

- For decades we have tutored Black candidates who are taking the FDNY firefighter entrance exam.
- The tutoring you are about to receive is without a doubt **the best** tutoring available at any price. However, we strongly encourage you to take advantage of every other tutoring option available.

3

You are competing for a great career

- Salary
- Job security
- Pension
- Unlimited medical leave
- Work schedule
- What we do everyday is challenging, interesting and important

4

- Approximately 60,000 people applied to take this test.
- Approximately 40 to 45,000 people will show up to take the test.
- Because of the amount of competition you will need a very high score on this test.

5

Taking the exam

- You will take this test entirely on a computer.
- You have 4 hours total to take the exam.
- The test will have 5 portions – three videos, background info survey questions, and reading info on computer screen and then answering questions on what you have read.
- Each portion of the test is timed.

6

- You will be required to use a mouse throughout the test.
- Make use of the exam screen's info about time remaining and #'s of questions answered or left.
- There will be video, audio and or exhibits. You cannot pause a video or audio. You can enlarge an exhibit.

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- As you move through the exam you can skip questions and or go back to questions at will. You can also change your answers.
- Once you end a portion you cannot go back to it.
- You will be given a training guide booklet that not only contains info on the 3 videos but can also help you find correct answers for some exam questions.

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Background Information Survey Questions

- For background information survey questions you must know what information these questions are trying to retrieve from the test taker. You must understand what the testers are looking for.
- The questions used are determined by identifying major personality traits and characteristics of a successful firefighter. **Knowing what personality traits and characteristics are being sought will greatly improve your chances of scoring well on these questions.**
- Next we will describe the characteristics and personality traits of a successful firefighter.

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- These personality traits include:
- *He/she maintains effective and pleasant working relationships with superiors and peers. This is a must!*
- ***Gets along well with others in a working relationship.** Remember that firefighters often work a 24-hour shift. You aren't going home after a normal 8-hour workday like most Americans do; you are spending an entire 24 hours with other firefighters. You are expected to be able to get along in this atmosphere. Getting along is crucial to working side-by-side at an emergency scene. You must be able to trust and depend on each other. This is one of the key personality characteristics that they are trying to find in a successful candidate. Can you get along? Can you work together with others in a continuous 24-hour period?*
- ***Is flexible, not rigid, in thinking.** It's not "my way or the highway." Firefighting is a team effort, not an individual effort. You must know that suggestions and recommendations are going to be made as a team; whatever is best for the team is what the final decision will be.*
- ***Is a self-motivated individual.** Firefighters are people who get things done. They don't wait around to be told what to do; they take action.*
- ***Is decisive.** Firefighters are not wishy-washy or maybe-sort of in their personality traits. They have to make a decision and stick with it. Sometimes decisions don't work out as planned, but it is a decision based on experience and the situation that is confronting you.*

flexible in thinking

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- ***Has empathy and is supportive of others in time of need.*** The definition of empathy is being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes to feel what they are feeling. Are you the type of person that can do that? Or are you the type of person who closes yourself in and can't imagine what the other person is experiencing. Firefighters respond to emergency scenes where people are in need. You need to be empathetic to better serve others. This is an important personality trait and is one that is critical on these examinations.
- ***Is able to control and keep emotions on an even keel.*** Firefighters do not get high anxiety or stressed in emergency situations. They need to stay calm and controlled to make the appropriate decisions.
- ***Has a pleasant, good sense of humor.*** Firefighters are easy to get along with their coworkers; they have a good sense of humor; they are not thin-skinned; they can take comments from coworkers and the public without feeling offended.
- ***Is willing to accept constructive criticism from others.*** Remember that firefighting is a paramilitary organization. You will take criticism from your superiors; you must accept it, find out how you can improve, and move on.
- ***Knows that there is a chain of command and that following established department procedures is important in an organization.*** Again, firefighting is a paramilitary organization. You report to your lieutenant, captain or battalion chief. You don't step out of rank over your officer to go to their superior. There is a chain of command and you must follow it.

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- ***Is willing to work as a team member. This personality characteristic is one of the most important ones that will determine whether or not you can be a successful firefighter. Firefighting is a team effort.*** It's not about individual accomplishments or what did I do; it's what the team did. This is what it's all about. You need to be able to work as a team. You must accept the team's decisions, even if you feel that your opinion in the decision is the best one. If the team determines another decision, then you must follow and support the team's decision.
- ***Has a positive and enthusiastic attitude.*** Firefighters are optimistic and believe that the outcome of a situation will be positive.
- ***Honesty.*** Firefighters are by nature very honest and trustworthy individuals. Citizens need to feel comfortable around firefighters and not feel suspicious of their motives.
- ***Shows initiative.*** Firefighters take initiative. They don't lay back to find out what can be done; they take action when it is needed.
- ***Innovativeness.*** Firefighters come up with ideas and suggestions for the betterment of the team.
- ***Uses judgment and common sense.*** Firefighters don't just "shoot from the hip." They use common sense and judgment for the best outcome at an emergency scene.

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- **Has a positive attitude and believes that a successful outcome will occur in emergency situations.** Firefighters are optimistic individuals, not pessimists. They believe that emergency situations will have the best outcome for those they are treating and always display that positive attitude on the scene.
- **Has strong values and ethics.** Firefighters are honest, trustworthy, dependable, and moral. They don't try and find the angle that is best for them; they are people that can be depended upon.
- **Good organizational skills.** Firefighters are well organized. Good organizational skills are needed at the fire house and on emergency scenes.
- **Dependable.** Firefighters are the type of people that you can count on. They are on time and are there when you need them.
- **Able to speak clearly and audibly.** Firefighters need to be understood by the public; they don't speak too fast, they have an even tone and are able to be well understood.
- **Ability to follow oral directions.** Firefighters are the type of people who can follow oral directions from their superiors and other firefighters

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- **Ability to follow written directions.** Firefighters must be able to understand their Standard Operating Procedures and their department rules and regulations. They must be able to understand written instructions on how equipment works and is employed at the scene.
- **Is able to handle stress and stay calm in emergency situations.** Again, firefighters don't show high anxiety, stress or nervousness – they remain calm so that everyone else in an emergency situation can also remain calm.
- **Works with little or no supervision.** There are times on an emergency scene when you are given an order and you must complete that order by yourself. You have to be able to know what you are doing and accomplish the task.
- **Is able to take charge when the situation demands it.** Firefighters are take-charge kind of people. They don't sit back; they show initiative to get things accomplished.
- **Under emergency conditions, can handle critical decision-making.** Many times at an emergency scene, critical decisions must be made. Firefighters must be able to make these decisions. They must trust their instinct and experience and have the most optimistic attitude towards a positive outcome.

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Vulcan Society Tutorial Lesson Plan A

- ***Under emergency conditions is able to perform both repetitive and complex tasks with little or no supervision.*** Firefighters often perform the same repetitive duties at the firehouse and at an emergency scene. They must be able to perform these tasks without direction. Firefighters take initiative to learn how the equipment is used properly and how to maintain it.
- ***Is able to treat the severely injured and sick.*** In today's environment much of what firefighters do on the job is related to the medical field – whether it is a heart attack, shortness of breath, diabetic emergency, etc.
- ***Is able to accomplish duties in tight time frames.*** Many times at the fire scene and at the firehouse, duties must be completed in a short time frame. Firefighters must be able to handle deadlines and accomplish the task successfully.
- ***Does high quality work and makes suggestions to improve how things are done.*** Firefighters make suggestions so that they can improve the nature of their work and be able to accomplish tasks on the emergency scene in a well organized manner to provide the best service possible to the public.
- ***Realizes that safety is a top priority.*** Firefighters realize that many times they must put themselves in harm's way to save another person. On the fireground, firefighters are always keeping keen attention and detail to the safety of themselves, other firefighters on the scene, and any civilians

15

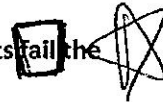
- ***Has the sincere desire to serve the community and help people.*** This is what firefighting is about. You are in a job to serve other people. People whose houses are on fire, or have been in an accident or have a medical emergency, and/or catastrophic situations – you must be the type of person who has a sincere desire to step up to the plate and be willing to put your life on the line to serve people you don't even know.
- ***Willing to accept people as they are without regard to race, creed, or gender.*** Firefighters treat people equally. They must treat those living in a \$20,000 home the same as those living in a \$400,000 home. It doesn't matter what color, religion or sex someone is – firefighters look at the person as a person. They don't stereotype people and truly believe that all people are created equal.
- ***Can render emergency care to anyone regardless of who they are, where they are and what their beliefs are.*** Firefighters cannot be biased towards anyone; they show everyone the same respect – whether an individual is on welfare or is a millionaire. They do not care what the religious or social views are of those they serve.
- ***Understands that there are cultural differences and does not stereotype individuals.*** Firefighters know that there are many different cultures in our country. They cannot stereotype cultures – for good or bad – they treat everyone fairly.

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- ***Able to treat all people with dignity and respect.*** Again, firefighters do not care what your social, religious, and/or economic values are – they treat everyone with the same respect.
- ***Willingness to continue learning new things.*** Firefighters are always in continuing education. They need to find out what the newest medical procedures are or the latest innovations on the fire scene.
- You have just reviewed the personality traits that are key indicators of a successful firefighter. Your goal should be to keep these key personality traits of a successful firefighter in the back of your mind.
- **We strongly suggest that you read these traits thoroughly at least 2-3 times between now and when you take your test.**

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- **Below we have identified specific reasons why fire applicants fail the background information survey questions. They include:**
- Applicants who have trouble controlling their emotions and tempers.
- Applicants who show a disregard for others feelings.
- Applicants who may question a supervisor's authority or have a problem with that authority.
- Individuals who have an anti-social personality and prefer to work alone in situations.
- Applicants who show a high degree of anxiety and could have difficulty dealing with that anxiety in emergency situations.
- Applicants who are not pleasant to their coworkers.
- Individuals who are rude and caustic.
- Individuals who are very rigid and refuse to be flexible in their thoughts and actions.
- Applicants who make their own decisions regardless of what the team is trying to accomplish.



