

Positive action and other strategies for improving diversity at assessment centres



Where will you



Outline

- Context
- Diversity drivers
- Positive action interventions
- Impacts
- Other interventions
- Learning



Fast Stream options

Generalist Fast
Stream:

DS / H of P / Sc. & Eng
/Central

HR

Northern Ireland

TiB

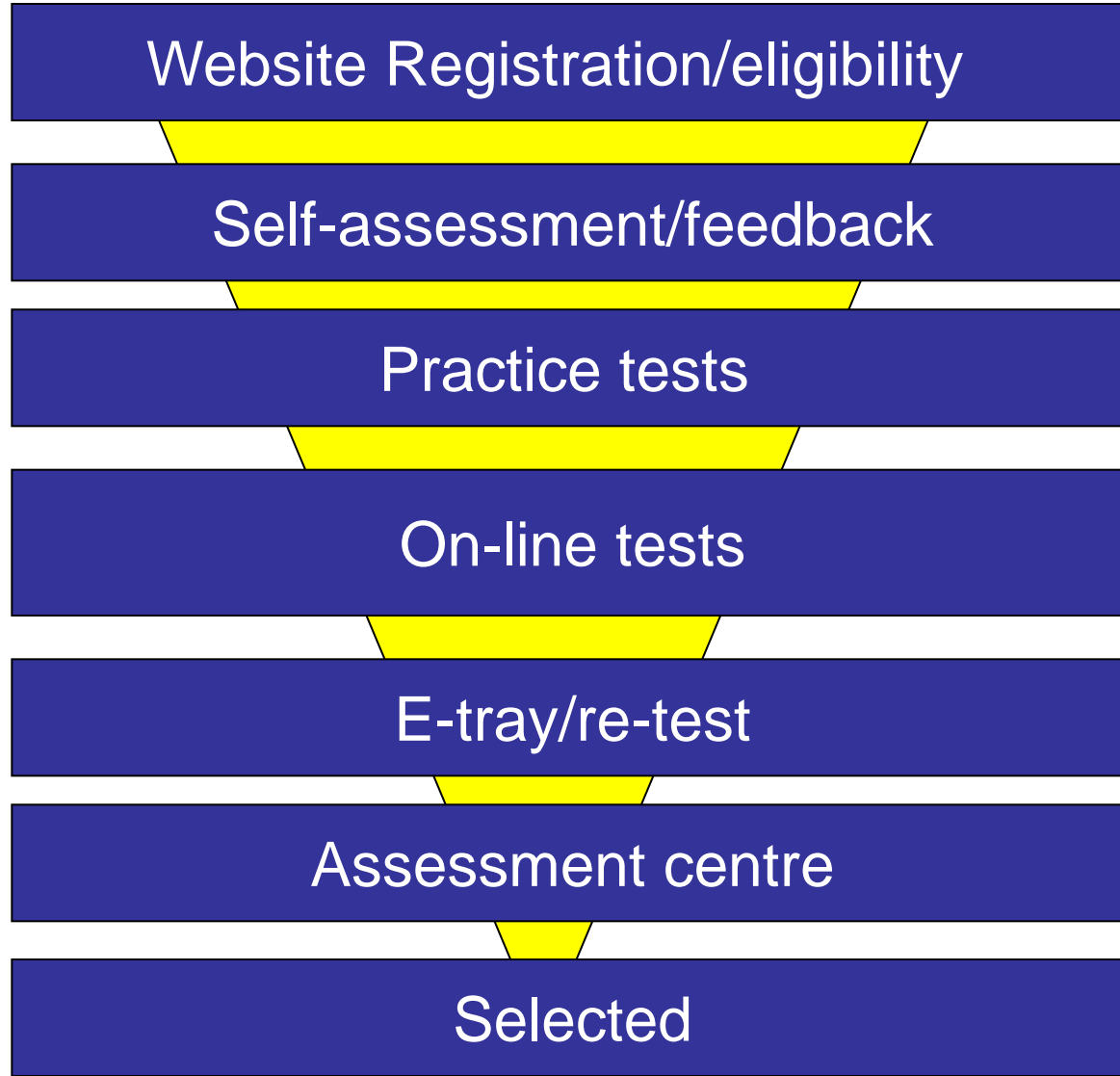
EFS

Analytical Fast
Stream:

