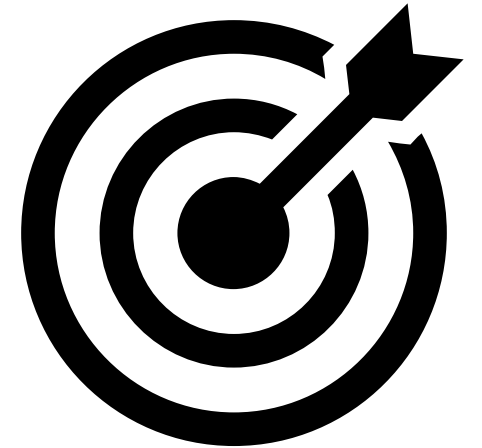
The course is an “umbrella course for managers”, focused on **awareness, empowerment, and collaboration with HR**, not on detailed HR procedures.



# Course Objectives

This course enables managers to fulfil their leadership role effectively within the selection and recruitment process. It does this by:

- Strengthening participants' ability to design and conduct fair, effective, and competency-based selection and interview processes which are in line with EU values
- Developing greater awareness of how to foster a strategic, inclusive and evidence-based approach to assessing candidates.



# Course Focus

## What the course is....

- ✓ A practical, awareness-building programme
- ✓ A guide to the whole recruitment cycle
- ✓ An opportunity to step back and reflect on how managerial behaviour shapes recruitment quality and candidate experience.
- ✓ A space for peer learning, discussion, and exchange.
- ✓ A complement to HR training,

## What the course is NOT...

- ✗ A detailed procedural or legal training
- ✗ A technical “how-to” on HR tools, eligibility checks, or a substitute for formal courses on interview skills, unconscious bias etc,
- ✗ A one-size-fits-all manual — participants are expected to adapt insights to their own institutional context.

# Course Flow

- Strategic role of managers
- Preparing for success
- Interviewing and selection
- Decision and onboarding
- Reflection & commitments



Please engage and participate as best you can!

# Icebreaker Activity

- Appoint a spokesperson:
  - Names
  - Where working?
  - Selection experience?
- Recall your most successful hires
- What made those recruitments work?
- Share some insights with the group



## Pre-work review:

### Identify your two biggest recruitment challenges

Think about the last one or two recruitment processes you were involved in (as a hiring manager, panel member, or decision-maker). What were the **two most difficult issues** you faced?

# Challenging Uncertainty

How confident do you feel leading selection under the new EPSO model?