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- Applicants may be very rigid and inflexible in thinking.
- May be unusually sensitive to criticism.
- Overly insensitive in interpersonal relationships.
- Tolerance of others opinions may limit work relationships.
- May have hostility or resentment toward others.
- May have somewhat unconventional beliefs and attitudes.
- May disregard rules when it suits him/her.
- Might become restless when he/she has to work with others for a long period of time.
- Does not appear to be very friendly or warm toward others.
- Profile may suggest that he/she would be most comfortable in a job that allows a great deal of independence.

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- Profile suggests that he has a preference for self-sufficiency.
- Applicant does not appear to worry about what others think of him/her; moreover, he/she does not seem to need their support or favorable opinions of him/her.
- Thinks it is important to be independent and direct his/her own life.
- Does not like others to decide for him/her; therefore, he/she probably works hard to gain control of his/her life and work.
- Describes himself/herself as suspicious; as a consequence, he/she is likely to be suspicious of the motives of others.
- Describes himself/herself as anxious and having difficulties dealing with stress.
- Appears to have trouble with a general sense of sadness and unpleasantness.
- May have irresponsible attitudes.

20

- **PROBLEM AREA**

- One of the problems many fire applicants have in answering background information survey questions is that they answer the questions relative to their current career. For example, you may be a top salesman. You work alone, and are at the top of your field. You may describe yourself in a background information survey examination as someone who prefers to work alone. Those answers where you state that you prefer to work alone will not get you hired as a firefighter.

Although those personality traits are admirable, by answering questions where you state you would rather work by yourself, you will automatically eliminate yourself from the firefighting exam process. A firefighter is an individual who is part of a team; they work as a team and not as an individual.

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Never
ANSWER → not sure !!

- **Very important test notes:**

- We highly recommend that you never, ever answer Not Sure! This gives the appearance of wavering, being wishy-washy and being unsure of your decisions – answering "Not Sure" may cause you to have a lower score on these type of examinations.

- We want you to be honest taking your FDNY Examination. Your answer selection of either "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Not Sure," "Disagree," or "Strongly Disagree" will vary depending upon your personality characteristics, however, we do make suggestions in some areas of the test format. Some sections we will emphasize using only "Strongly Agree" or "Strongly Disagree." Those sections include Teamwork and Stress Characteristics, Impression Control, and questions concerning Stealing, Drug Use and Dishonesty. For these sections, we give specific responses that we have highlighted in your suggested answers that we feel are important in determining how well you will do on this examination.

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Background Info Survey

Interpersonal Characteristics questions

A firefighter is someone who has a positive, enthusiastic attitude; maintains an effective and pleasant working relationship with peers and superiors; has a good, pleasant sense of humor; is honest and has strong values and ethics; is self confident in their work; will show empathy and is supportive of others in time of need; is someone who will treat all people with dignity and respect; someone who can render emergency care to anyone, regardless of who they are, where they are, and what their beliefs are; is able to work cooperatively and effectively with diverse groups of people, not only in the department, but in the community they serve; is willing to accept constructive criticism from others; has good organizational skills; is able to follow both oral and written directions; and is able to express themselves clearly and audibly

23

1) I believe that meeting people with different backgrounds and cultures can improve me as a person.

☒ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

2) If a situation arises that I can manipulate in my favor, I often do so.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☒ Strongly Disagree

3) If both salaries were the same, I would rather be a bookkeeper than a sales manager.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☒ Strongly Disagree

4) I would rather stay home and read a good novel than go to a social gathering.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☒ Strongly Disagree

24

Answers

- 1) Strongly agree
- 2) Strongly disagree
- 3) Strongly disagree
- 4) Strongly disagree

25

Teamwork

- TEAMWORK CHARACTERISTICS



THIS IS THE NUMBER ONE AREA OF FAILURE FOR FIREFIGHTER APPLICANTS. Many applicants answering background information survey questions don't realize that firefighting is a team atmosphere. One of the most important qualities of a firefighter is the ability to work as part of a team. **We expect that this will be one of the main personality characteristics that will be highlighted in background information questions.** It is extremely important that you always emphasize the team and not your individual accomplishments or selfishness. A firefighter must demonstrate an ability to take orders from superior officers, to contribute to efforts of others on the team, to compromise and put the best interests of the team and organization above personal interests and differences.

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Teamwork questions

1) It is more important to be recognized as part of a team than for individual contributions.

☒ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

2) In a situation where I am in a group setting, I never try to attract immediate attention to myself.

☒ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

3) I believe that a team environment best suits me because everyone is able to make contributions to the accomplishments and successes of the team.

☒ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

27

Answers

1) Strongly agree

2) Strongly agree

3) Strongly agree

28

Motivation Characteristics questions

MOTIVATION CHARACTERISTICS

A firefighter is a self-motivated individual, shows initiative and innovativeness, and is able to take charge when the situation demands it. Firefighters always display a positive attitude and believe that a successful outcome will occur at emergency situations. A firefighter is energetic, displays a willingness to learn new things, does high quality work, and makes suggestions to improve how things are done. Most important, a firefighter is motivated and has a sincere desire to serve the community and help people.

1) I am the type of individual who likes to meet a challenge head on.

☒ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree

2) Often times when the thought of exercise crosses my mind, I try to detour my thoughts to another avenue.

☐ Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Not Sure ☐ Disagree ☒ Strongly Disagree

29

Answers

1) Strongly agree

2) Strongly disagree

30

Stress questions

STRESS CHARACTERISTICS

The job of a firefighter is very stressful. Being able to deal with that stress is of the utmost importance. Firefighters must be able to handle stress and stay calm in emergency situations. They must be able to control and keep their emotions on an even keel. Firefighters cannot be the type of person who is overly anxious, have high anxiety, or let their emotions control them. Stress Characteristics is a very important section of the examination.

Stress characteristic questions are another area where we suggest you answer either "Strongly Agree" or "Strongly Disagree"

31

1) I believe that I am the type of person who is emotionally stable in both my actions and thoughts.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Not Sure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2) When things are done in the same repetitive manner, I often find myself getting aggravated.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Not Sure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3) There are situations where I begin feeling tense and the littlest things have gotten on my nerves.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Not Sure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4) I am the type of person who gets excited very easily. (emotion)

Strongly Agree

Agree

Not Sure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

32

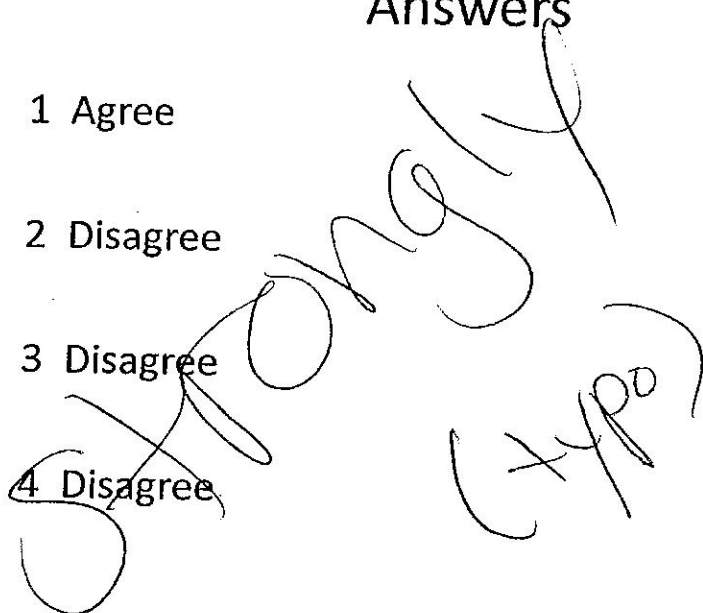
Answers

1 Agree

2 Disagree

3 Disagree

4 Disagree



33

Dependability and Decision Making questions

DEPENDABILITY AND DECISION- MAKING CHARACTERISTICS

Firefighters, under emergency conditions, must be able to perform both repetitive and complex tasks with little or no supervision. Firefighters must know that there is a chain of command and that following established department procedures is important in an organization. They must be thorough in their actions and able to accomplish duties in tight time frames. They must be on time and available for others when needed.

Many times there is chaos at an emergency scene, and a firefighter must be able to make decisions in life-or-death situations. They must be able to use common sense, be flexible in thinking, and be able to define one clear line of action in all situations. Many times a firefighter has to adjust to the situation in order to have a successful outcome. Firefighters are the type of people who are decisive and do not waver in between decisions. Once a decision is made, he/she goes forward with it.

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1) I am the type of person who likes things done in an orderly and timely fashion, and am often selected for projects because of this trait.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

2) When I encounter a difficult problem or situation, my approach is to address the problem in a systematic way.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

3) I have the ability in a crisis situation to be clear minded and calm.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

35

Answers

1 Agree

2 Agree

3 Agree

36

Impression Control questions

Below are some questions that are categorized as "Impression Control Questions." These type of questions determine whether or not you are trying to portray yourself as someone who is always happy, always had the perfect job, never made mistakes, never been bored or tired, never acted on impulse, etc. It is not probable for anyone to always feel or act a particular way. A successful firefighter candidate will not Strongly Agree or Agree to any of these type of questions. They are trying to determine if you are being deceitful and trying to present yourself differently than you really are. As you can see, the key wording for these questions is *always* and *never*. Be sure to take a good look at the question when you see those key words.

 **Important Test Note:** We strongly recommend that you answer Strongly Disagree for these type of Impression Control questions.