Economists, Statisticians,
Social Researchers,
Op. Researchers

www.civilservice.gov.uk/faststream

Fast Stream selection



Assessment centre

**Group Exercise
& self-assessment**

**Policy
Recommendation
Exercise**

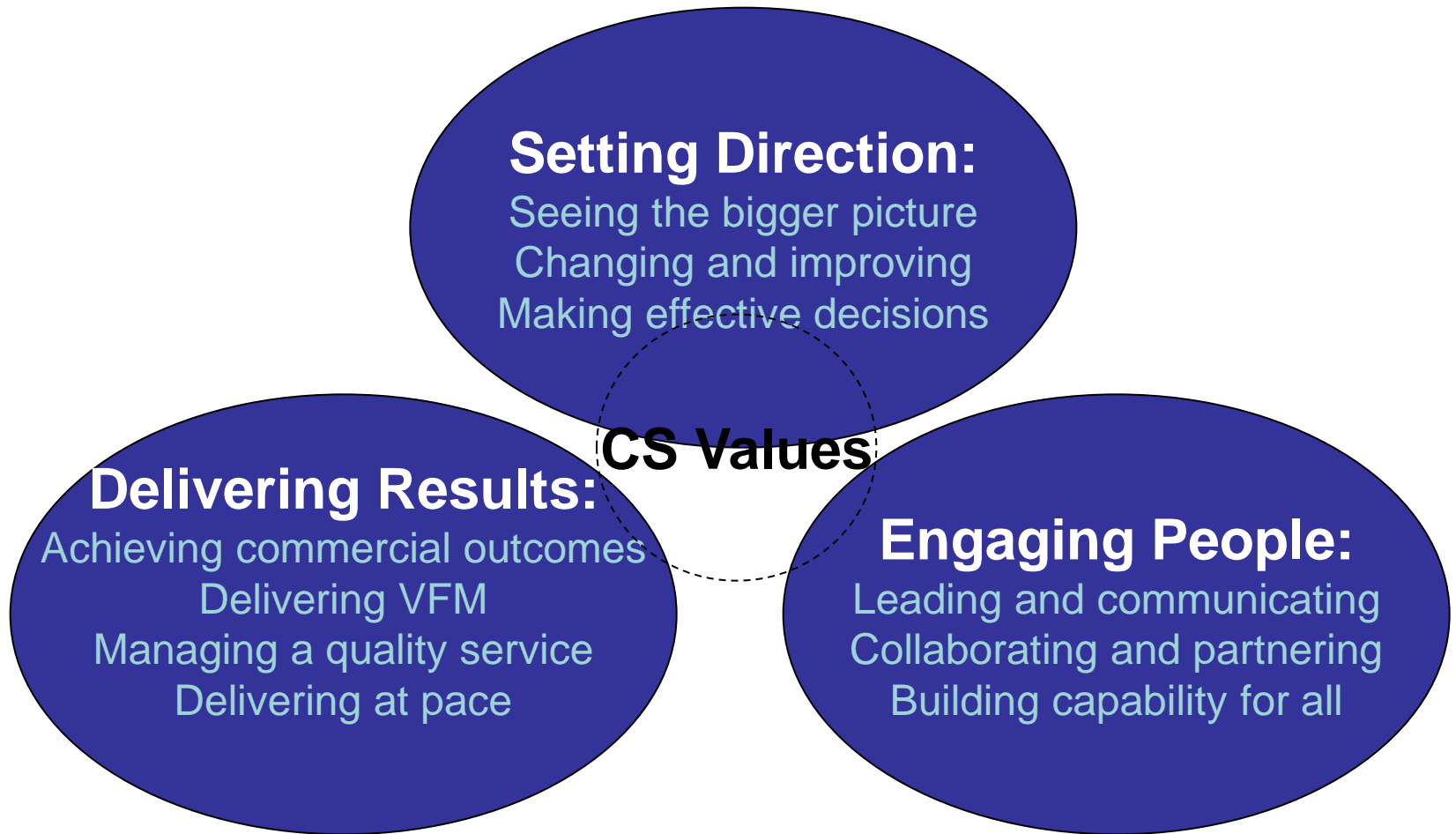
E-tray - written

Interview

**Leadership
Exercise
& self-assessment**



Competencies

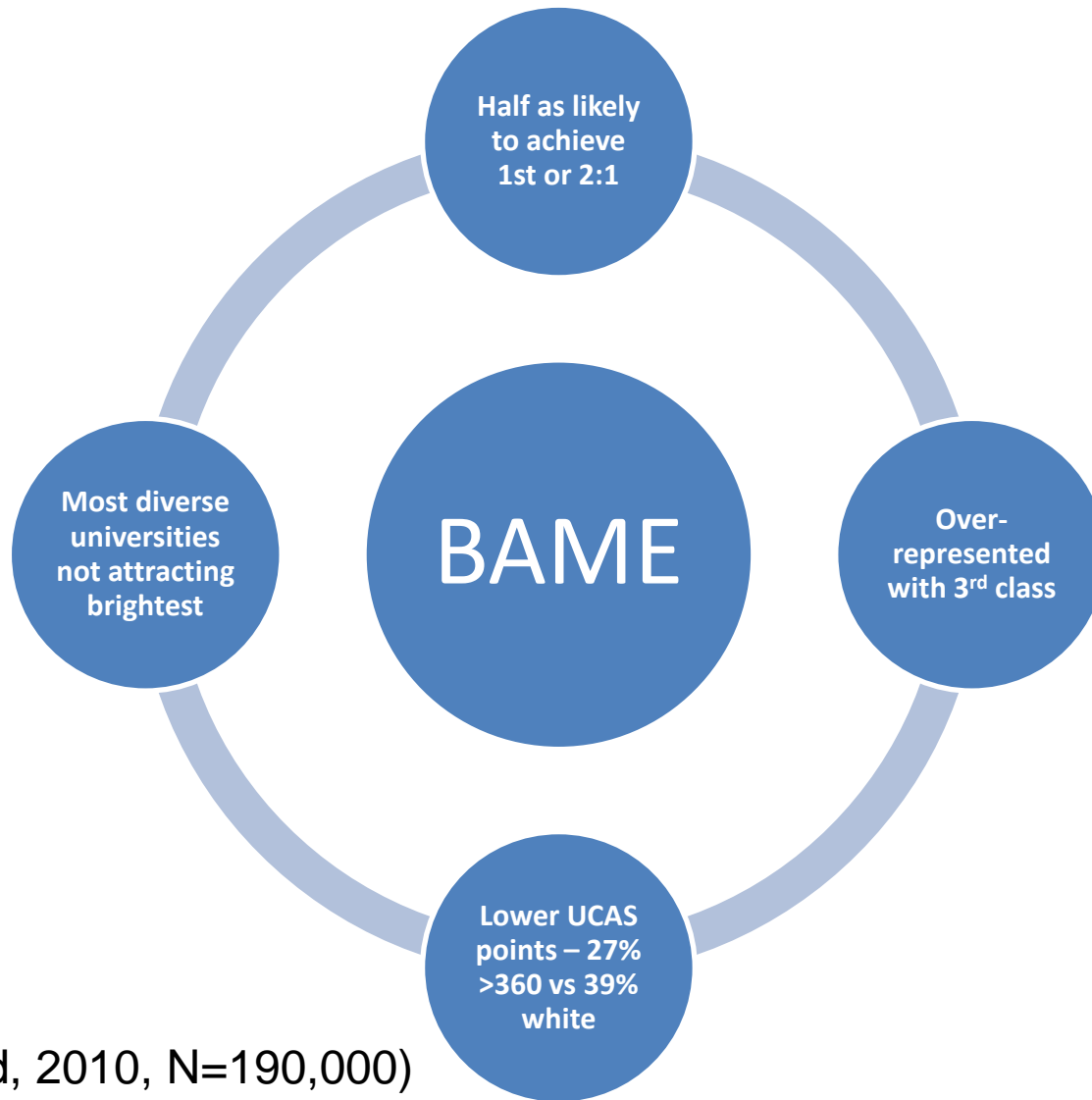


The employer challenge...