# Key Takeaways

EU recruitment is evolving—  
managers now lead

Fair, structured  
processes build  
trust and diversity

Today's course  
equips you to  
recruit for impact

# Session 2 - The Strategic Role of Managers in Recruitment



# Managers as Talent Leaders



Recruitment is a core leadership function

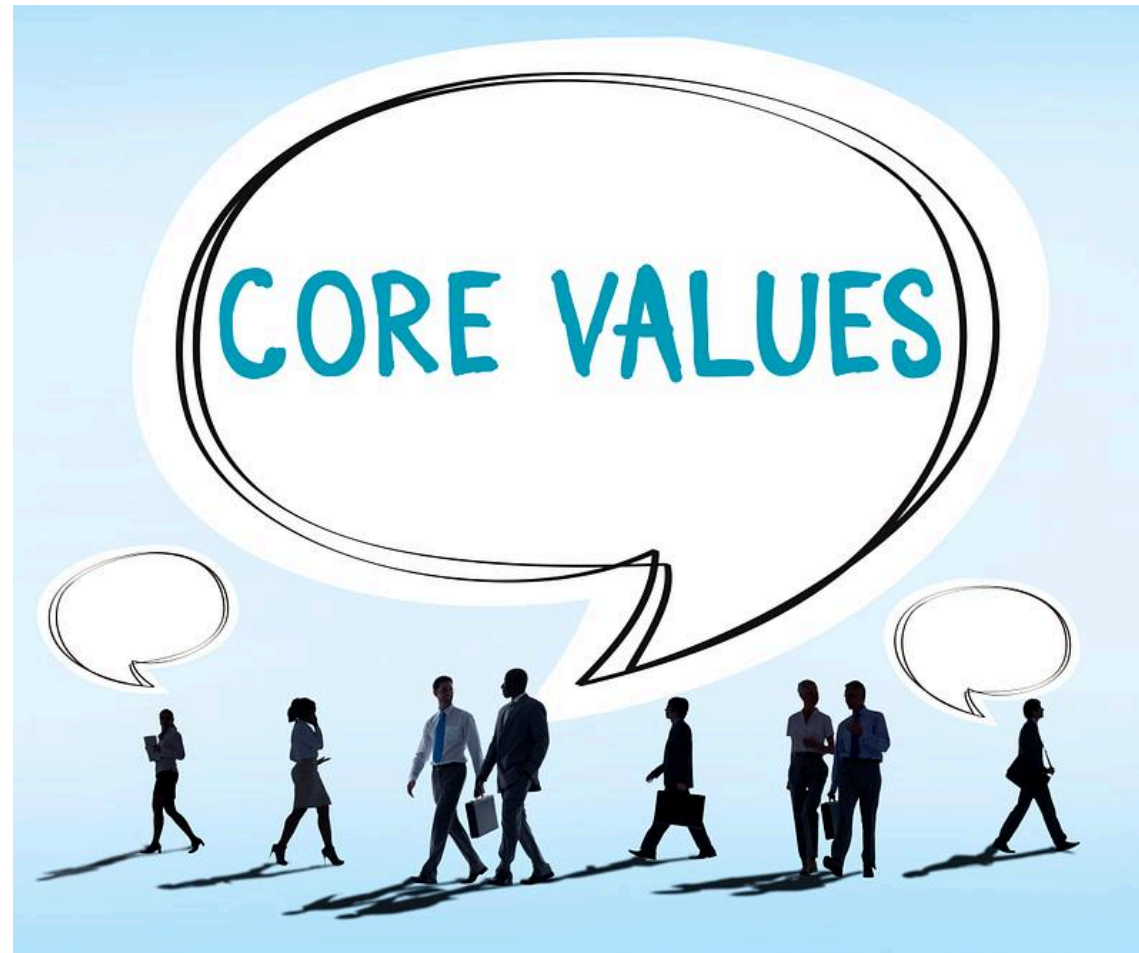


Every interview signals EU values and culture



Managers shape candidate experience and reputation

# How Does Your Behaviour in Selection Reflect EU values?



# From Compliance to Ownership

- Highlight decentralisation: managers now hold real hiring authority.
- Move from procedural mindset to strategic mindset
- Managers own outcomes, not just process steps
- Empowerment through accountability



# Shared Accountability with HR

- The selection process relies on effective teamwork
- HR ensures compliance and provides tools - HR can be a strategic partner with useful, complementary perspectives, not just processes.
- Managers define needs and assess motivation
- Partnership yields fair, efficient recruitment



# Aligning Recruitment to Strategy

- Recruitment decisions shape future capability
- Select for long-term organisational needs
- Link diversity, inclusion and performance to EU mission impact



**How best can you connect hiring to your institutional/service priorities?**

# Building a Team with the Panel Members - Creating a united, fair, and value-driven selection panel

- The **panel is a team**, not just a group of assessors.
- A well-functioning panel ensures **fairness, consistency, and credibility** of the selection outcome.
- The **quality of the panel dynamic** directly affects candidate experience and institutional reputation.



# Building Trust in Selection Panels

- Clarify roles and expectations early
- Foster open, balanced discussion
- Handle disagreements respectfully
- Exercise – Ground rules

Reflect on and draft a **Ground Rule chart** that will support a respectful and meaningful flow of discussion across the panel: **before, during and after the interview.**



# Key Takeaways

Recruitment  
leadership defines  
culture and  
fairness

Partner with HR;  
act as ambassador  
of EU values

Inclusion,  
transparency, and  
trust are strategic  
assets

# Session 3 - Preparing for Success – Planning the Recruitment Cycle

# Exercise: Vacancy Notices – Focus on Quality

In small groups:

As a manager you may feel constrained in terms of your impact on the quality of VNs BUT...

What makes a VN more qualitative?