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1) I am always full of energy.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

2) I am always happy.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

3) I have always had the perfect job.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

38

Answers

1 Strongly disagree

2 Strongly disagree

3 Strongly disagree

39

Stealing/Drug Use/Dishonesty

IMPORTANT TEST NOTE: This is another section discussing stealing, drug use and dishonesty where we suggest you answer either "Strongly Agree" or "Strongly Disagree"

1) If a coworker stole something from work, I would always report him/her.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Not Sure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2) One or more of my friends has taken money from their employer without getting caught.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Not Sure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3) At work, most people will falsify receipts to get more money than they deserve from the company.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Not Sure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4) I have exaggerated my previous work experience in order to get a good job.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Not Sure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

40

Answers

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Strongly disagree
- 3 Strongly disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree

41

Video questions

- There will be three videos of unknown length – probably 1 or 2 minutes.
 - The information contained in the videos is false and some of the words used are made up.
 - You can watch each video 3x before you answer questions. Make sure you do so!
- ✱ **Take notes** on your training guide as the video plays.

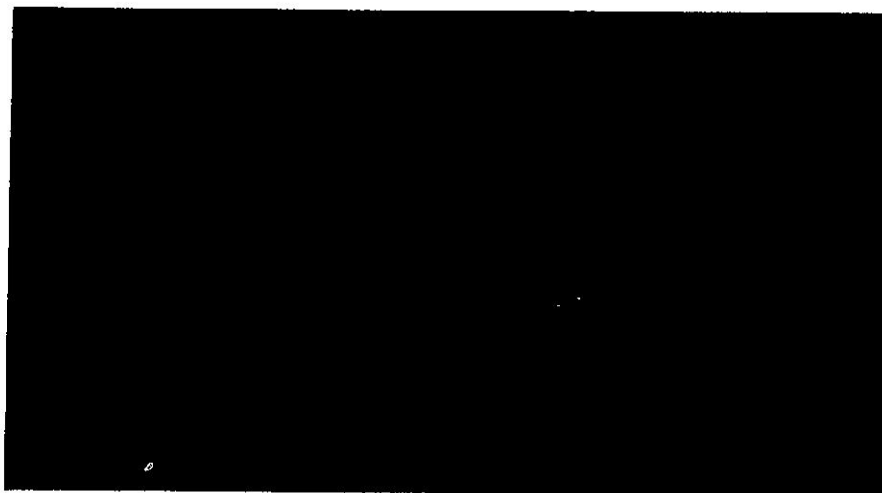
42

Training guide page for Zombie Apocalypse

- Tip # 1 is "Don't prioritize your pies"
- George was thought to be either a young man full of eggnog looking for a kiss or a zombie interested in brains
- Carolers pride themselves on singing in even the most adverse conditions

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Zombie Apocalypse



44

Notes

- Tip 2 stow the toe
- Single ladies spruce up the party by standing under the mistletoe

45

Notes

- Tip 3 care for carolers
- lock doors, set oven to 350, bar windows, resume baking in that order

46

Notes

- Woman put on glasses to get a better look at George
- Film made by Team Unicorn

47

Zombie Apocalypse questions

- 1) What should be done immediately before you "resume baking your pies"
 - a) Set oven to 350
 - b) Give your children guns
 - c) bar all windows
 - d) lock all doors
- 2) Tip # 2 is...
 - a) Set oven to 350
 - b) Care for carolers
 - c) Bar all windows
 - d) Stow the 'toe
- 3) George was first thought to be either:
 - a) a young man full of eggnog
 - b) a suitor on the make
 - c) trying to spruce up the party
 - d) a zombie only interested in brains

48

Zombie Apocalypse questions continued

4) Tip # 3 is:

- a) bar all doors b) care for carolers
- c) resume baking pies d) stow the toe

5) This film was produced by:

- a) How to survive a zombie holiday
- b) The Zombie Apocalypse c) Team Unicorn
- d) Zombie bakers

49

Zombie Apocalypse questions continued

6) Which of the following are tips on how to survive a zombie holiday?

- a) don't prioritize your pies b) stow the tow
- c) give your wife guns d) care for carolers

7) Carolers pride themselves on:

- a) singing for long periods of time
- b) singing in even the most adverse conditions
- c) appearing like zombies d) their appearance

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Answers

- 1 C
- 2 D
- 3 A,D
- 4 B
- 5 C
- 6 A,B,D
- 7 B

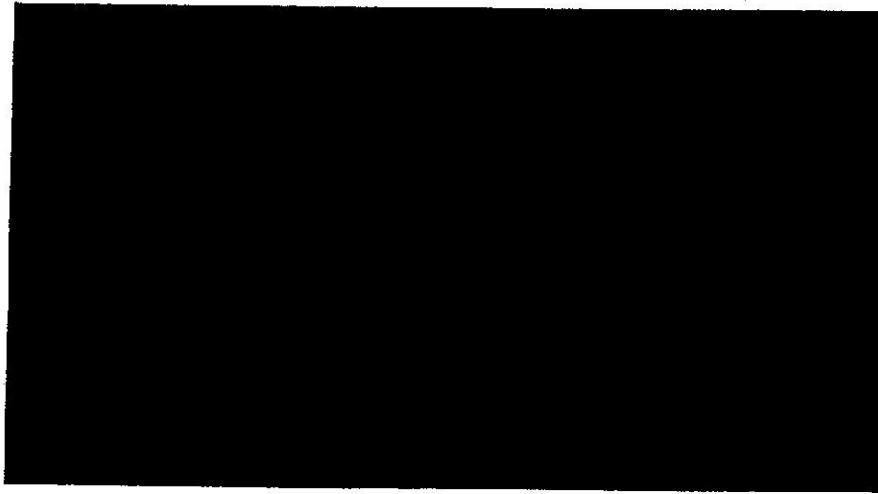
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Training guide page for Tonight's Sky video

- Betelgeuse is a red super giant star
- Venus is in the western sky
- Orion is a constellation

52

Tonight's Sky video



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Questions for Tonight's Sky video questions

- 1) Jupiter is higher up in the western sky than Venus T or F
- 2) Betelgeuse is how much bigger than the sun: a) 550x b) 600x c) 650x d) 700x
- 3) Orion is: a) a constellation b) the great hunter of Greek mythology c) a soldier

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Questions for Tonight's Sky video continued

- 4) Betelgeuse has the brightness of: a) 10's of 1000's of moons b) 10's of 1000's of suns
c) 100's of 1000's of moons d) 100's of 1000's of suns
- 5) Venus is: a) close to the horizon in the west
b) close to horizon in the east c) higher in the sky than Jupiter d) only visible with a telescope

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Questions for Tonight's Sky video continued

- 6) Orion is filled with: a) young stars b) dying stars c) black holes d) many nebulae
- 7) Mars appears in the east late in the evening
T or F

56

Answers

- 1) T
- 2) C
- 3) A,B
- 4) B
- 5) A
- 6) A,B,D
- 7) T

57

Reading Comprehension questions

Operations conducted at fire-related incidents evacuation procedures. These procedures are of 3 types:

TYPE 1: EMERGENCY EVACUATION - This type of evacuation procedure is used in such instances as the potential collapse of a structure and hazardous material incidents. All personnel inside the involved building or area will, without question, immediately evacuate the involved building or area, leaving all equipment in place. All personnel will immediately report back to their assigned apparatus or area designate by the Incident Commander.

TYPE 2: TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL - This type of evacuation procedure is used when going from an offensive (interior attack), to a defensive (exterior attack), strategy. All personnel inside the involved building or area will, without question, evacuate the involved building or area with all equipment. All personnel will immediately report back to their assigned apparatus or area designated by the Incident Commander.

TYPE 3: AREA OR SECTOR WITHDRAWAL - After the use of an Emergency Evacuation or Tactical Withdrawal, all personnel shall be outside the involved area. However, conditions may be hazardous enough to require withdrawal from an entire sector or area. If so, this type of evacuation procedure is used. If feasible, apparatus with all personnel shall immediately leave the area by a safe route, leaving all equipment behind, to an area designated by the Incident Commander. Apparatus radios are to be monitored for further orders.

58

1) Consider the following situation. Fire fighters from Station Number 9 had been fighting a fire in a one-story clothing warehouse. The warehouse was fully involved. When the roof showed signs of collapse, the Incident Commander ordered all fire fighters to evacuate the building immediately and to leave any firefighting equipment in place. Fire fighters were instructed to return to their assigned areas.

This situation best represents a(n):

- A) Tactical Withdrawal
- B) Tactical Withdrawal followed by an Area or Sector Withdrawal
- ☒ C) Emergency Evacuation
- D) Area or Sector Withdrawal

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Reading Comprehension questions continued

Hoselines

At the scene of a fire, crews attempting to perform a rescue should have every kind of protection available. The primary type of protective equipment is a hoseline with an adequate supply of water. The advantages of a fire stream are its effect in the control of fire in the rescue area and its cooling effect. The force of a water spray will also help ventilate the structure. This will help to provide cool fresh air, which will assist the victims as well as the rescue crew.

Another advantage of taking in a hoseline is that the hose automatically marks an escape route. If the conditions in the structure worsen, smoke may decrease most visibility. When this occurs, the hoseline will lead the rescue team out of the structure. Since searches for victims in the fire structure must be done quickly, the rescue crew may not be able to use hoselines in all cases. However, as the rescue continues, hoselines should be advanced to protect rescue workers and trapped victims. Fire streams may have to be used to knock down the fire and to protect victims.

At times it may be necessary to delay rescue in an area until a charged hoseline is ready to advance. The rescue crew must then enter the structure behind the protection of the fire stream. As the fire is controlled, the rescue crew can search each room.

60

To speed up the search of the more distant rooms, the rescue crew can leave the protection of the charged hoseline. Before this occurs, the rescue crew must tell the firefighter on the charged line of their actions.

Firefighters on the fire floor must keep in mind the presence of other rescue crews on the floors above the fire. If it appears that the fire streams will be unable to hold the fire, instant warning must be given to the crews above the fire. Steps should be taken to provide escape by ladder. An effort should also be made to place fire streams between the fire and the exposed rescue crews.

Caution must be exercised when stretching hoselines to keep them from blocking any rescue attempts. The one exception to this would be where the fire stream is required to protect the occupants' escape. When many persons have to get out of a building, rescue plans must be considered in the placement of equipment. This includes the stretching of hoselines.