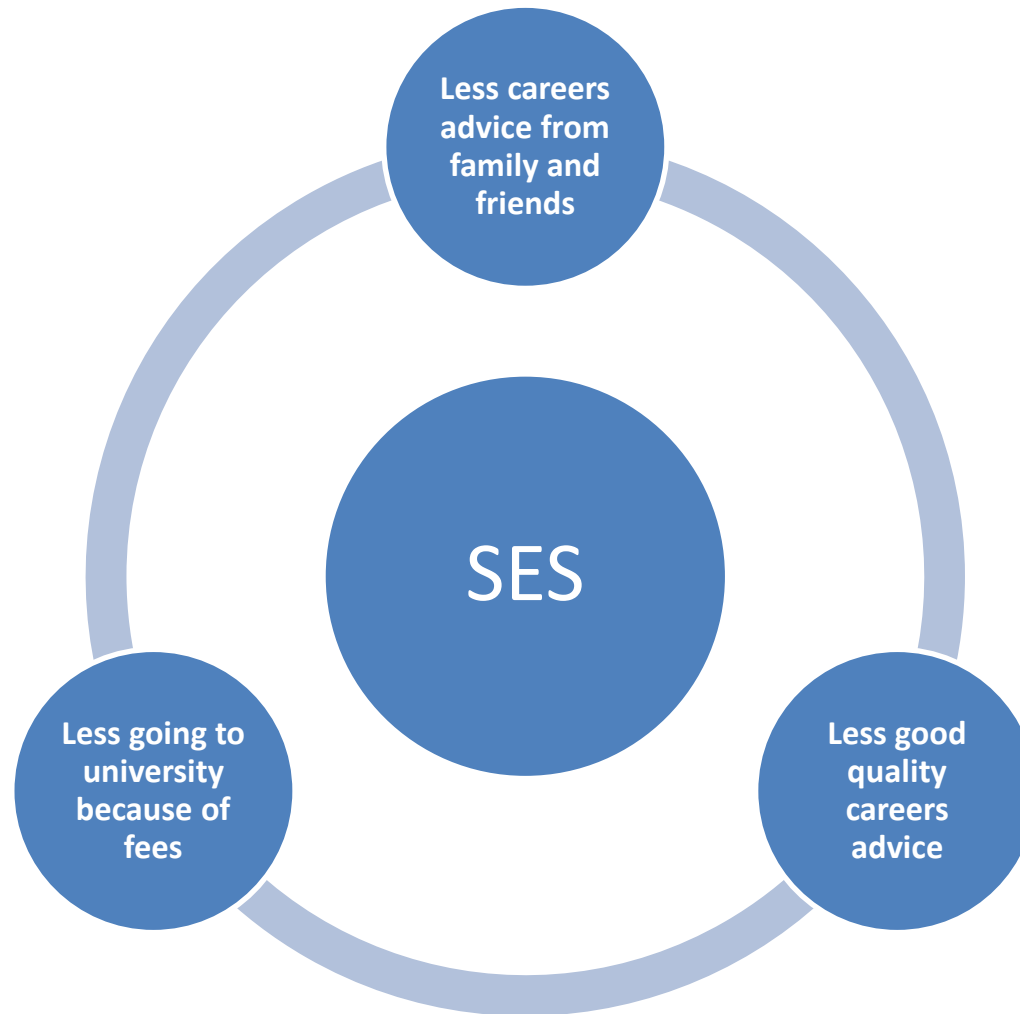
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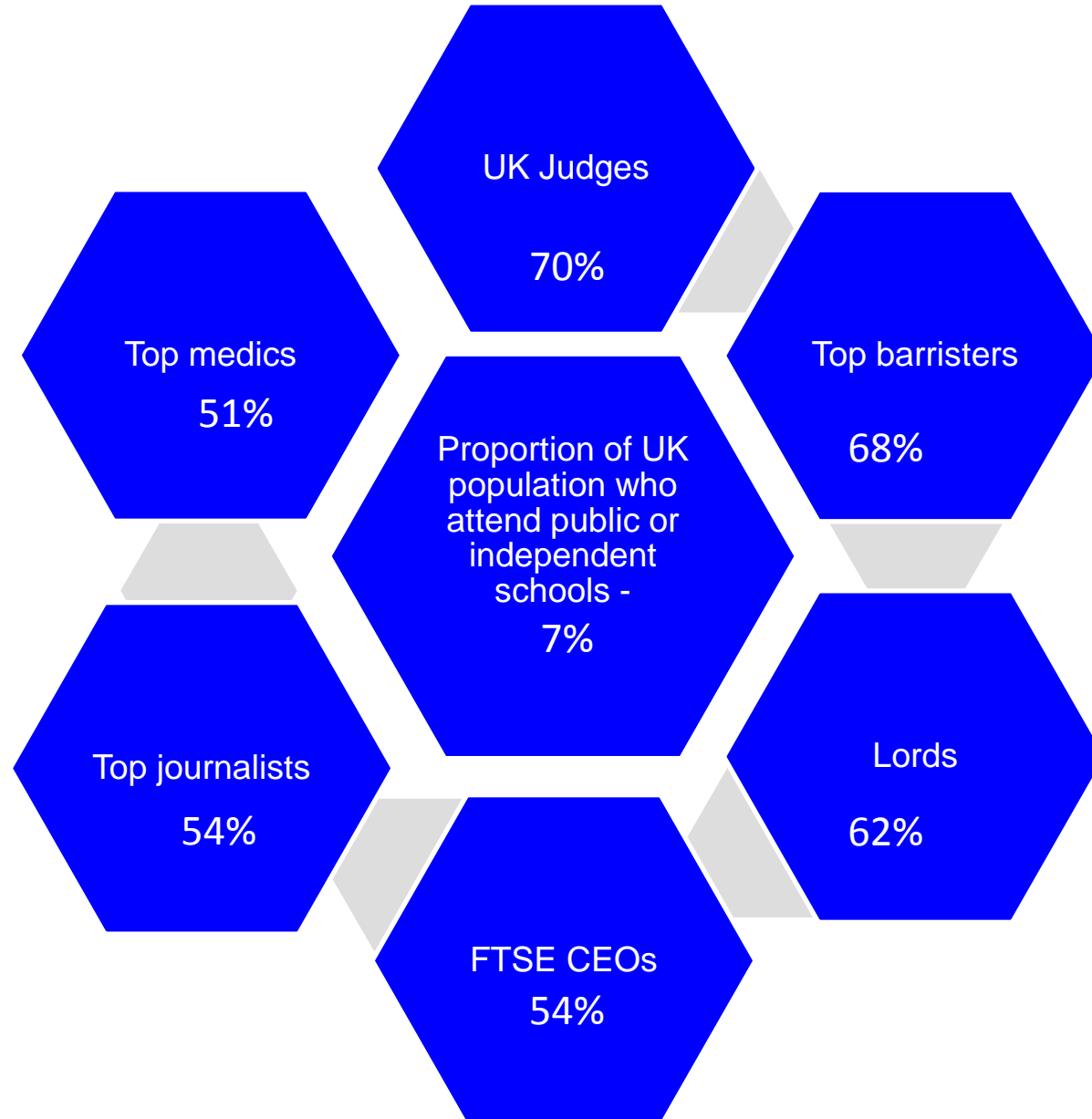


(Real World, 2010, N=190,000)



(Real World, 2011, N=217 sixth formers)

Barriers to professional progression



Diversity challenge at assessment centres

- Differential performance - diversity groups
- Assessor bias
- Disadvantage

Positive action: models

Assessment model

- Provides selection skills
- Raises awareness about assessment centres
- Offers exposure and practice on exercises
- Feedbacks on individual/group - relatively light touch

Assessment-development model

- Wider development of the individual
- Diagnosing strengths and performance gaps
- Developmental action plan.
- Self-assessment and observer feedback
- Part of a broader development cycle – mentoring/coaching etc.



Interventions

1. Internship Coaching Programme

(Assessment model):