# Drafting Accurate, Inclusive Job Descriptions/Vacancy Notices

- Use clear, gender-neutral, and inclusive language
- Describe real challenges and opportunities – avoid jargon
- Focus on purpose and impact: why the role matters to the EU mission
- List only essential requirements; avoid unnecessary barriers
- Test readability and inclusiveness with peers before publishing

# Identifying Competencies and Motivation for Success



- Define core and technical competencies linked to role impact
- Clarify 'what good looks like' using behavioural indicators
- Balance hard skills (expertise) and soft skills (collaboration, adaptability)
- Consider motivation for public service – beyond performance metrics
- Diversity of profiles strengthens problem-solving and innovation



# Developing Criteria for Competency Evaluation



## Step 1 – Identify Key Behavioural Indicators

- Working in small groups, participants brainstorm and agree on observable behaviours (at work) that indicate effective self-management.

## Step 2 – Break The Definition Down

- Develop specific, observable actions that could be demonstrated in an interview example.

## Step 3 – Create and Apply the Structured Evaluation Grid



# Developing Criteria for Competency Evaluation



## Example:

- Define observable, measurable **criteria** for “Self-management.”
- Develop powerful **questions** which target prioritised competencies
- Use a **structured evaluation grid** to ensure fairness and consistency.
- Strengthen their ability to **identify behavioural evidence** during competency-based interviews.
- Competency under review: Self Management