While hoselines are designed as an extinguishment device, it is clear they are very effective in the rescue process. Firefighters must use the hoselines to assist them in all rescue operations for their safety and the safety of the trapped victims.

61

Reading Comprehension questions continued

2) Firefighters must exercise extreme caution when stretching hoselines to keep them from blocking any rescue attempts. The one exception to this would be:

- a) when a fire stream is used to cover a nearby exposure
- b) the fire floor is fully engulfed in flames
- c) when a fire stream is required to protect occupants' escape
- d) when salvage operations have begun

62

3) You are on Engine 17 and have taken a hoseline into the second story of a three-story building. Engine 22 has proceeded to the third floor and is attacking the fire that is spreading upward. While fighting the fire on the second floor, you realize that extinguishment operations are going to be difficult if not impossible and it appears that the fire is stretching above to the third floor.

Which of the following would be the correct procedure?

- a) order additional help into the second floor area to alleviate the situation
- b) give a warning to the members of Engine 22 above you that the fire has spread into the third floor area
- c) withdraw your crew members immediately and escape by ladder
- d) limit the amount of rescue and ventilation operations

63

Reading Comprehension questions continued

4) According to the passage:

- a) Crews attempting to perform rescue should have every type of protection available. The primary type of protective equipment is an operating air mask.
- b) During rescue operations, firefighters for their own safety and that of trapped victims can call on the assistance of hoselines to provide them with direction.
- c) An uncharged hoseline with a water spray will help ventilate a structure allowing for additional assistance in rescuing the victims.
- d) Decrease the amount of hoseline stretched into the area while increasing horizontal ventilation.

64

5) According to the passage:

- a) Taking a hoseline into a fire automatically will indicate an escape route to firefighters entering.
- b) Rescue should never be delayed under any circumstances.
- c) When a large amount of people are in need of rescue from a building, rescue plans must be considered in the placement of exit ways.
- d) If conditions worsen and visibility increases, firefighters should be immediately removed from the occupancy.

65

Answers

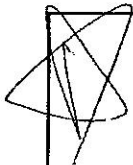
- 1) C
- 2) C
- 3) B
- 4) B
- 5) A

66

Information Ordering

- Information ordering questions may show you the proper sequence for some items or some actions then ask you to once again place them in the correct order.
- They may also ask you to put a series of statements in the best or most appropriate sequence.

67



Information Ordering questions

Firefighters often are required to remove people who are trapped in elevators. At this type of emergency, firefighters perform the following steps in the order given:

1. Upon entering the building, determine the location of the elevator involved.
2. Reassure the trapped occupants that the fire department is on the scene and that firefighters are attempting to free them.
3. Determine whether there are any injured people in the elevator.
4. Determine whether all the doors from the hallways into the elevator shaft are closed.
5. If all the doors are closed, call for an elevator mechanic.
6. Wait until a trained elevator mechanic arrives before attempting to remove any trapped persons from the elevator, unless they can be removed through the door to the hallway. However, firefighters must remove the trapped persons by any safe method if any one of the following conditions exists:
 - a. There is a fire in the building.
 - b. Someone in the elevator is seriously injured.
 - c. The people trapped in the elevator are in a state of panic.

68

Information Ordering questions continued

1) Firefighters are called to an elevator emergency at a factory building. The freight elevator has stopped suddenly between floors. The sudden stop caused heavy boxes to fall on the elevator operator, breaking his arm. Upon arrival, the firefighters determine the location of the elevator. They tell the trapped operator that they are on the scene, are aware of his injury, and are attempting to free him. They determine that all the hallway doors leading into the elevator shaft are closed. The firefighters' next step should be to:

- a) call for an ambulance and wait until it arrives
- b) remove the trapped person through the door to the hallway
- ☒ c) call for an elevator mechanic
- d) remove the trapped person by any safe method

69

Information Ordering questions continued

At times, a portable ladder is needed on an upper floor or on the roof of a building. To raise a portable ladder to the roof, firefighters perform the following in the order given:

- A team of firefighters equipped with a hose roller, rope, and safety belts goes to the roof.
- At the roof, a firefighter places the hose roller on the outer wall in a position between the line of windows where the ladder will be raised.
- The rope is lowered to the street.
- A firefighter in the street ties a bowline knot and passes it through the first two rungs above the center of the ladder. The ladder should be positioned below and in line with the destination point.
- Sufficient rope should be drawn through the ladder to allow the loop of the bowline to be slipped over both beams at the butt. The rope is then drawn taut and the ladder turned over so the knot faces the ground.
- A signal is given to the firefighters to haul up the ladder. The firefighter in the street holds the butt end of the beams to guide it into position.
- While the ladder is being raised, the firefighter in the street acts as a safety and keeps people away from the area.
- To lower a ladder, use the procedure in Steps 5 and 6, except that the knot should face toward the sky. Once on the roof, the ladder can be used as a bridge between buildings, a safety cover over a large hole, or a tool to climb to higher heights.

70

Information Ordering questions continued

2) While operating at a fire in a six-story factory, you are told to help a team of firefighters bring a 20-foot portable ladder up to the roof. Your position is in the street. You would be expected to perform all of the following except:

- a) tie a bowline knot
- ☒ b) put on a safety belt
- c) signal the roof to raise the ladder
- d) keep people away

3) At a fire, firefighters at the roof lower a rope to raise a portable ladder. The first action that should be taken by the firefighter in the street is to:

- ☒ a) tie a knot in the rope
- b) turn the ladder over
- c) line the ladder up with the windows
- d) place a ladder roller on the wall

71

Information Ordering questions

You are at a restaurant when it comes to your attention that a customer seated behind you has choked on a piece of food and is lying on the floor and appears to be unresponsive. The procedures for treating the victim are listed below. These procedures have not been listed in the correct order.

- 1) Establish an airway by tilting the victims head back and attempt to ventilate.
- 2) Following the administering of back blows, open mouth and clear the airway with fingers.
- 3) Establish that the victim is unconscious and unresponsive.
- 4) If still unsuccessful, hit the victim on the back a total of four times.
- 5) If unable to ventilate, reposition the victims head and attempt to ventilate again.

3, 1, 5

4, 2

72

Information Ordering questions continued

4) The above procedures should be performed
in which of the following order:

- A) 1, 2, 5, 4, 3
- ☒ B) 3, 1, 5, 4, 2
- C) 5, 4, 2, 3, 1
- D) 3, 4, 2, 5, 1

73

Answers

1

2

3

4

74

Math

- You will be asked to solve basic math problems. These questions **may be** asked in the form of a word problem.
- Be aware of your time. Do not spend too much time on one particular question. If you cannot solve the problem in a reasonable amount of time skip that question and come back to it later.

75

Math questions

1) The Fire Chief's Association telephone and fax bill listed the following items: \$45.12 for call waiting; \$98.46 for long distance; 782 personal messages at \$.08 each; and \$48.21 fax service charge. What was the total bill:

- A) \$154.48
- B) \$267.39
- ☒ C) \$254.35

Handwritten calculations for the math problem:

$$\begin{array}{r} 98.46 \\ 45.12 \\ + 48.21 \\ \hline 191.79 \end{array}$$

Additional handwritten notes and calculations:

- 782 $\times$.08 = 62.56
- 98.46 + 45.12 + 62.56 + 48.21 = 254.35
- Handwritten "2" above the first column of the addition.
- Handwritten "56" next to the 62.56 calculation.
- Handwritten "191.79" circled.
- Handwritten "254.35" circled.

76

2) There were a total of 632 fire students attending the Fire College with 24 teachers, 15 faculty members and 15 custodians. On May 14, 31 students called in sick. At 11:50 A.M., a fire broke out within the facility. Three students were taken out during the fire through the stairwells, 42 were taken through the second floor window and 38 through the front door. How many students were left:

- A) 562
B) 627
☒ C) 518

$$\begin{array}{r} 632 \\ - 31 \\ \hline 601 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{r} 414 \\ 656 \\ - 38 \\ \hline 518 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 598 \\ - 42 \\ \hline 556 \end{array}$$

Math questions continued

3) You have \$200.00 to spend for the station BBQ. At least \$25.00 must remain for beverages after the food has been purchased. Chicken was \$37.68, burgers were \$33.00 and ribs were \$59.50. How much more can you spend before you reach your limit:

- A) \$25.32
☒ B) \$44.82
C) \$69.32

4) 3.5% of 80 =

- A) .28
B) .028
C) 2.8

$$\begin{array}{r} 21 \\ 37.68 \\ 33.00 \\ 59.50 \\ \hline 130.18 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 175.00 \\ - 130.18 \\ \hline 44.82 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 3.5 \\ \times 80 \\ \hline 280 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 280 \\ \div 100 \\ \hline 2.8 \end{array}$$

Answers

$$\begin{aligned}
 1) \quad & 782 \text{ calls} \times \$0.08 = \$62.56 \\
 & \$45.12 + \$98.46 + \$48.21 + \$62.56 = \\
 & \quad \$254.35
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 2) \quad & 632 - 31 = 601 \\
 & 601 - 83 = \\
 & \quad 518
 \end{aligned}$$

79

Answers

$$\begin{aligned}
 3) \quad & \$37.68 + \$33 + \$59.50 = \$130.18 \\
 & \$130.18 + \$25 = \$155.18 \\
 & \$200 - \$155.18 = \\
 & \quad \$44.92
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 4) \quad & 3.5\% \text{ of } 80 = 2.8 \\
 & .035 \\
 & \times 80 \\
 & \hline
 & 000 \\
 & 280 \\
 & \hline
 & 2.80
 \end{aligned}$$

80

Tips

- Make sure you have an admissions card!
- Do not bring any electronic devices to the test.
- You can apply for residency credit at the test.
- Get a good night's sleep the night before.
- Eat a good breakfast.
- Bring food to test.
- Moderate cardio exercise in the weeks leading up to the test will boost your brain's ability to think.
- Do not guess at answers.