- Lower socio-economic (45%)/ BAME (55%)
 - Selection skills
 - 120-160 interns

2. University/Civil Service – Union supported (Assessment/development model):

- Development centres
 - Mentoring
- 200 interns/80% BAME

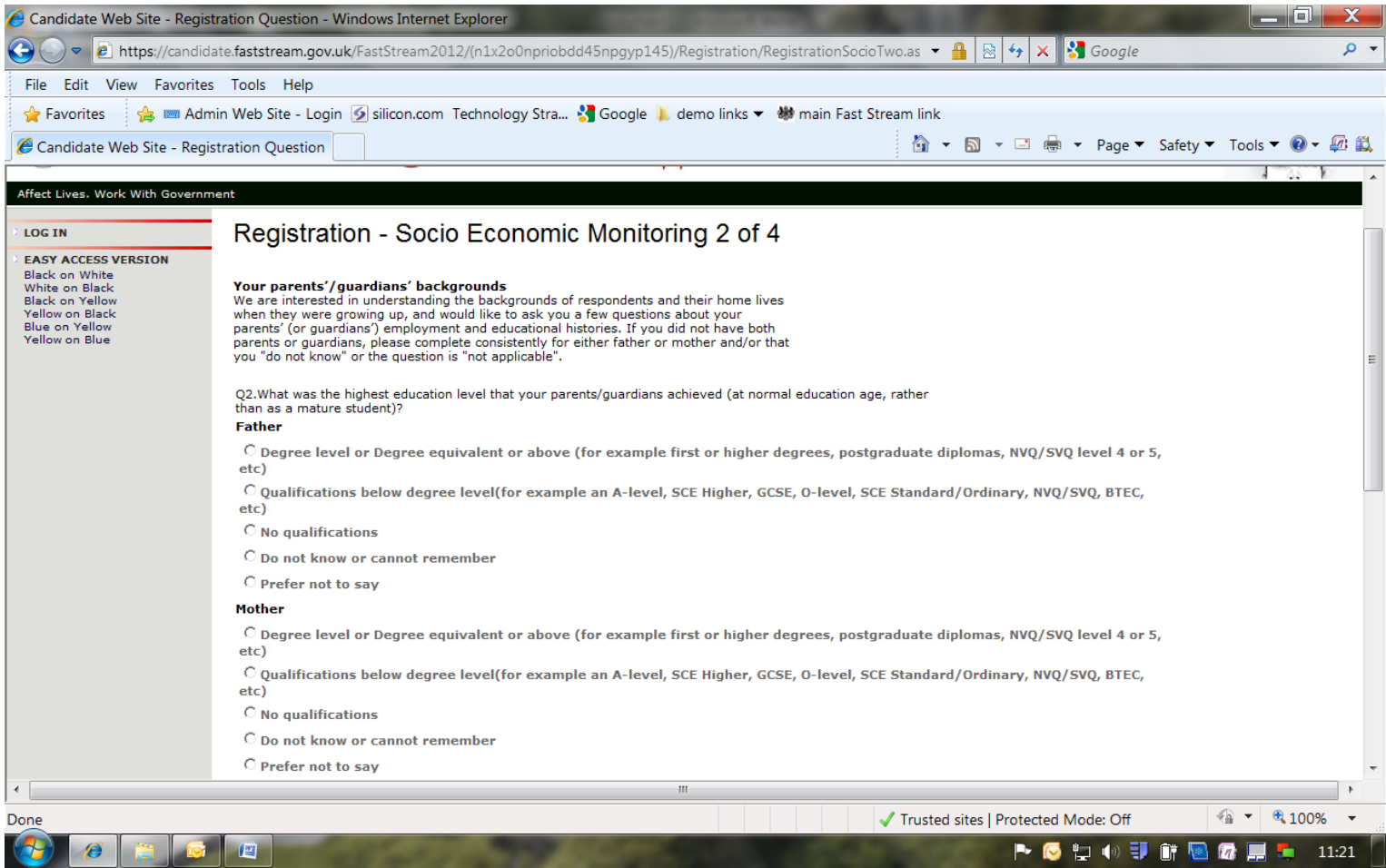
3. Positive Action Pathway (Assessment/development model):