# Competency framework

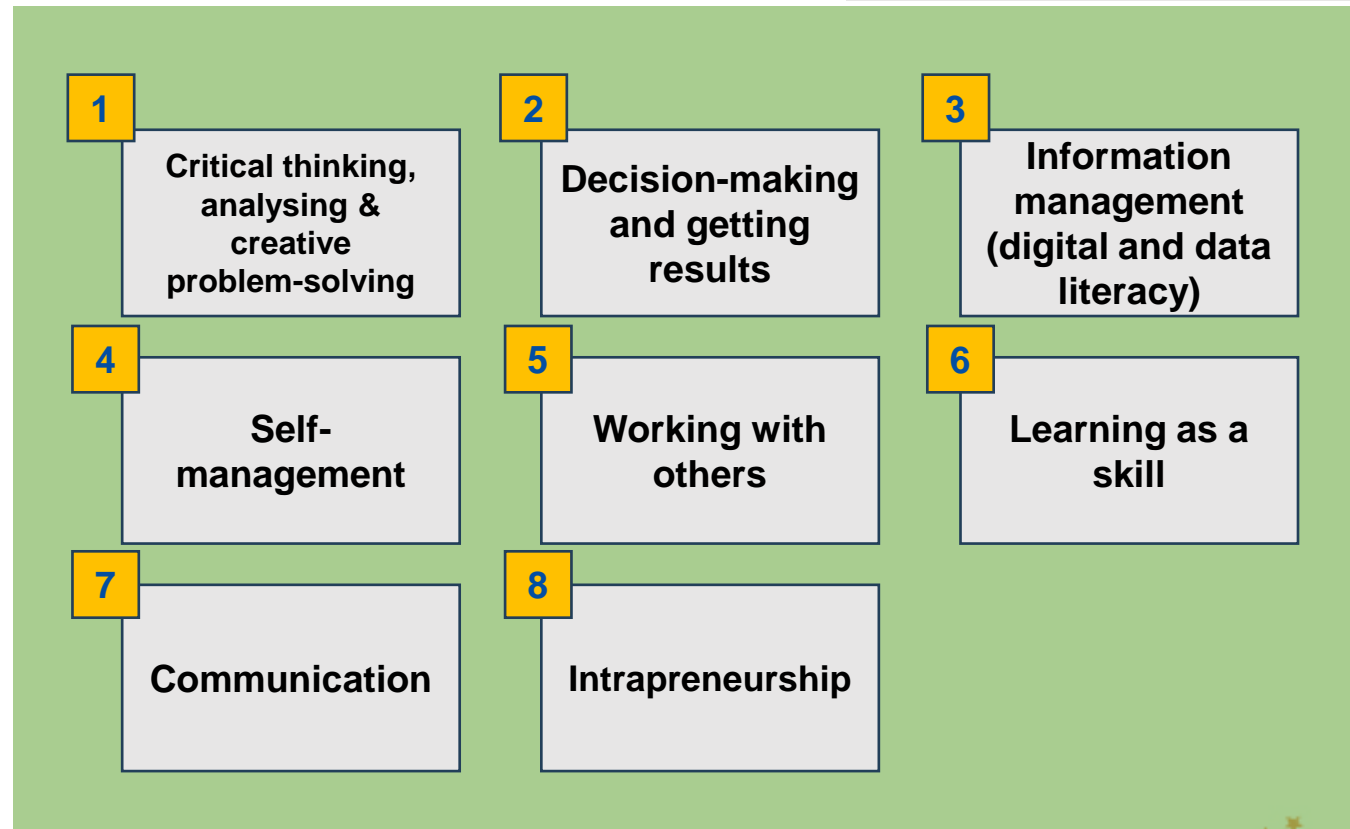


## NEW COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The new **EPSO Competency Framework** defines the 8 general competencies that EU officials are expected to demonstrate throughout their career.

Each general competency is composed of various observable elements, called **anchors**.

These competencies are the fundamentals for evaluating the laureates.



[EPSO's Competency Framework | EU Careers](#)



# Self Management Competency

Organise own work, set goals, manage time effectively, and demonstrate self-motivation and a sense of responsibility. Demonstrate resilience in the face of stress and setbacks. Respond to and implement change with a positive attitude and remain effective under a changing/fluctuating workload. Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability.



# Self Management Competency Anchors

- Organises own work effectively.
- Takes responsibility for own results and demonstrates commitment to achieve their goals.
- Responds calmly to obstacles and is able to distance themselves from frustration and negativity.
- Applies strategies to help prevent stress and setbacks (e.g. asking for help or support when necessary).
- Is adaptable concerning changing work conditions and responds to fluctuating circumstances in a positive manner.



# Self Management Competency - Exercise

- Organises own work effectively.
- Takes responsibility for own results and demonstrates commitment to achieve their goals.
- Responds calmly to obstacles and is able to distance themselves from frustration and negativity.
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Develop interview questions that would help the panel investigate a candidate's likely levels of competency in the two highlighted 'anchor' areas.

# Self Management Evaluation Grid

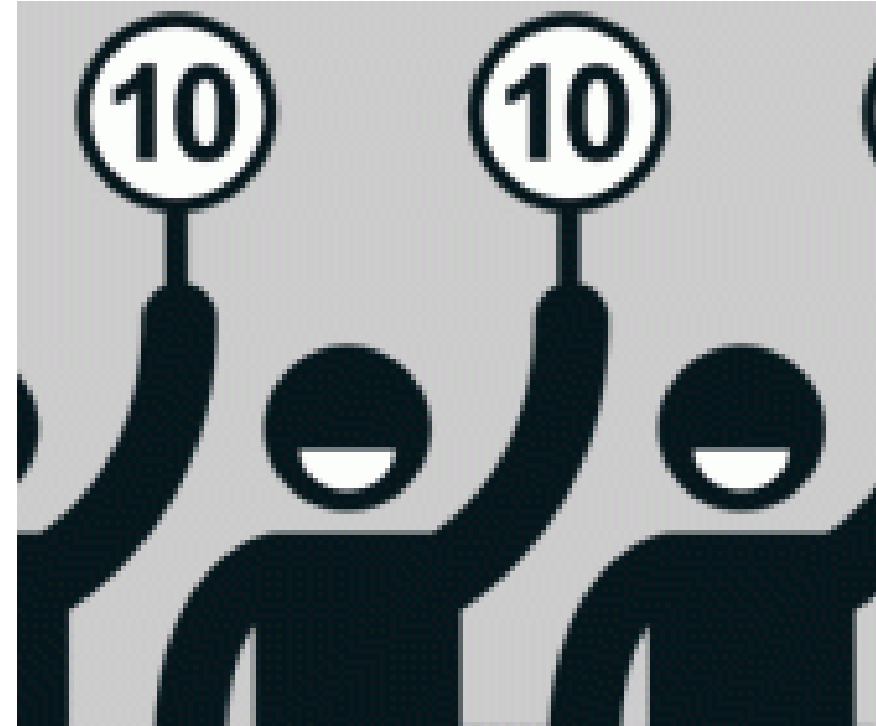
Organises own work, sets goals, manages time effectively, and demonstrates self-motivation and a sense of responsibility. Demonstrates resilience in the face of stress and setbacks. Responds to and implements change with a positive attitude, remaining effective under a changing or fluctuating workload. Shows flexibility and adaptability.