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Homework

82

The number one cause of failure on background information survey examinations is not having the information these tests are trying to retrieve from the firefighter applicant. This program will put you in the mindset of what the test consultants are looking for in a successful firefighter candidate.

The questions used on background information survey examinations are determined by identifying the personality traits and characteristics of a successful firefighter. Knowing what personality traits and characteristics are being sought will greatly improve your chances of scoring well on these examinations. In this booklet, we will describe the characteristics and personality traits and give you examples of questions that you will be facing in this type of examination.

We would like to have you begin by reading the personality characteristics of a successful firefighter. These are very important for you to know if you want to be successful in the background information exam process.

These personality traits include:

- ***Maintains effective and pleasant working relationships with superiors and peers.*** This is a must!
- ***Gets along well with others in a working relationship.*** Remember that firefighters work a 24-hour shift. You aren't going home after a normal 8-hour workday like most Americans do; you are spending an entire 24 hours with other firefighters. You are expected to be able to get along in this atmosphere. Getting along is crucial to working side-by-side at an emergency scene. You must be able to trust and depend on each other. This is one of the key personality characteristics that they are trying to find in a successful candidate. Can you get along? Can you work together with others in a continuous 24-hour period?
- ***Is flexible, not rigid, in thinking.*** It's not "my way or the highway." Firefighting is a team effort, not an individual effort. You must know that suggestions and recommendations are going to be made as a team; whatever is best for the team is what the final decision will be.
- ***Is a self-motivated individual.*** Firefighters are people who get things done. They don't wait around to be told what to do; they take action.
- ***Is decisive.*** Firefighters are not wishy-washy or maybe-sort of in their personality traits. They have to make a decision and stick with it. Sometimes decisions don't work out as planned, but it is a decision based on experience and the situation that is confronting you.
- ***Has empathy and is supportive of others in time of need.*** The definition of empathy is being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes to feel what they are feeling. Are you the type of person that can do that? Or are you the type of person who closes yourself in and can't imagine what the other person is experiencing. Firefighters respond to emergency scenes where people are in need. You need to be empathetic to better serve others. This is an important personality trait and is one that is critical on these examinations.
- ***Is able to control and keep emotions on an even keel.*** Firefighters do not get high anxiety or stressed in emergency situations. They need to stay calm and controlled to make the appropriate decisions.
- ***Has a pleasant, good sense of humor.*** Firefighters are easy to get along with their coworkers; they have a good sense of humor; they are not thin-skinned; they can take comments from coworkers and the public without feeling offended.

- ***Is willing to accept constructive criticism from others.*** Remember that firefighting is a paramilitary organization. You will take criticism from your superiors; you must accept it, find out how you can improve, and move on.
- ***Knows that there is a chain of command and that following established department procedures is important in an organization.*** Again, firefighting is a paramilitary organization. You report to your lieutenant, captain or battalion chief. You don't step out of rank over your officer to go to their superior. There is a chain of command and you must follow it.
- ***Is willing to work as a team member.*** This personality characteristic is one of the most important ones that will determine whether or not you can be a successful firefighter. Firefighting is a team effort. It's not about individual accomplishments or what did I do; it's what the team did. This is what it's all about. You need to be able to work as a team. You must accept the team's decisions, even if you feel that your opinion in the decision is the best one. If the team determines another decision, then you must follow and support the team's decision.
- ***Has a positive and enthusiastic attitude.*** Firefighters are optimistic and believe that the outcome of a situation will be positive.
- ***Honesty.*** Firefighters are by nature very honest and trustworthy individuals. Citizens need to feel comfortable around firefighters and not feel suspicious of their motives.
- ***Shows initiative.*** Firefighters take initiative. They don't lay back to find out what can be done; they take action when it is needed.
- ***Innovativeness.*** Firefighters come up with ideas and suggestions for the betterment of the team.
- ***Uses judgment and common sense.*** Firefighters don't just "shoot from the hip." They use common sense and judgment for the best outcome at an emergency scene.
- ***Has a positive attitude and believes that a successful outcome will occur in emergency situations.*** Firefighters are optimistic individuals, not pessimists. They believe that emergency situations will have the best outcome for those they are treating and always display that positive attitude on the scene.
- ***Has strong values and ethics.*** Firefighters are honest, trustworthy, dependable, and moral. They don't try and find the angle that is best for them; they are people that can be depended upon.
- ***Good organizational skills.*** Firefighters are well organized. Good organizational skills are needed at the fire house and on emergency scenes.
- ***Dependable.*** Firefighters are the type of people that you can count on. They are on time and are there when you need them.
- ***Able to speak clearly and audibly.*** Firefighters need to be understood by the public; they don't speak too fast, they have an even tone and are able to be well understood.
- ***Ability to follow oral directions.*** Firefighters are the type of people who can follow oral directions from their superiors and other firefighters.

- ***Ability to follow written directions.*** Firefighters must be able to understand their Standard Operating Procedures and their department rules and regulations. They must be able to understand written instructions on how equipment works and is employed at the scene.
- ***Is able to handle stress and stay calm in emergency situations.*** Again, firefighters don't show high anxiety, stress or nervousness – they remain calm so that everyone else in an emergency situation can also remain calm.
- ***Works with little or no supervision.*** There are times on an emergency scene when you are given an order and you must complete that order by yourself. You have to be able to know what you are doing and accomplish the task.
- ***Is able to take charge when the situation demands it.*** Firefighters are take-charge kind of people. They don't sit back; they show initiative to get things accomplished.
- ***Under emergency conditions, can handle critical decision-making.*** Many times at an emergency scene, critical decisions must be made. Firefighters must be able to make these decisions. They must trust their instinct and experience and have the most optimistic attitude towards a positive outcome.
- ***Under emergency conditions is able to perform both repetitive and complex tasks with little or no supervision.*** Firefighters often perform the same repetitive duties at the firehouse and at an emergency scene. They must be able to perform these tasks without direction. Firefighters take initiative to learn how the equipment is used properly and how to maintain it.
- ***Is able to treat the severely injured and sick.*** In today's environment, 70% of what firefighters do on the job is related to the medical field – whether it is a heart attack, shortness of breath, diabetic emergency, etc.
- ***Is able to accomplish duties in tight time frames.*** Many times at the fire scene and at the firehouse, duties must be completed in a short time frame. Firefighters must be able to handle deadlines and accomplish the task successfully.
- ***Does high quality work and makes suggestions to improve how things are done.*** Firefighters make suggestions so that they can improve the nature of their work and be able to accomplish tasks on the emergency scene in a well organized manner to provide the best service possible to the public.
- ***Realizes that safety is a top priority.*** Firefighters realize that many times they must put themselves in harm's way to save another person. On the fireground, firefighters are always keeping keen attention and detail to the safety of themselves, other firefighters on the scene, and any civilians.
- ***Has the sincere desire to serve the community and help people.*** This is what firefighting is about. You are in a job to serve other people. People whose houses are on fire, or have been in an accident or have a medical emergency, and/or catastrophic situations – you must be the type of person who has a sincere desire to step up to the plate and be willing to put your life on the line to serve people you don't even know.
- ***Willing to accept people as they are without regard to race, creed, or gender.*** Firefighters treat people equally. They must treat those living in a \$20,000 home the same as those living in a \$400,000 home. It doesn't matter what color, religion or sex someone is – firefighters look at the person as a person. They don't stereotype people and truly believe that all people are created equal.

PROBLEM AREA

One of the problems many fire applicants have in taking background information survey examinations is that they answer the questions relative to their current career. For example, you may be a top salesman. You work alone, you are at the top of your field, you have a six-figure salary, and have been given many top awards. You may describe yourself in a background information survey examination as someone who prefers to work alone, is very successful at doing so, and is highly motivated and driven. Those answers where you state that you prefer to work alone will not get you hired as a firefighter. Although those personality traits are admirable and the individual may be well respected in his field, community, and church – by answering one question where you state you would rather work by yourself, you will automatically eliminate yourself from the firefighting exam process. A firefighter is an individual who is part of a team; they work as a team and not as an individual. This is just one example of someone who can be very successful in life, yet fail the background information profile of a successful firefighter. If you need to review the personality characteristics again before proceeding to the questions, please do so.

Very important test notes:

We highly recommend that you never, ever answer Not Sure! This gives the appearance of waivering, being wishy-washy and being unsure of your decisions – answering “Not Sure” WILL cause you to fail these type of examinations.

We want you to be honest taking your New York Firefighter Examination. Your answer selection of either “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” “Not Sure,” “Disagree,” or “Strongly Disagree” will vary depending upon your personality characteristics, however, we do make suggestions in some areas of the test format. Some sections we will emphasize using only “Strongly Agree” or “Strongly Disagree.” Those sections include Teamwork and Stress Characteristics, Impression Control, and questions concerning Stealing, Drug Use and Dishonesty. For these sections, we give specific responses that we have highlighted in your suggested answers that we feel are important in determining how well you will do on this examination.

We would now like you to review our first personality characteristic of a successful firefighter – interpersonal skills. Begin by reading only the paragraph explaining the interpersonal characteristic.

INTERPERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

A firefighter is someone who has a positive, enthusiastic attitude; maintains an effective and pleasant working relationship with peers and superiors; has a good, pleasant sense of humor; is honest and has strong values and ethics; is self confident in their work; will show empathy and is supportive of others in time of need; is someone who will treat all people with dignity and respect; someone who can render emergency care to anyone, regardless of who they are, where they are, and what their beliefs are; is able to work cooperatively and effectively with diverse groups of people, not only in the department, but in the community they serve; is willing to accept constructive criticism from others; has good organizational skills; is able to follow both oral and written directions; and is able to express themselves clearly and audibly.

You have now reviewed the interpersonal characteristics of a successful firefighter. Below are sample questions that may be used to determine this trait. Answer these questions by circling either Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree or Strongly Disagree.