- Development centres
- Development modules
- 48% disabled/39% BAME/ 36% Female

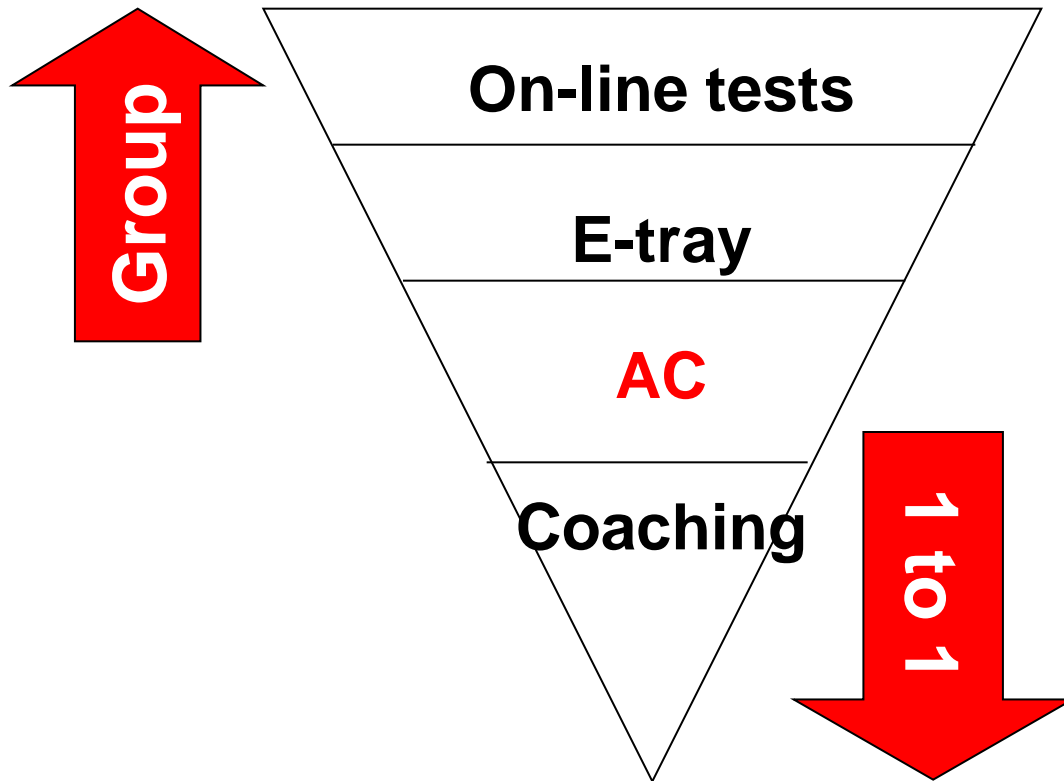
Intervention 1: Coaching Programme



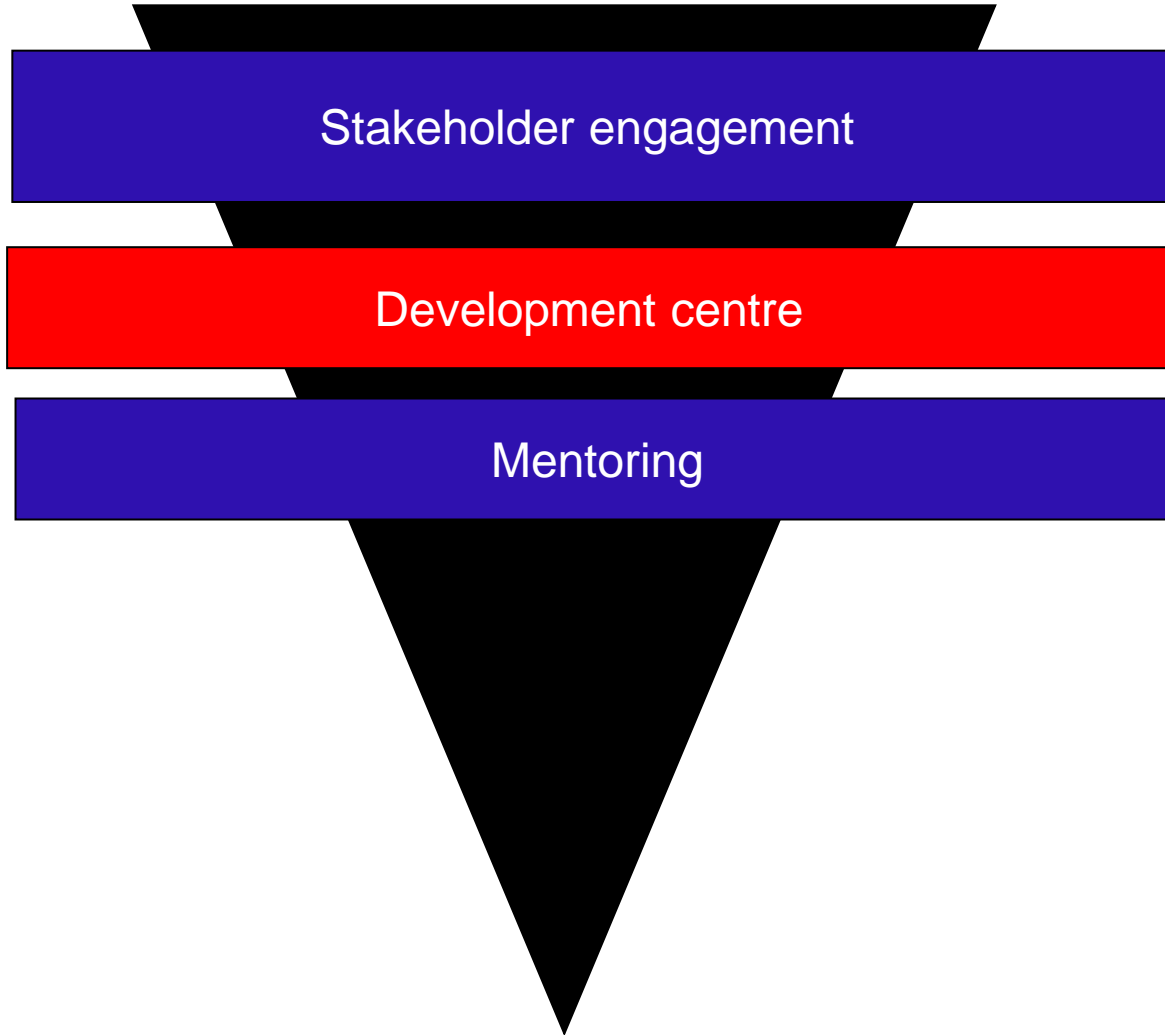
Measuring SES



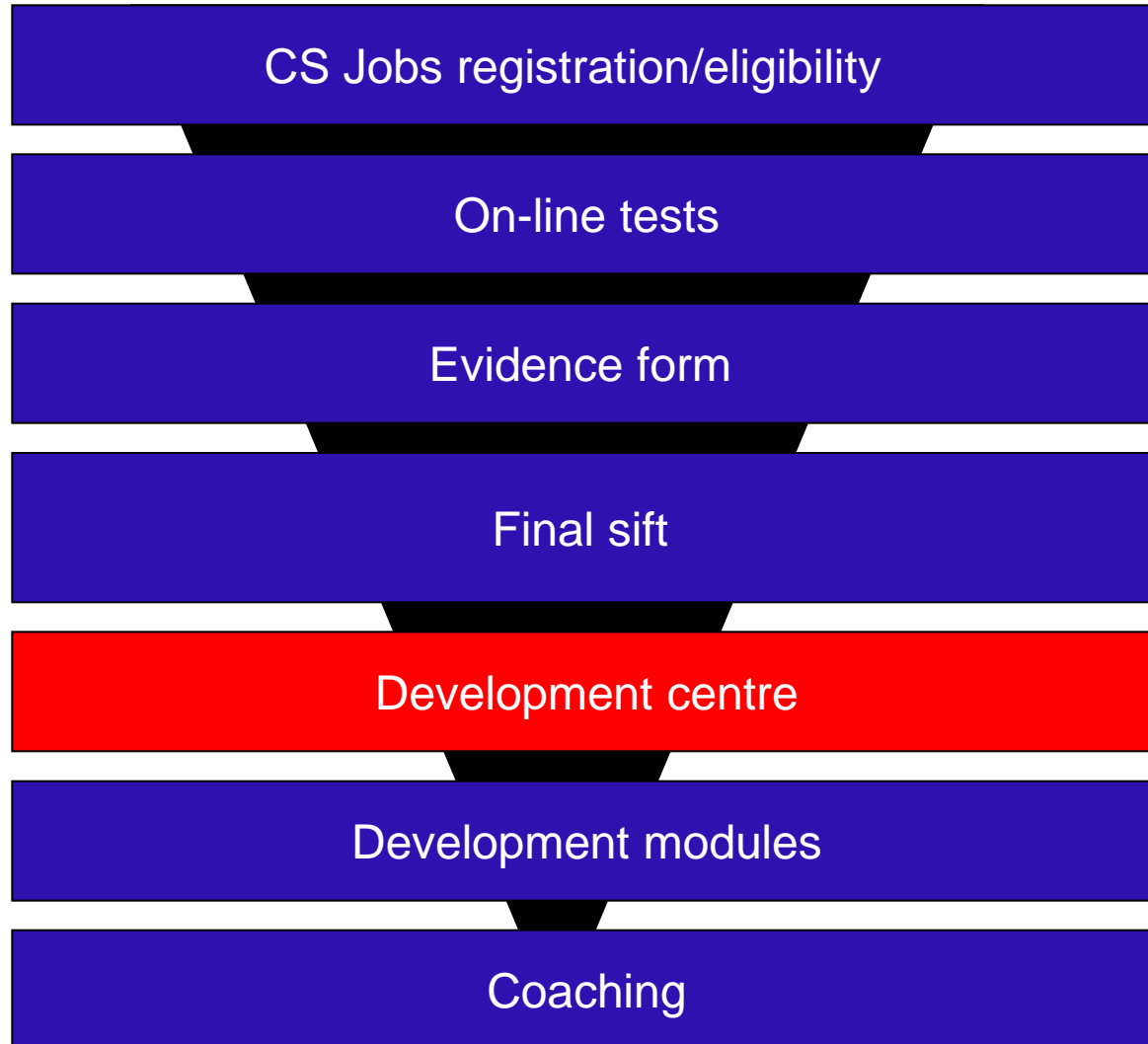
Coaching Programme structure



Intervention 2: University/Civil Service



Intervention 3: Positive Action Pathway



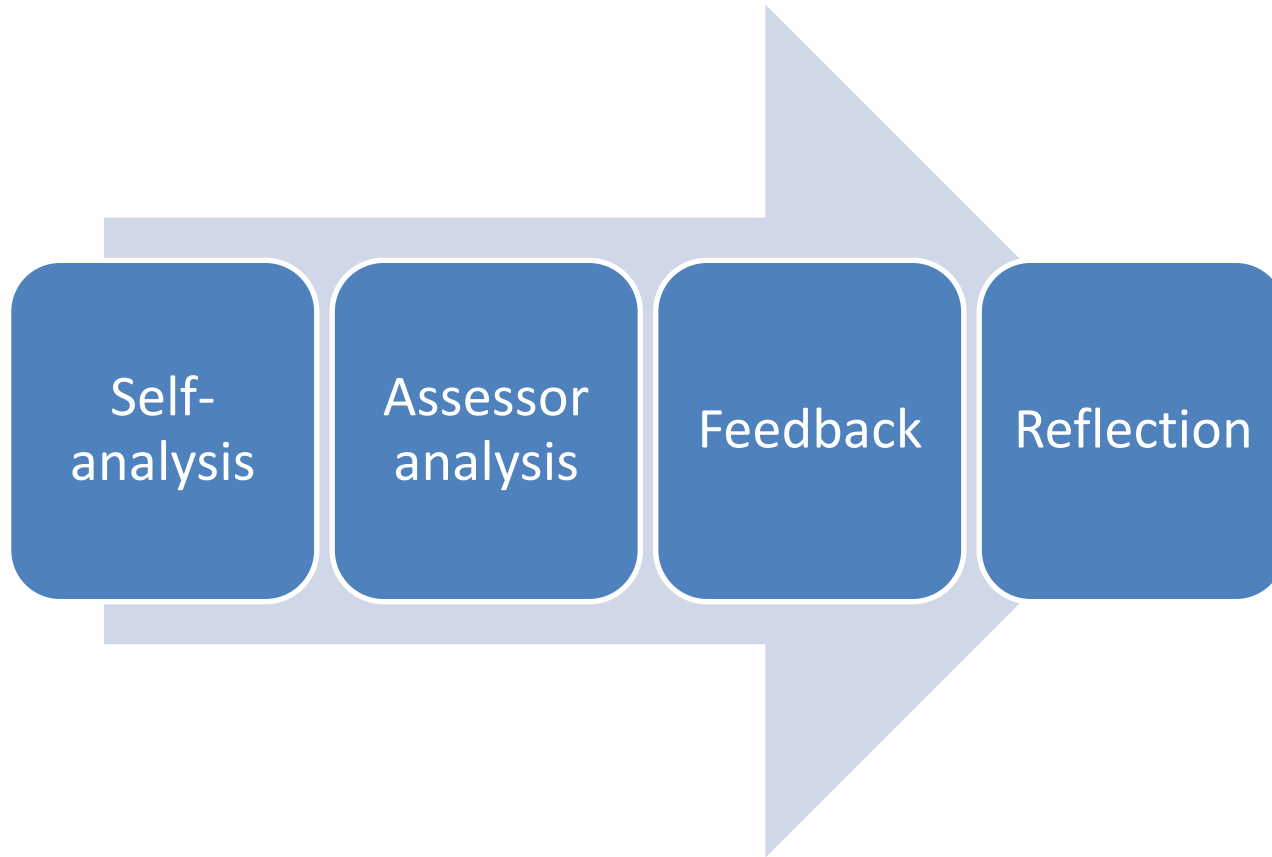
Positive Action Pathway: Development Centre matrix

CLUSTER	Competencies	Team Exercise	Drafting Exercise	Presentation Exercise
Setting Direction	Making Effective Decisions	✓	✓	
	Seeing the Big Picture/ Changing & Improving			✓
Engaging People	Building Capability for All/ Collaborating & Partnering	✓	✓	✓
	Leading and Communicating	✓	✓	✓
Delivering Results	Delivering at Pace/ Managing a Quality Service		✓	✓
	Achieving Commercial Outcomes/ Delivering Value for Money	✓		

Timetable

Time	Activity
09.00-09.45	Set-up
09.45-10.00	Assessor/Participant Arrival/Coffee
10.00-10.30	Welcome/Overview
10.30-12.00	Group Exercise