Weak:			Satisfactory:				Excellent:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Struggles to grasp the bigger picture; focuses only on isolated tasks.</li> <li>Has difficulty understanding or organising complex information.</li> <li>Responds to challenges with rigid thinking and repetitive solutions.</li> <li>Shows little initiative or creativity in problem-solving.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands how their role fits into wider team or organisational goals.</li> <li>Can break down complex issues into manageable parts and respond with practical solutions.</li> <li>Demonstrates creative thinking when prompted or supported.</li> <li>Manages workload effectively and adapts to challenges in a structured way.</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrates multiple perspectives to form a clear, strategic understanding of complex issues.</li> <li>Regularly generates original, practical solutions that improve processes or outcomes.</li> <li>Anticipates challenges and proactively adapts, maintaining composure and focus.</li> <li>Champions innovation and encourages others to explore creative approaches.</li> </ul>		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Evidence from the Interview:

# Preparing for Aligned Evaluation

- Use the 1–10 (or 1-5) scale based on the behavioural anchors created in Step 2.
- The final competency score may be an average or consensus rating from all panel members.
- Stress that evidence must **match the defined criteria**, not the assessor's personal impression.



# Key Takeaway – Clarity Ensures Fairness and Quality

- Preparation defines recruitment success – clarity saves time later
- A well-written vacancy text attracts the right motivation and skills
- Transparent criteria build trust and confidence among candidates
- Inclusion starts with words: every sentence signals your values
- Good planning = better selection, better onboarding, stronger teams



# Part 4

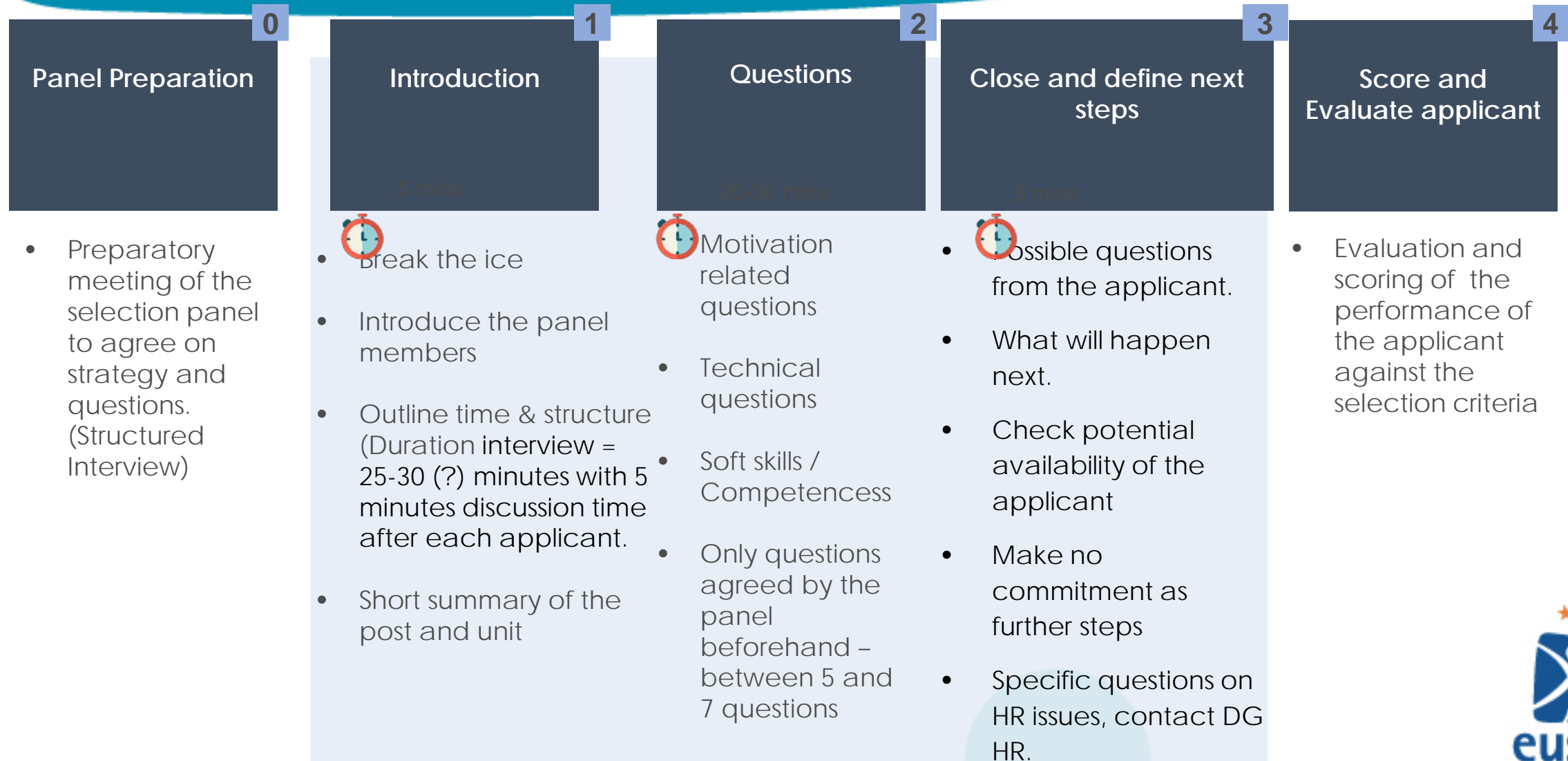
## Interviewing and Selection in Practice