You are now to answer the questions concerning Interpersonal Characteristics. Please circle your answers. After you have completed the questions, read our suggested responses that follow for an idea of how best to answer these type of questions.

1. I am the type of person who finds it very easy to talk with people I have just met.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
2. In a discussion with another person where I do not agree with their statements, I will interrupt to express my point of view.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
3. In describing me, people would classify me as shy.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
4. I am the type of person who would make a life commitment to the needs of the community I would serve.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
5. I am the type of person who would show no empathy to the difficulties the people around me are experiencing.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
6. I have been in some situations where I often get frustrated very quickly with the people around me.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
7. I believe that meeting people with different backgrounds and cultures can improve me as a person.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
8. If a situation arises that I can manipulate in my favor, I often do so.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
9. If both salaries were the same, I would rather be a bookkeeper than a sales manager.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
10. I would rather stay home and read a good novel than go to a social gathering.
 Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

You have now completed the sample questions for interpersonal skills. In the next section, we suggest possible answers. **However, if these suggested answers do not fit your personality type, you must answer them in the most genuine, honest manner.** Our goal of this background information preparation program is to give you insight into what the test consultants are looking for in successful firefighter candidates. Remember that not all firefighter applicants can be successful firefighter candidates.

1. I am the type of person who finds it very easy to talk with people I have just met.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- As a firefighter, 99% of the people you meet during emergency situations or during day-to-day contact with the public will be people that you don't know. You must be someone who can present yourself in a genuine, caring demeanor during your dealings with the public. The public should find you someone easy to talk to and someone they feel comfortable asking for help.

2. In a discussion with another person where I do not agree with their statements, I will interrupt to express my point of view.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- Good listening skills are very important in a firefighter's career. There will be many times you will deal with people who are highly emotional, unruly, obnoxious, and you must be patient and courteous when dealing with the public, even if you don't agree with them. The key statement in this question is "I will interrupt." You can express your point of view, but allow the person to express their position first without interrupting them.

3. In describing me, people would classify me as shy.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- Firefighters are outgoing people who like to socialize with their co-workers, peers and the public. They are generally not shy in nature.

4. I am the type of person who would make a life commitment to the needs of the community I would serve.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- This statement tells what firefighting is all about. If you are not able to commit yourself to the service of others, you will never be successful as a firefighter. This also means that you will risk your life to save a person that you don't know.

5. I am the type of person who would show no empathy to the difficulties the people around me are experiencing.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- The definition of empathy is "putting yourself in someone else's shoes and knowing how they feel." As a firefighter, many of the incidents you will respond to are situations where individuals are in your need. You must be the type of person who is sensitive to the pains and sorrows that often accompany an emergency scene. If you are insensitive to the difficulties of the people in need, you will not be a successful firefighter.

6. I have been in some situations where I often get frustrated very quickly with the people around me.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- **IMPORTANT TEST NOTE** – In some questions, you will see words such as "very often," "frequently," "always," and "never." Make note to pay attention to this type of phrasing. Let's look at this question. It states, "I often..." Yes, there will be times when you are frustrated. The key word "often" dictates that you are constantly frustrated. There will be times on an emergency scene where things aren't going as you would like. You cannot get frustrated in these situations. You must remain calm and look at the situation in a logical manner in order to quickly and efficiently resolve the crisis.

7. I believe that meeting people with different backgrounds and cultures can improve me as a person.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as "Strongly Agree" unless your personality dictates you answering "Agree")

- One of the most important interpersonal characteristics that many of these background information survey examinations will try to determine is your cultural and racial sensitivity and tolerance. As a firefighter, you will be continually dealing with people from different races, cultures and backgrounds. You must be the type of person who can learn from these different cultures and backgrounds and make yourself a more complete person, and thus a better firefighter.

8. If a situation arises that I can manipulate in my favor, I often do so.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- Again, look at the key wording in this question – it is the phrase "I often do so." This question is trying to determine whether you are a sincere, honest person with morals and values. You can't be the type of person who tries to manipulate others into thinking that your way is the best way. Remember, your philosophy should be that "what is best for the team is best for me."

9. If both salaries were the same, I would rather be a bookkeeper than a sales manager.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- These type of questions are key ones in background information tests. The point of this question is to determine whether you like to work with people or work by yourself. As a bookkeeper, you would likely be working by yourself with limited exposure to the public. As a sales manager, you would be working with people on a regular basis. Remember that firefighting is a people-oriented, service-oriented profession.

10. I would rather stay home and read a good novel than go to a social gathering.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- Again, this question is trying to determine whether or not you are a person that likes to be in an atmosphere that deals with people. By saying that you would prefer to stay home and read a book, you are indicating that you prefer to be by yourself than in a social, interactive atmosphere.

We have now completed your first personality trait questions. The next personality trait we will cover is the Teamwork Characteristics. Read the teamwork characteristics below before proceeding to the questions. After this review, answer the questions and then read our suggested answer review.

TEAMWORK CHARACTERISTICS

THIS IS THE NUMBER ONE AREA OF FAILURE FOR FIREFIGHTER APPLICANTS. Many applicants taking background information survey examinations don't realize that firefighting is a team atmosphere. One of the most important qualities of a firefighter is the ability to work as part of a team. This will be one of the main personality characteristics that will be highlighted in a background information exam. It is extremely important that you always emphasize the team and not your individual accomplishments or selfishness. A firefighter must demonstrate an ability to take orders from superior officers, to contribute to efforts of others on the team, to compromise and put the best interests of the team and organization above personal interests and differences.

1. It is more important to be recognized as part of a team than for individual contributions.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	----------	-------------------
2. In a situation where I am in a group setting, I never try to attract immediate attention to myself.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	----------	-------------------
3. I believe that a team environment best suits me because everyone is able to make contributions to the accomplishments and successes of the team.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	----------	-------------------
4. When trying to accomplish a goal or project, I would be more motivated and secure in my decision making when working alone rather than working with a task force or committee.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	----------	-------------------
5. I am the type of person who is considered by the group as an individual who can pull others together for a common cause.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	----------	-------------------
6. When I am working on a task, I often feel annoyed when other people come up to me and ask me for my opinion or advice.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	----------	-------------------
7. There have been times in my life where I have gotten into difficult situations because I sometimes pursue my own goals and ideas without first discussing them with others involved in the situation.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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IMPORTANT TEST NOTE: As you will see, we are highly recommending that you answer “Strongly Agree” or “Strongly Disagree” on this section concerning Teamwork. This is different from other sections in the exam, where we have suggested you answer either “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” or “Strongly Disagree” or “Agree”, as your personality dictates. Teamwork is a very important aspect of firefighting and one that will hold considerable weight on your examination. Our suggested answers follow:

1. It is more important to be recognized as part of a team than for individual contributions.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Agree”)

- This question is trying to determine your preference in working alone or as a team. An example that we used previously: You could be very successful as a salesman – the top seller in your field. Most of the things that you have accomplished in your career, you have done on your own and you can be proud of this. You may be very involved in your church or community activities, but prefer to work alone. Remember that in the successful profile of a fire applicant, that type of individual would not be considered a good candidate for a career as a firefighter. Departments are looking for someone who will become part of the team and make contributions, not for someone who likes working by himself or herself, even if you are successful doing so.

2. In a situation where I am in a group setting, I never try to attract immediate attention to myself.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Agree”)

- This type of question is trying to determine if you consider yourself an individual or as a member of a team. If you need to have attention on just you, you are probably not a team player and are the type of person who needs to be recognized for their individual accomplishments.

3. I believe that a team environment best suits me because everyone is able to make contributions to the accomplishments and successes of the team.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Agree”)

- Successful firefighter candidates are the type of people who believe that a team environment is the best way to accomplish things. If you prefer individual gains and accolades, you would not be able to make contributions in a team atmosphere where you will get little personal recognition, but the team as a whole prospers. Remember that teamwork is the key.

4. When trying to accomplish a goal or project, I would be more motivated and secure in my decision making when working alone rather than working with a task force or committee.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Disagree”)

- This question is again trying to see if you prefer working by yourself or with a group in accomplishing a task.

5. I am the type of person who is considered by the group as an individual who can pull others together for a common cause.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Agree”)

- This type of question is trying to determine if you are the type of person who has the personality characteristics to pull a team together to make decisions that are best for the team. You are not the type of person who sits back and waits for others; you are motivated and conscientious to determine what is best for the team.

6. When I am working on a task, I often feel annoyed when other people come up to me and ask me for my opinion or advice.

(We believe this type of question should first be answered as "Strongly Disagree")

- As a team member, you are always willing to give advice to advance the goals and accomplishments of the team. In doing so, you must exhibit patience and understanding with others. There will be many times where individuals approach you for advice. You must be the type of person who is willing to give advice to others for the betterment of the team.

7. There have been times in my life where I have gotten into difficult situations because I sometimes pursue my own goals and ideas without first discussing them with others involved in the situation.

(We believe this type of question should first be answered as "Strongly Disagree")

- This question is trying to determine if you would present your ideas and suggestions to a team, or whether you would go off on your own, not considering the consequences of your actions to the team.

You have just completed the teamwork characteristic section. Next, review the Motivation Characteristics, then answer the questions and read our suggested answer review.

MOTIVATION CHARACTERISTICS

A firefighter is a self-motivated individual, shows initiative and innovativeness, and is able to take charge when the situation demands it. Firefighters always display a positive attitude and believe that a successful outcome will occur at emergency situations. A firefighter is energetic, displays a willingness to learn new things, does high quality work, and makes suggestions to improve how things are done. Most important, a firefighter is motivated and has a sincere desire to serve the community and help people.

1. I am the type of individual who likes to meet a challenge head on.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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2. Often times when the thought of exercise crosses my mind, I try to detour my thoughts to another avenue.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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3. I despise vigorous, intense physical activities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	----------	-------------------

4. I am a slow-moving, passive, laid-back person in nature.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Below are our suggested answers:

1. I am the type of individual who likes to meet a challenge head on.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- In the job of a firefighter, you will face many challenges. You will be confronted with situations where you are going into burning buildings, rescuing people and giving medical aid. Each of these situations presents unique challenges that you must meet and overcome.

