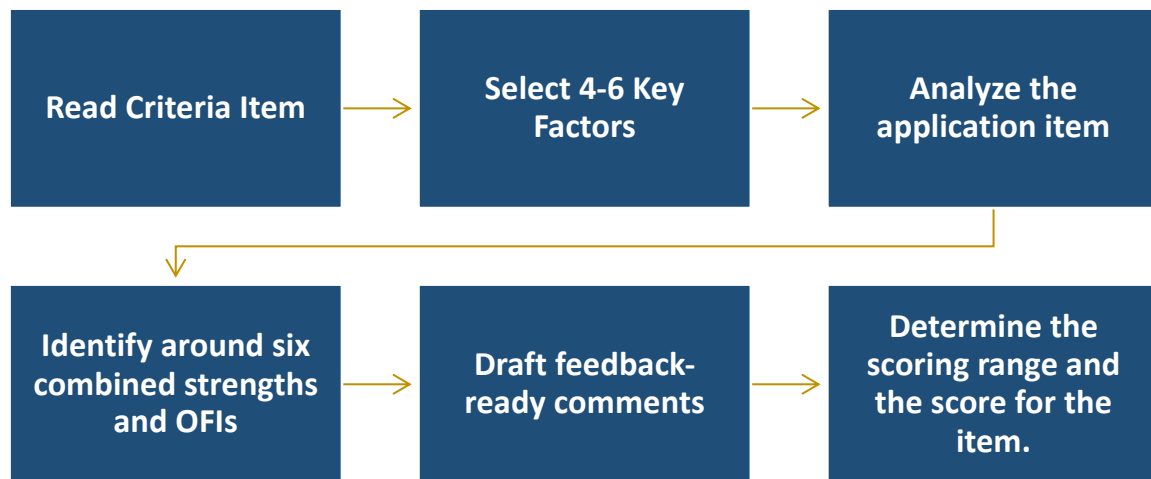# Consensus Review: Six-Step Item Evaluation Process

Use the following process for each of your assigned items to create your first draft of the Consensus Review Worksheet for each of your items.

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┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│                  │      │                  │      │                  │
│ Read Criteria    │ ───► │ Select 4-6 Key   │ ───► │ Analyze the      │
│ Item             │      │ Factors          │      │ application item │
│                  │      │                  │      │                  │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘

┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│ Identify around  │      │                  │      │ Determine the    │
│ six combined     │ ───► │ Draft feedback-  │ ───► │ scoring range and│
│ strengths        │      │ ready comments   │      │ the score for the│
│ and OFIs         │      │                  │      │ item.            │
└──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘
```

1. **Read the Criteria for your item to refresh your memory and understand the item questions.**

   - Remember to think about what you expect to see in terms of process and results for this item.

2. **Determine and select the most relevant KFs for the item.** In this step, the item lead looks over and considers the Consensus KF Worksheet, and then chooses 4–6 KFs.

   - Considering the Criteria questions and the Consensus KF Worksheet, determine the most relevant 4–6 KFs for this item.
   - To increase relevance to the item, you may choose to include only a portion of a KF (e.g., one strategic challenge as opposed to the entire list).
   - The KFs, considered in relation to the key Criteria questions, should help guide your expectations in evaluating the applicant's response.

3. **Analyze the application item.**

   - Review the application item, thinking about the Criteria, KFs, and either ADLI or LeTCI.

4. **Identify around six combined strengths and OFIs.**

   - Review the inputs from your teammates' IR Worksheets and begin to determine commonalities and/or conflicts.
   - Keeping the application, KFs, and Criteria in mind, look for multiple comments around the same area to address. Also, consider the outliers—those strengths/OFIs made by only one examiner—which sometimes provide significant insights into the applicant's performance.
   - Then, identify your strengths/OFIs, keeping these principles in mind:

     a. Choose strengths/OFIs that provide value-added insight that gives the applicant information it doesn't already know.
     b. Choose strengths that are processes or approaches that support the applicant's achievement of its desired results. Link to key factors and the Criteria.
     c. Choose OFIs that are processes or approaches (or lack of) that create vulnerabilities in achieving the applicant's desired results. Link to key factors and the Criteria.
     d. Consider the maturity of the applicant—look for strengths or OFIs that will take it to the next level.
     e. Choose strengths and OFIs that do not conflict.
     f. Give benefit of the doubt where appropriate.

Consensus Review: Six-Step Item Evaluation Process

- When you have completed the strengths and OFIs, rank them in order of importance to the applicant. Indicate bolded strengths/OFIs.
- In the rationale field, indicate why you included the strength or OFI in the worksheet (e.g., because it addresses a strategic challenge). Record the initials of the examiners who concurred. If there is a conflict among examiners, propose a resolution to the conflict and explain why you resolved it as you did. Remember that the rest of the members of the examiner team are the "customers" of the rationale field. Use the rationale box to document additional evidence and data that will be helpful to the team but not necessarily needed by the applicant in the comment.
- In the "Notes" field, record any key strengths or OFIs that you are not including in the "around six," along with the initials of the examiners who noted them. (Please do not list every comment not used.)

5. **Draft feedback-ready comments.**

- On the CR Worksheet, record a comment for each strength and OFI that is actionable and feedback-ready.
- In the first sentence of the comment, tell the applicant the "nugget" or main point of the feedback. Provide one or two examples that best support the main point, considering their relevance and importance to the applicant.
- For both strengths and OFIs, show relevance by tying the main point to one of the applicant's important KFs. You can also ask, "What evaluation factor is relevant to that strength or OFI?" Thinking this way may further help you focus the comment on the importance to the applicant (e.g., if the important element of the comment is deployment, there may be no need to add text on approach, learning, and integration).
- Finalize your comments using the Comment Guidelines.

6. **Determine the scoring range and the score for the item.**

- To score the item, start by reviewing the comments for the item, noting their importance relative to the Criteria item questions and KFs.
- On the scoring page for the item, review the range descriptions in the Scoring Guidelines and choose the scoring range that is, overall, most descriptive of the organization's achievement level based on the **content** of the Strength and OFI comments.
- Remember that the applicant does not need to demonstrate all characteristics in the selected range; rather, the score is based on a holistic view of the characteristics. Keep in mind that the "approach" dimension should not be viewed as a "gatekeeper" when determining the scoring range. In other words, it should not constrain or inflate the scoring range. All evaluation factors are to be considered in the selection of the scoring range.
- As a check, read the descriptions of the ranges above and below the selected range to determine where the applicant's score falls within that range.
- Finally, determine a percentage score that is a multiple of 5 for the item. Select the percentage score at the lower right side of the scoring page.
- *Reminder: Consensus scores are based on the consensus comments not the IR scores from individual examiners.*

Repeat this six-step process for each of your assigned items.

Consensus Review: Six-Step Item Evaluation Process

Tell your backup item lead and team leader (via email) that your first draft CR Worksheet is open for feedback. Using the Comment and Scoring Checklist as a guide, the backup item lead reviews and provides feedback to the item lead. This is the 1st Review (R-1).

Prepare 2nd draft of the CR Worksheet. Integrate changes suggested by your backup item lead, as appropriate, into your CR Worksheet.

Tell (via email) all your team members that your 2nd draft CR Worksheet is open for feedback. Using the Comment and Scoring Checklist as a guide, all team members review and provide feedback to the item lead. This is the 2nd Review (R-2).

Prepare 3rd draft of the CR Worksheet. Integrate changes suggested by your team, as appropriate, into your CR Worksheet.

Provide feedback on Key Themes (KTs). The Team Leader will create the initial list of KT topics and may assign a KTs writer who will draft the KTs. Team members will be invited to provide feedback before the KTs are finalized.

Tell (via email) all your team members that your 3rd draft CR Worksheet is open for feedback. Using the Comment and Scoring Checklist as a guide, all team members plus the team's tech editor review and provide feedback to the item lead. This is the 3rd Review (R-3).

Integrate changes, as appropriate, from any additional feedback from the team.

Prepare for the Consensus Call. Develop a script to help you present your item during the call.

- Prepare to review the Criteria questions and KFs and to clarify any areas of disagreement. This will get the team ready to discuss the item.
- Be prepared to serve in additional assigned roles (e.g., Criteria cop, scorekeeper) and to provide specific points and recommendations on other items.

Participate on the consensus call(s). ALL team members must be present or the call cannot proceed.

- *Team members*: Listen for changes that may impact or conflict with other item- or KT-level comments and bring them to the team's attention.
- *Item leads*: Ensure that changes in your CR Worksheets are correctly reflected in the KT Worksheet. Confirm that all team members agree on each item score and that the score is recorded correctly on each CR Worksheet.
- *Item backups*: Take notes for item leads. At the end of each topic, you may want to restate what you have heard.

Revise comments to reflect consensus decisions. Integrate changes into the CR and KT Worksheets, based on the team's inputs. This is the 4th and final draft of your CR Worksheet.

- *Item backups*: Review the item lead's CR Worksheet to help ensure that the revised comments and scores accurately represent the consensus discussion.

Complete the scorebook by the deadline. Finalize the CR Worksheets and mark items "*complete*" in scorebook software.

- *Team leader:* Review and edit the final CR Scorebook. Mark each item *"final"* and then mark the entire scorebook "*final*".