12.00-12.45	Lunch
12.45-14.20	Drafting Exercise
14.20-15:45	Presentation Exercise
15:45-16.15	Wash-up/Review
16.15-16.45	Close/Tidy-up.

Developmental feedback



Impacts - headlines

1. Internship Coaching Programme (Assessment model):

- 35-40% success rates

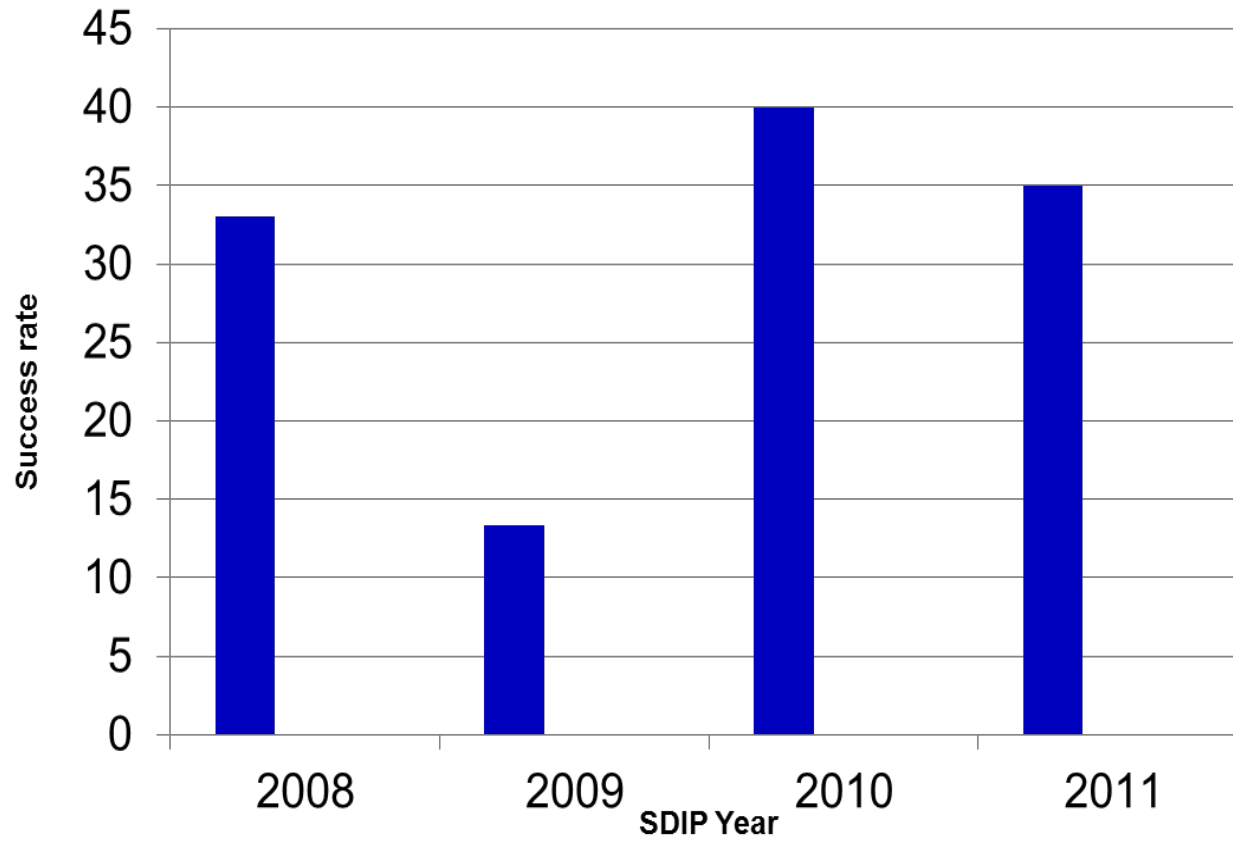
2. University/Civil Service – Union support (Assessment/development model);

- 100% success rates Tax Professionals

3. Positive Action Pathway (Assessment/development model)

- 100% useful

Intervention 1 Impact: Coaching Programme



Intervention 2 Impact: University/Civil Service

- 100% of participants felt the initiative would ‘improve their employability’
- 85% felt that the work should be embedded in university degree programmes.
- “The experience has been of enormous benefit to all”

Dean and Pro Vice-Chancellor Middlesex University Business School

- “I learned a lot - it was very beneficial”
- “I passed my assessment centre and have been offered a position. The development centre was critical.”