Questions 2 and 3 can be combined into one answer.

2. Often times when the thought of exercise crosses my mind, I try to detour my thoughts to another avenue.

3. I despise vigorous, intense physical activities.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- The job of firefighting is a very aggressive, physically demanding job. If you are not up to the task of motivating yourself to stay in shape to meet the physical demands of the profession, you will not be successful.

4. I am a slow-moving, passive, laid-back person in nature.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- As previously stated, firefighting is an aggressive, physically-oriented field. A person who is passive and laid back may not be the person who is mentally and physically able to rush into a burning building and save someone's life. This type of person might sit back and wait for others to take the lead in an emergency situation.

You have just completed the Motivation Characteristic section. Next, review the Stress Characteristics, then answer the questions, and proceed to our suggested answer review.

STRESS CHARACTERISTICS

The job of a firefighter is very stressful. Being able to deal with that stress is of the utmost importance. Firefighters must be able to handle stress and stay calm in emergency situations. They must be able to control and keep their emotions on an even keel. Firefighters cannot be the type of person who is overly anxious, have high anxiety, or let their emotions control them. Stress Characteristics is a very important section of the examination; after you answer these questions, be sure and review our suggested answers.

1. I believe that I am the type of person who is emotionally stable in both my actions and thoughts.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. When things are done in the same repetitive manner, I often find myself getting aggravated.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. There are situations where I begin feeling tense and the littlest things have gotten on my nerves.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. I am the type of person who gets excited very easily.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. A feeling of anxiety starts to overcome me when entering a roomful of people.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. I become easily confused and don't know which direction to take when a situation becomes stressful.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. If I am not doing something at all times, I often become restless.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. Feelings of anxiety and stress often overcome me when I am under time constraints to complete a project in which deadlines are involved.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

IMPORTANT TEST NOTE: Stress characteristic questions are another area where we suggest you answer either "Strongly Agree" or "Strongly Disagree". Below are our suggested answers:

1. I believe that I am the type of person who is emotionally stable in both my actions and thoughts.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as "Strongly Agree")

- Firefighters must be able to keep their emotions on an even keel. Even though an emergency may be very intense and involve life-and-death situations, firefighters must have control of their emotions and thoughts to be able to make the right decisions. Showing high anxiety and high stress only makes the situation worse for the people you are treating. You need to be the type of person who stays calm at all times.

2. When things are done in the same repetitive manner, I often find myself getting aggravated.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as "Strongly Disagree")

- Many of the jobs and duties of a firefighter are repetitive in nature. You need to be the type of individual who is willing to do these repetitive jobs and not appear aggravated or frustrated. Over and over you will clean the fire truck and tools, you will do ladder and emergency medical drills, and many other firefighting tasks. These are repetitive tasks, but serve to keep your skills sharp in order to better serve the public.

3. There are situations where I begin feeling tense and the littlest things have gotten on my nerves.
(We believe this type of question should first be answered as "Strongly Disagree")

- Firefighters must be able to remain stable in their actions and thoughts. If little things get on your nerves, you will not be able to maintain that emotional stability needed at an emergency scene.

4. I am the type of person who gets excited very easily.

(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Disagree”)

- An individual who is prone to getting excited easily is one whose thought process is not under control. Their reactions might endanger themselves or the citizens they serve. Firefighters must remain emotionally calm, stable, and even-tempered.

5. A feeling of anxiety starts to overcome me when entering a roomful of people.

(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Disagree”)

- Remember that as a firefighter you will often be entering rooms where strangers need your assistance. Feelings of anxiety only cloud your thinking and do not allow you to react to the situation in a calm, logical fashion.

6. I become easily confused and don’t know which direction to take when a situation becomes stressful.

(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Disagree”)

- Firefighter must have a clear thinking, organized, emotionally stable approach to stressful situations.

7. If I am not doing something at all times, I often become restless.

(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Disagree”)

- The key word here is “often.” There are times when you will become slightly bored. But, this question is trying to determine if you are the type of person who has anxiety, can’t sit still, or becomes restless. Don’t be fooled into thinking this question means that if you are not doing something you will look lazy. Many firefighters work 24-hour shifts and can go 5 or 6 hours without any calls and all of a sudden a major emergency is at hand.

8. Feelings of anxiety and stress often overcome me when I am under time constraints to complete a project in which deadlines are involved.

(We believe this type of question should first be answered as “Strongly Disagree”)

- You must be the type of person who sorts things out and organizes them in a logical order to complete them in a timely fashion. By doing so, you will prevent the anxiety from overcoming you.

You have just completed the Stress Characteristic section. Next, review the Dependability and Decision-making Characteristics, then answer the questions and read our suggested answer review.

DEPENDABILITY AND DECISION- MAKING CHARACTERISTICS

Firefighters, under emergency conditions, must be able to perform both repetitive and complex tasks with little or no supervision. Firefighters must know that there is a chain of command and that following established department procedures is important in an organization. They must be thorough in their actions and able to accomplish duties in tight time frames. They must be on time and available for others when needed.

Many times there is chaos at an emergency scene, and a firefighter must be able to make decisions in life-or-death situations. They must be able to use common sense, be flexible in thinking, and be able to define one clear line of action in all situations. Many times a firefighter has to adjust to the situation in order to have a successful outcome. Firefighters are the type of people who are decisive and do not waver in between decisions. Once a decision is made, he/she goes forward with it.

1. I am the type of person who likes things done in an orderly and timely fashion, and am often selected for projects because of this trait.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. When I encounter a difficult problem or situation, my approach is to address the problem in a systematic way.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. I have the ability in a crisis situation to be clear minded and calm.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. When I am working on a project and something goes wrong, my first thought process is to determine how and what can be done to alleviate the problem.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. There are many times when I have completed a task that I will concentrate my attention on the most important details of the task and I will often forget about the small, mundane details of the task.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Below are our suggested answers:

1. I am the type of person who likes things done in an orderly and timely fashion, and am often selected for projects because of this trait.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- You are the type of individual who analyzes the job, organizes it in a systematic manner, and completes it in the requested timeframe. You are motivated to get things done.

2. When I encounter a difficult problem or situation, my approach is to address the problem in a systematic way.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- You must be well organized and in control of the situation. You are the type who approaches things in a systematic, orderly fashion in order to make the most logical decision for a given situation.

3. I have the ability in a crisis situation to be clear minded and calm.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- In order for a firefighter to make the correct decisions needed on an emergency scene, they must remain calm and clear minded. It is very important – you cannot show that you are stressed. You need to weigh decisions rationally and come up with an organized, workable solution to the problem they are facing.

4. When I am working on a project and something goes wrong, my first thought process is to determine how and what can be done to alleviate the problem.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- Firefighters must be problem solvers, not someone who points a finger in blame. You need to work for the best outcome for the team and try to solve problems confronting the team.

5. There are many times when I have completed a task that I will concentrate my attention on the most important details of the task and I will often forget about the small, mundane details of the task.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- You are the type of person who is dependable and who will not only do the most important details, but will make sure all of the smaller tasks are also done. When given a task, you finish it completely, not overlooking any details.

You have just completed the Dependability and Decision-making Characteristic section. The next subject are Miscellaneous questions that encompass all of the personality traits previously discussed as well as other test questions that you may see on these examinations. Answer the miscellaneous questions and then read our suggested answer review.

MISCELLANEOUS

This miscellaneous section encompasses all the personality traits previously covered as well as others.

1. I believe that being happy is more important in my life than constantly being the center of attention.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I am often treated less reasonably than my good intentions deserve.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. Often times the sight of blood makes me nauseous.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. I am the type of person who would rather work on a home improvement project than volunteer for a worthy cause in my church or community.

- | | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|----------|-------------------|
| 5. I believe that it is better to have large amounts of money than many friends. | | | | | |
| 6. I believe that in life most people are out to get you and I tend to protect myself in these situations. | | | | | |
| 7. People describe me as a person of my word. | | | | | |
| 8. The saying "nice guys finish last" is one I believe is more true than false. | | | | | |
| 9. I believe that lying is appropriate if a situation demands it. | | | | | |
| 10. I get annoyed when people try to insist that I follow every single safety precaution in the task that I am doing. | | | | | |
| 11. Corruption exists in every workplace. | | | | | |
| 12. I keep secrets or confidential information to myself. | | | | | |
| 13. When something I am working on is not successful, I want to know why. | | | | | |
| 14. Certain people I have met in my life easily provoke me. | | | | | |
| 15. I am the type of person who is forgiving. | | | | | |
| 16. I do many things which I regret afterwards (I regret things more than others seem to). | | | | | |

17. When in a group of people, I have trouble thinking of the right things to talk about.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

18. If several people find themselves in trouble, the best thing for them to do is to agree upon a story and stick to it.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

19. When I'm in a small, cramped space (as on a crowded elevator), I have an uncomfortable feeling of being "shut in."

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

20. When given a set of rules, I follow them when personally convenient, rather than exactly to the letter.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

21. I like acting on impulses of the moment, even if they land me in later difficulties.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

22. I have a strong desire to win any game I play with others.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

23. I admit my mistakes even if I get in trouble.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

24. I rarely miss a day on the job.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Below are our suggested answers:

1. I believe that being happy is more important in my life than constantly being the center of attention. (We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- Needing to be the center of attention means that you are selfish in nature, not a team player. A firefighter gains happiness in serving others through their commitment to the community.

2. I am often treated less reasonably than my good intentions deserve. (We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- This type of question is trying to determine if you are a cautious person who is always looking over your shoulder and on guard against everyone's motives toward you.

3. Often times the sight of blood makes me nauseous.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- During your career as a firefighter, you will be repeatedly confronted with situations where blood is part of the emergency scene. Individuals who become nauseous at this site would not make good firefighters.

