



Improving candidate hires at **Housing** Ombudsman Service

🎯 Background

Having successfully used Strengths Partnership's strengths-based interviewing techniques to recruit staff during 2011 (establishing the energy and motivation individuals had for target roles as well as knowledge, skills and competencies), Housing Ombudsman Service approached Strengths Partnership again to support their recruitment process for a Case Worker role in 2012.

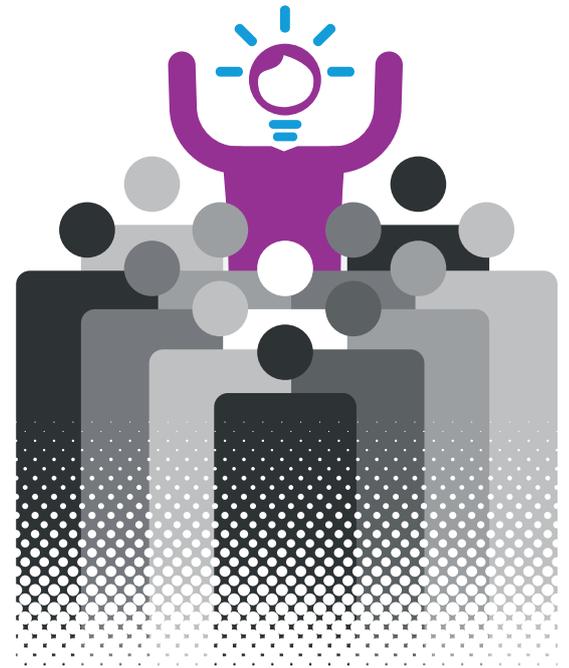
Historically this role had required a different skill set supported by a specific recruitment process. However, with significant organizational changes affecting both the culture and the Case Worker role, the recruitment process needed to be altered to reflect this.

The challenge facing the business was that the role required strong behavioural capabilities with less emphasis required on the technical skills. Being a proactive organization, the Housing Ombudsman was already seeking to develop a more strengths-based culture, to facilitate a more responsive future-focused business. Therefore a process that supported this would be essential.

🎯 Our solution

Strengths Partnership worked in collaboration with Housing Ombudsman Service to research the new role requirements. Firstly, a job analysis was conducted which identified the key parameters for the role that would lead to performance success. Following the job analysis, a new competency framework was designed to support not only the new role but also the desired culture. It was clear from the initial research the sorts of strengths that would support performance success within the role, as well as flagging the sorts of strengths that could inhibit performance.

Following this in-depth strengths-focused research phase, a bespoke strengths and competency based assessment centre was designed and then delivered in partnership by both Strengths Partnership and Housing Ombudsman Service. The assessment centre comprised a strengths interview, strengths-based role play and case study. Candidates were identified both from within and outside the organization and several assessment centres were run during the second half of 2012.



🎯 Outcome

Using the strengths-based approach, Housing Ombudsman Service was readily able to identify candidates who would fit well into current caseworker roles as well as roles that required a new style and approach. Through observation and interviewing at the assessment centres, assessors could establish whether candidates had both the skills and the energy/drive for the target roles and also the extent to which candidates were able to use their strengths in an optimal way (i.e. the right strengths, in the right amount, at the right time) that would benefit their delivery of the target role.

Housing Ombudsman Service was delighted with the quality of candidates selected from the process, reporting that the candidates had needed less training than would typically be required, and that they were very energized by the job, had achieved high levels of performance very quickly and were a great fit for the organization.

Candidates all reported that while their experience of the assessment centre was that they felt stretched and challenged, they also felt that they were able to be themselves and give their best on the day, feeling comfortable that the process had enabled assessors to see their full potential.