Tax Professional Development Programme participants

Intervention 3 Impact: Positive Action Pathway

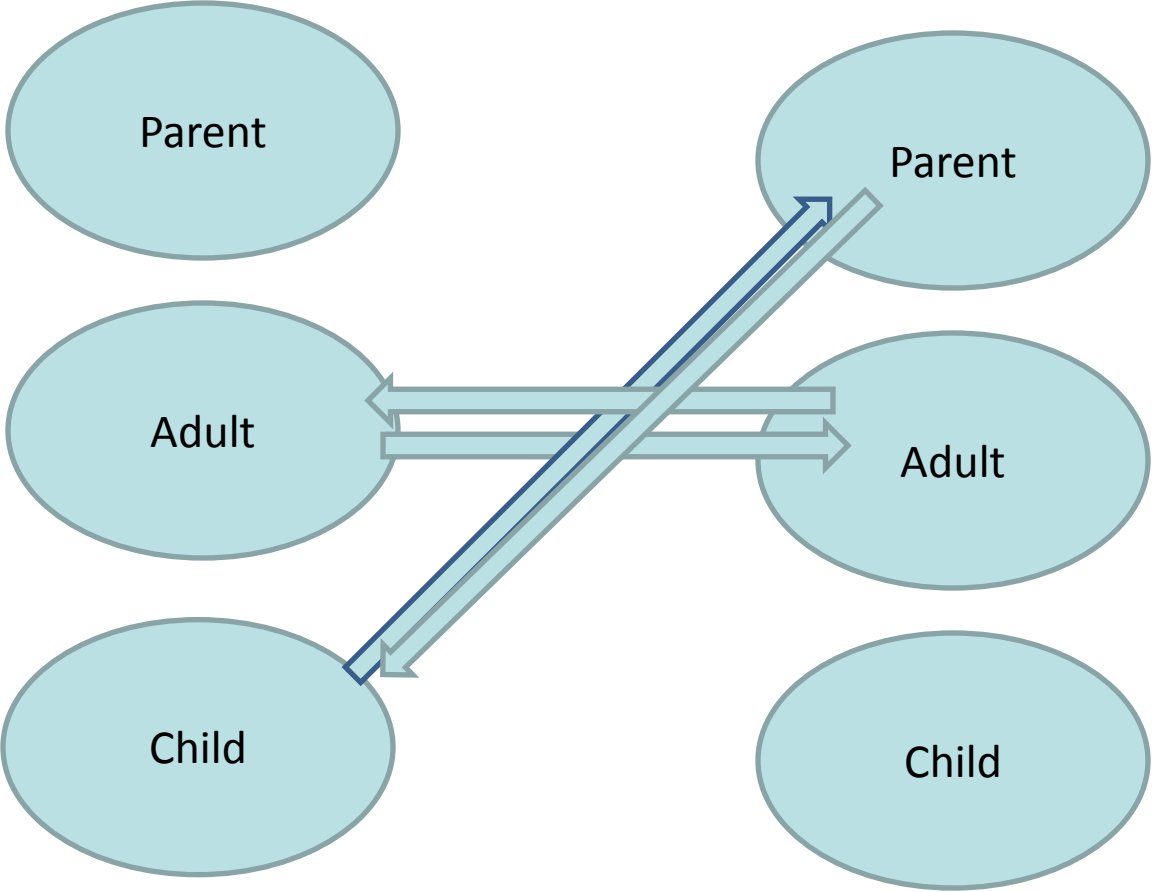
- ‘How useful was the Positive Action Pathway Development Centre in helping you to identify areas of strength and areas for development?’ - 91% agree useful/very useful
- ‘Although this Development Centre was not an Assessment Centre, how useful do you think the exercises at the Development Centre were in helping you prepare for any future Assessment Centre you might undertake?’ - 100% agree useful/very useful