# Interviewing and Selection in Practice

- Build and lead a balanced selection panel
- Panel roles
- Effective and ineffective interview structures
- Managing timing
- Remote interviews – making them fluent
- Mitigating perceived power imbalances and unconscious bias
- Tricky candidates

# Interview Structure and Questions



# Tricky Candidates

## 1. The Over-Talker

Gives long, unfocused answers; difficult to redirect without appearing rude.

## 2. The Under-Communicator

Provides very short or vague responses; hard to assess competencies.

## 3. The Scripted Candidate

Reads rehearsed answers; sounds polished but lacks authenticity or depth.

## 4. The Technical/Connection Disrupter

Blames poor audio/video for not answering fully; creates stop-start dynamics.

## 5. The Defensive Candidate

Becomes evasive or argumentative when probed; challenging to keep on track.



# Coping with Tricky Candidates - Exercise

In small groups:

- Consider two of the previous examples:
- What might we do to cope with them professionally?



# AI Awareness

- How candidates use AI.
- How managers can use AI ethically (e.g., drafting notices, structuring interview questions).
- Discussion prompt: "Where is the line between smart assistance and unfair advantage?"



# Candidates Using AI for Responses

## 1. Use Behavioural, Experience-Based Questions

Ask for *specific examples* from the candidate's own past work ("Tell me about a time when... What did you do?"). AI-generated answers tend to be generic; real experiences contain detail, context, and nuance.

## 2. Ask Follow-Up Probes That Require Personal Insight

Use spontaneous follow-up questions ("What happened next?" "What did you learn?" "How did your team react?"). These are difficult to answer convincingly with pre-prepared or AI-assisted responses.

## 3. Introduce Short, Scenario-Based Tasks

Give a brief scenario and ask for an immediate explanation of how they would handle it. Real-time reasoning makes it harder to rely on AI tools and reveals genuine problem-solving ability.

## 4. Observe Response Patterns and Pace

Watch for long pauses, sudden shifts in language style, or answers that sound overly polished or generic. If suspected, gently re-anchor with: "Let's focus on your own experience—can you walk me through what *you* personally did?"



# Preparing to Record Evidence

During an interview, note short quotes or paraphrases that demonstrate behaviour.

Example: *"I reorganised the project plan when our policy priorities shifted and met all deadlines despite losing a team member."*

This becomes the factual **basis for scoring**, thereby mitigating bias.



# Apply the Evaluation Grid to Hard Evidence

## Each participant:

- Reviews the transcript/video silently.
- Highlights or underlines behavioural evidence.
- Fills in the “Evidence from the Interview” column in their grid, noting short quotes or summaries.

## Group Comparison and Justification:

- Once everyone has scored individually:
- Participants share their ratings aloud for each behavioural indicator.
- For each score, the rater must justify it using evidence — “I gave a 4 because the candidate proactively adjusted their plan after a policy change and still met deadlines.”



# Apply the Evaluation Grid to Hard Evidence

- Why did ratings differ?
- Were participants interpreting the indicators differently?
- Did some focus on positive tone rather than concrete actions?
- Did everyone apply the same standard for 'excellent' vs 'satisfactory'?



# Part 5

## Decision Reporting and Onboarding



# Decision Reporting & Onboarding - Checklist



## Before the Decision – Prepare for Fair, Informed Judgement

Review all interview and test evidence **against the agreed criteria**, not personal impressions.

Ensure the **panel discussion** covers each candidate's performance and potential objectively.

Confirm that diversity and inclusion principles have been respected throughout.

Involve HR early to validate **eligibility and procedural compliance**.

## During the Decision – Select and Document Transparently

Strive for **evidence-based consensus**, not compromise

Justify ratings with **specific behavioural examples** (“The candidate demonstrated...”).

Document the rationale clearly for panel decisions.

## After the Decision – Onboarding, Engagement & Retention

Send a **welcome message** and essential information early. - clarify next steps

Assign a **contact person or buddy**

Hold a first meeting to discuss: **role priorities, team culture and communication norms**. -explain the **probation period purpose and process** and schedule regular check-ins to review progress

Follow up after 3–6 months to assess engagement, motivation, and fit. *capability, diversity, and culture?*

# Decision Reporting & Onboarding

- Synthesise evidence and make defensible selection decisions
- Document rationale clearly and transparently
- Write fair and traceable selection reports
- Addressing AI-generated applications: authenticity checks and ethical guidance
- Link recruitment outcomes to onboarding and long-term engagement



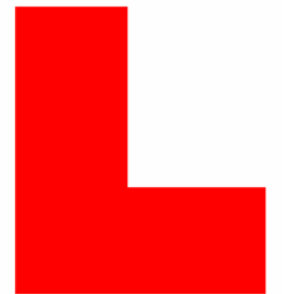
# Onboarding and Long-Term Engagement

- 1. Set Expectations Early and Deliver on Them**  
Ensure the role, culture, and ways of working described during recruitment match what the new hire actually experiences—this builds trust and early engagement.
- 2. Create a Seamless Handover Between Recruiters and Hiring Managers**  
Share candidate insights, motivations, and concerns so onboarding feels personalised and continuous rather than a “reset.”
- 3. Start Engagement Before Day One**  
Use pre-boarding touchpoints (welcome messages, key information, introductions) to build connection and reduce first-day anxiety.
- 4. Link Onboarding Activities to Long-Term Development**  
Show early how the new hire’s strengths and goals connect to growth opportunities, encouraging a sense of purpose and early retention.



# Optimising the Probationary Period: Turning Selection into Sustainable Performance

- **Why Probation Matters** - it is the final validation stage of selection.
- **Manager's Role** – Owning the success of the selection process
- **A Simple 9-Month Probation Framework**
  - **Month 1–2: Orientation & Signal Detection**
    - Is motivation genuine and sustained?
    - How does the person interact, ask questions, handle ambiguity?
  - **Month 3–5: Capability & Behaviour in Action**
    - Does behaviour match interview evidence?
    - How does the person respond to feedback and pressure?
  - **Month 6–9: Confirmation or Course Correction**
    - Is this a sustainable fit for the role and team?
    - Are gaps closing — or persisting?