Additional interventions

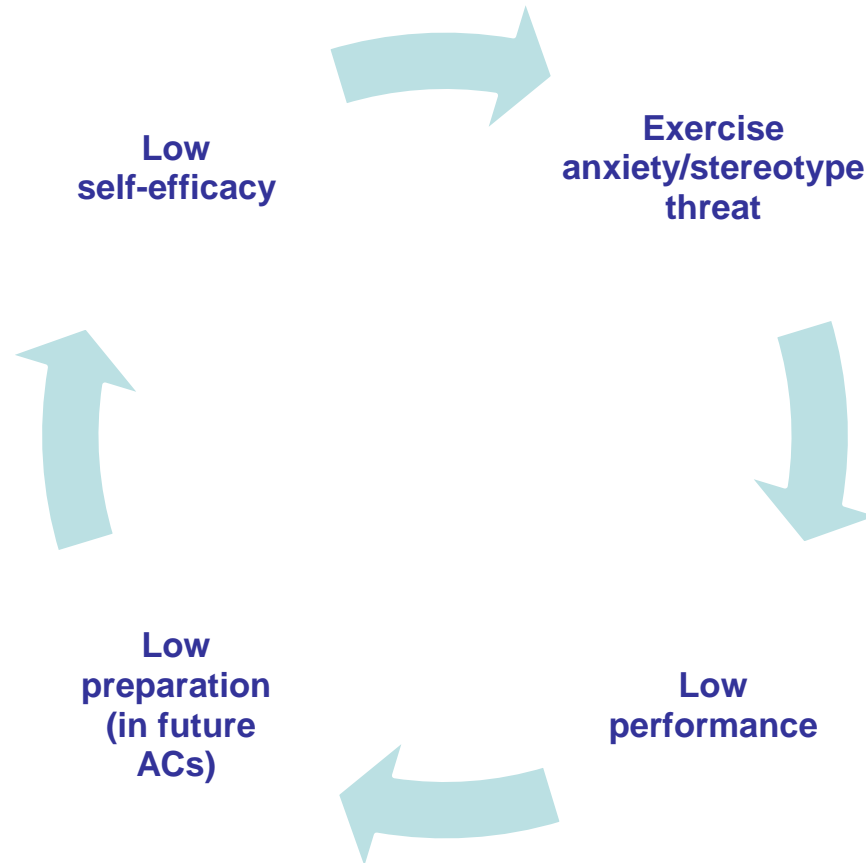


Psychological models

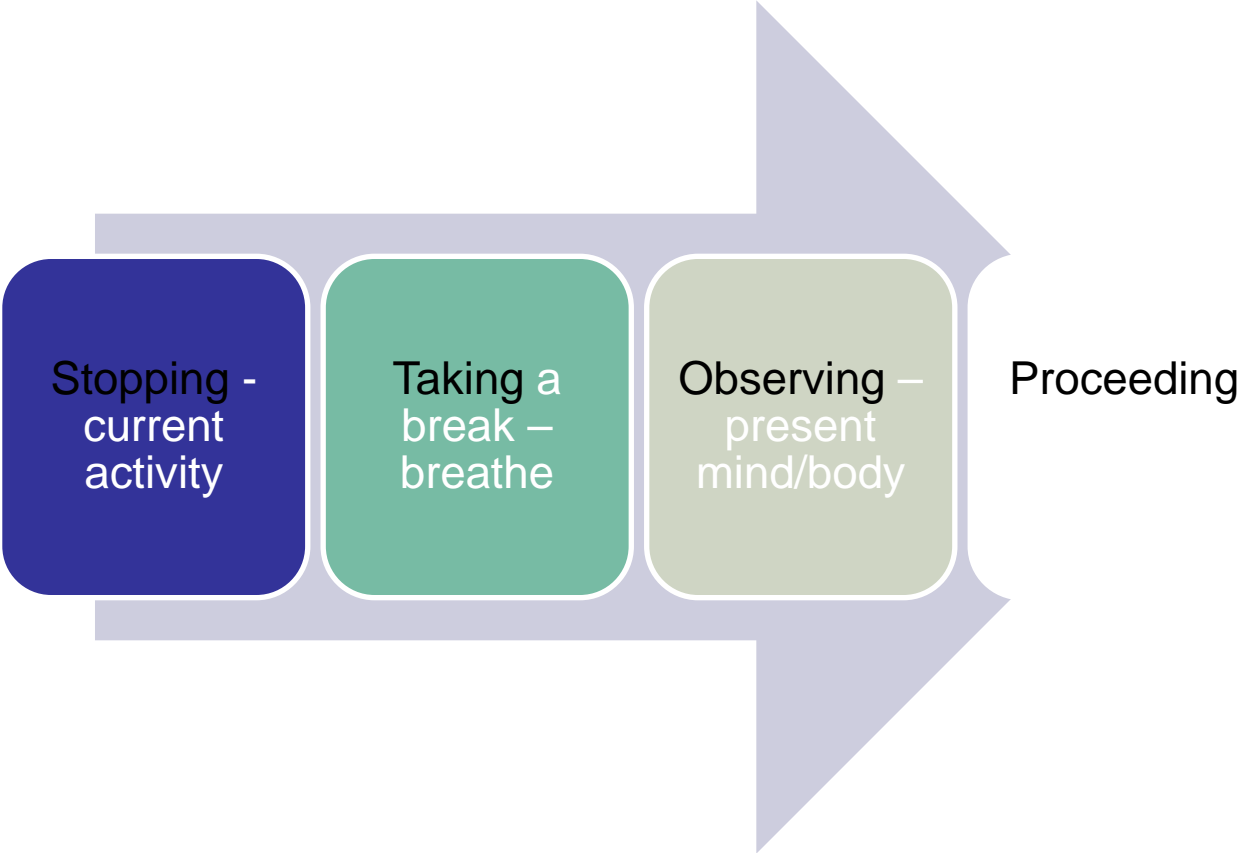
Being 'Adult' by default/'as if' in role



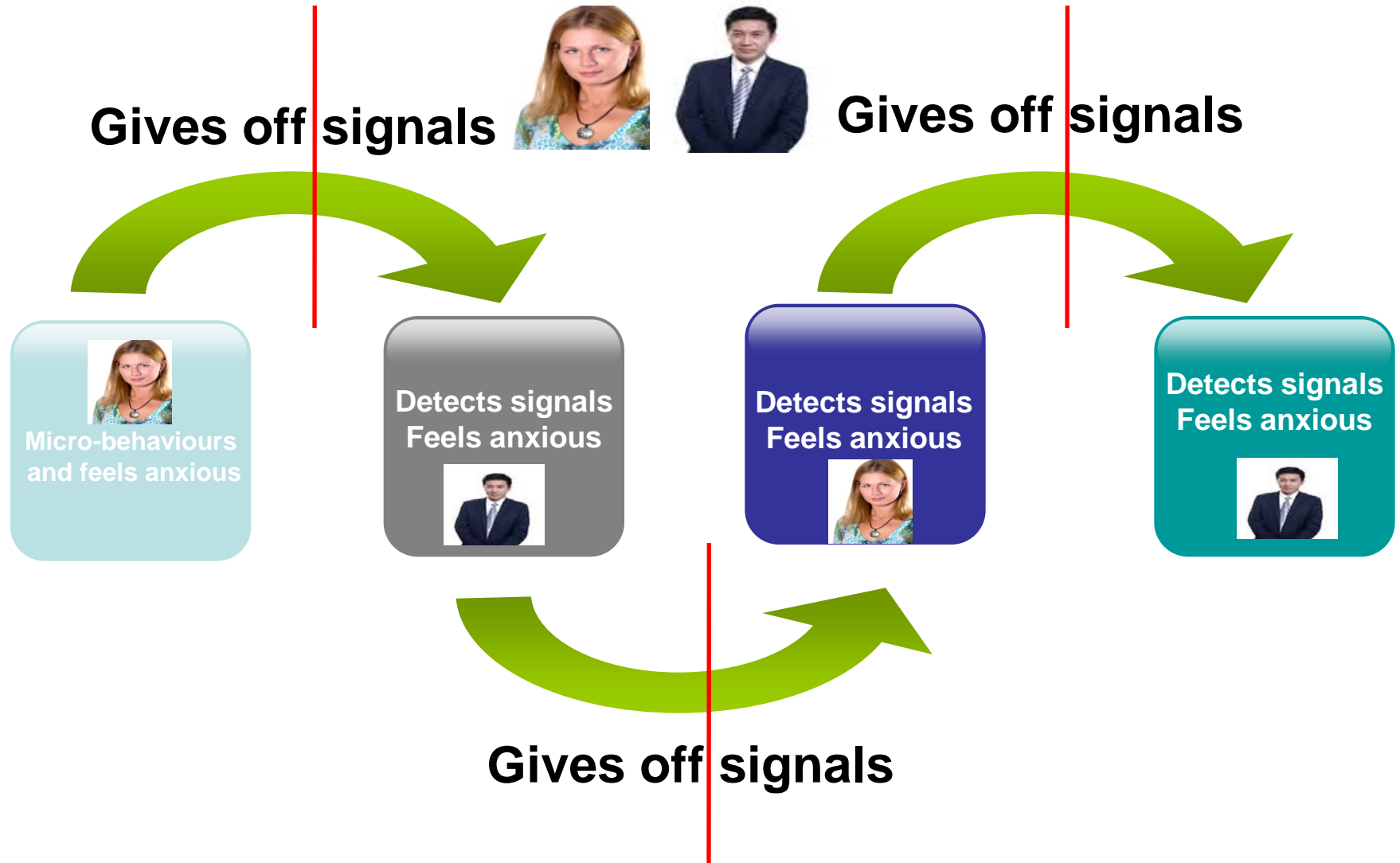
Low efficacy cycle



Mindfulness



Micro-behaviours



Learning for assessment centres

- Can use legislation positively
- Can create parallel ACs
- Design simplified formats to allow feedback
- Make versions/competencies generic for wider development
- Timetable to balance resourcing with objectives
- Up-skill assessors towards feedback/coaching

Conclusions

- Proportionate intervention supports diversity
- Mix of interventions possible
- Developmental benefits beyond AC success
- Importance of partnership/collaboration/enthusiasm

Thank you

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