# Part 6

## Reflection and Action Planning



# Next Steps

Continue applying evidence-based, fair and inclusive selection practices

Use EUSA resources and HR partnerships for ongoing learning

Feedback survey link and certificate information

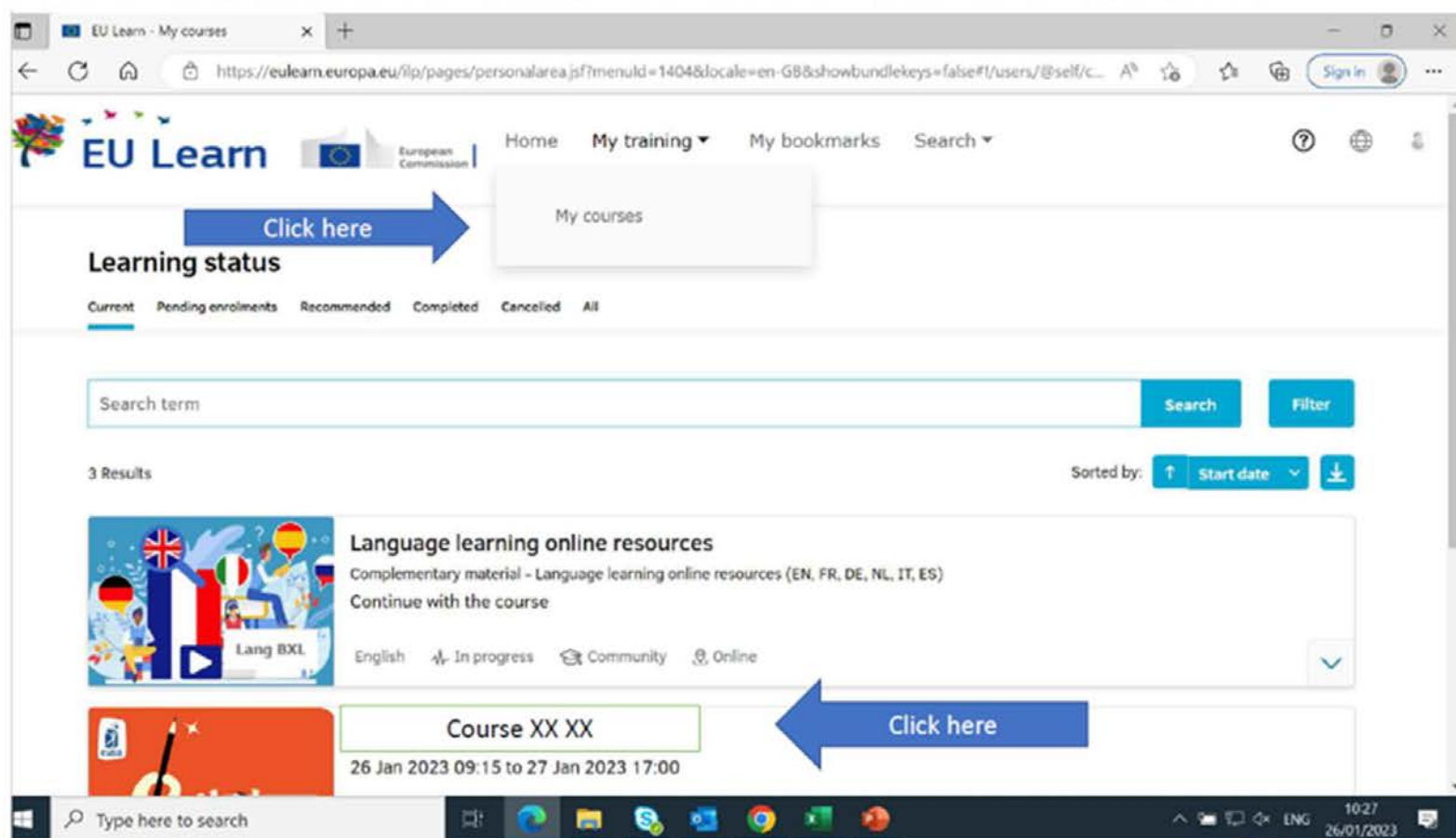
Contact: European School of Administration (EUSA)

# Reflection & Action Planning

- Individual reflection: Key insights and commitments
- Group discussion: How will you apply learning in your next recruitment?
- Action planning template: 'One concrete step I'll take...'



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