4. I am the type of person who would rather work on a home improvement project than volunteer for a worthy cause in my church or community.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- Although home improvement projects are mechanical in nature, it is better to volunteer for a charitable cause in your community because you are volunteering your time and serving other people -- which is very important.

5. I believe that it is better to have large amounts of money than many friends.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- Saying you would prefer large amounts of money gives the appearance of being self-centered and materialistic. Remember that firefighting is a "give of yourself" type of occupation.

6. I believe that in life most people are out to get you and I tend to protect myself in these situations.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- The key word is in "most" situations. Answering "True," or "Strongly Agree/Agree" to this question would give the appearance that you are paranoid, not trusting of others, and extremely cautious in nature.

7. People describe me as a person of my word.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- You are an honest person with high integrity. When you say something, people believe you.

8. The saying "nice guys finish last" is one I believe is more true than false.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- You believe that someone who is caring for their fellow man is a person who is respected by others and will not finish last.

9. I believe that lying is appropriate if a situation demands it.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- This question is trying to determine if you are an honest person. If you say that in certain situations you would lie, this indicates that you are a manipulative type of person.

10. I get annoyed when people try to insist that I follow every single safety precaution in the task that I am doing.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- The job of firefighting is extremely dangerous. Your fellow firefighters depend on you to follow safety procedures, not only for your safety, but also for theirs.

11. Corruption exists in every workplace.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- If you believe this, then you believe that people are corrupt by nature and that every organization has dishonest individuals. You need to be the type of person who believes that people are good and they are trying to do what is good.

12. I keep secrets or confidential information to myself.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- You are not a gossip. If a firefighter tells you something in confidence, you keep it to yourself and not make it headlines for the entire department. You need to be considered trustworthy and discreet.

13. When something I am working on is not successful, I want to know why.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- Firefighters are the type of people who make goals and set out to accomplish them. When something trips them up, they want to know why and what can be done next time to alleviate that situation and accomplish the goal.

14. Certain people I have met in my life easily provoke me.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- This type of question is trying to determine if you are an individual who has racial issues or problems dealing with certain groups or individuals. You must be accepting of everyone no matter what their social, religious, or economic background.

15. I am the type of person who is forgiving.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- You don't hold a grudge; you are forgiving of people and situations.

16. I do many things which I regret afterwards (I regret things more than others seem to).
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- This type of question implies that you have a guilty conscience for what you are doing. Another key wording is "many things." This implies that you regret many things that happen to you in your day-to-day life.

17. When in a group of people, I have trouble thinking of the right things to talk about.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- This question implies that you are nervous around groups of people. Remember that firefighters are constantly around the public and their coworkers. You should be comfortable in social situations.

18. If several people find themselves in trouble, the best thing for them to do is to agree upon a story and stick to it.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- This type of behavior is totally dishonest. The question says to stick to a story whether or not it is true. Firefighters are honest, sincere people who do not put themselves in positions like this.

19. When I'm in a small, cramped space (as on a crowded elevator), I have an uncomfortable feeling of being "shut in."
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- This question is trying to determine if you are claustrophobic. Remember that firefighters wear masks and are in emergency scenes where they have no visibility because of smoke and flames. You can't be the type of person that is bothered by these situations.

20. When given a set of rules, I follow them when personally convenient, rather than exactly to the letter.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- Firefighters are given many safety rules and procedures that they must follow. You cannot follow rules arbitrarily or only when it is convenient. Safety procedures must be followed at all times; not only for the firefighter's safety but for the other firefighters and the victims at the scene.

21. I like acting on impulses of the moment, even if they land me in later difficulties.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as your personality dictates.)

- Firefighters are not the type of people who think "off the cuff." They don't act on impulse without thinking through to the consequences of their behavior.

22. I have a strong desire to win any game I play with others.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- Firefighters by nature are competitive. They do have a strong desire to win. They like to be successful in what they are trying to accomplish. On the other hand, if they do not succeed at a game, they are gracious and are good losers.

23. I admit my mistakes even if I get in trouble.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- This is another question concerning honesty. If firefighters make a mistake, they either report it to another firefighter or an officer. Even if there will be consequences for their mistake, they take responsibility for them.

24. I rarely miss a day on the job.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" as your personality dictates.)

- Firefighters show up unless there is an absolute emergency. They don't take a day off just because it's a nice day and they want to play a round of golf or attend a party. They realize that their job is a priority and a responsibility.

IMPRESSION CONTROL QUESTIONS

Below are some questions that are categorized as "Impression Control Questions." These type of questions determine whether or not you are trying to portray yourself as someone who is always happy, always had the perfect job, never made mistakes, never been bored or tired, never acted on impulse, etc. It is impossible for anyone to answer Strongly Agree or Agree on any of these type of questions. They are trying to determine if you are being deceitful and trying to present yourself differently than you really are. As you can see, the key wording for these questions is *always* and *never*. Be sure to take a good look at the question when you see those key words.

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----------------|-------|----------|----------|-------------------|
| 1. | I always finish what I start. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 2. | I am always full of energy. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 3. | I am always happy. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 4. | I have always had the perfect job. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 5. | I never made a mistake at work. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 6. | I have never made a statement that wasn't completely true. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 7. | I have never acted on impulse. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 8. | I have never been bored. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 9. | I have never been late in anything. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 10. | I have never been tired at work. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Not Sure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

11. I have never used bad language to anyone.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

12. I have never met someone I didn't like.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Important Test Note: We strongly recommend that you answer **Strongly Disagree** for these type of Impression Control questions.

1. I always finish what I start.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- That is impossible for anyone to state. There are times in everyone's life where something has happened, possibly beyond their control, while they are working on a project or a job that prevents finishing.

2. I am always full of energy.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- Again, this is impossible. No one can always be full of energy. There have been times in your life where you possibly didn't feel well, didn't get enough asleep, etc.

3. I am always happy.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- No one is never always happy. There is always some point in your life where you were sad or disappointed about something.

4. I have always had the perfect job.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- If that is the case, there would be a line from here to China for that job. Some people have jobs that they enjoy, but most people have had numerous jobs and they can't all be perfect.

5. I never made a mistake at work.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- Everyone has made a mistake at work at some point.

6. I have never made a statement that wasn't completely true.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- At some time, everyone has made a statement that wasn't completely true.

7. I have never acted on impulse.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- At some point, everyone has reacted to something impulsively, where they didn't completely

think out their actions.

8. I have never been bored.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- That's impossible. Everyone has been bored at some point.

9. I have never been late in anything.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- Everyone has been late to either a class, a party, a sports practice for a reason that was beyond your control, such as weather, you weren't driving, etc.

10. I have never been tired at work.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- No one can state that they've never been tired at work. Maybe you came to work ill or didn't feel well and didn't sleep the night before because of illness or something that has kept you up.

11. I have never used bad language to anyone.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- It would be hard to believe that anyone has never sworn or gotten angry or used some time of bad language at least once in their life.

12. I have never met someone I didn't like.

(We believe this type of question should be answered "Strongly Disagree.")

- Everyone has met someone who was rude to them. Or maybe it's the person that committed a crime or injustice.

STEALING/DRUG USE/DISHONESTY

1. If a coworker stole something from work, I would always report him/her.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
2. One or more of my friends has taken money from their employer without getting caught.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
3. At work, most people will falsify receipts to get more money than they deserve from the company.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
4. I have exaggerated my previous work experience in order to get a good job.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
5. Everyone knowingly overdraws his/her bank account.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
6. I have bought an item when I know it was stolen.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
7. I have cheated on my income tax.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
8. It is alright for a person to use illegal drugs at home provided he/she doesn't use them at work.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
9. At least once, I have used an illegal drug at work or shortly before going to work.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
10. Some of my friends use drugs.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
11. If I knew a coworker was using an illegal drug at work, I would report it to a supervisor.
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
12. Do you believe that stealing is part of growing up?
Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

13. Marijuana is okay when its use doesn't affect your work.
- Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
14. It's alright to show up to work under the influence once in awhile.
- Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
15. Everyone steals something at some point in their life.
- Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree
16. Borrowing supplies from work will usually lead to stealing.
- Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

IMPORTANT TEST NOTE: **This is another section discussing stealing, drug use and dishonesty where we suggest you answer either "Strongly Agree" or "Strongly Disagree".** Below are our suggested answers:

1. If a coworker stole something from work, I would always report him/her.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree.")
- This is a huge question dealing with honesty. If you knew a coworker had stolen something, it is your responsibility to report them, even if they are friends of yours.
2. One or more of my friends has taken money from their employer without getting caught.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree.")
- The statement "one or more of my friends" indicates that you associate with people who would be dishonest and take money from their employer. It also indicates that you knew that your friends had taken money from their employee but did not report it.
3. At work, most people will falsify receipts to get more money than they deserve from the company.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree.")
- Again, the wording of this question indicates "most" people would falsify receipts. This is another question directed at honesty. Most people do not falsify receipts and are honest in their nature.
4. I have exaggerated my previous work experience in order to get a good job.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree.")
- This again points to your honesty traits. Exaggerating your work experience is just another word for lying on your job application.
5. Everyone knowingly overdraws his/her bank account.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree.")
- Look at the word "everyone." There are people who knowingly do overdraw their bank accounts,

but most everyone would not knowingly overdraw their account.

6. I have bought an item when I know it was stolen.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as **"Strongly Disagree."**)

- This question is the extreme of dishonesty. By stating that you bought an item that you knew was stolen says that you have no integrity or honesty and means you would possibly steal from your employer.

7. I have cheated on my income tax.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as **"Strongly Disagree."**)

- There are people who cheat on their income tax but this is a question that is trying to determine your honesty and integrity.

8. It is alright for a person to use illegal drugs at home provided he/she doesn't use them at work.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as **"Strongly Disagree"**)

- It's never alright for anyone to use illegal drugs.

9. At least once, I have used an illegal drug at work or shortly before going to work.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as **"Strongly Disagree."**)

- At no time would you take any part in using any type of illegal drug – whether on duty or on your own time.

10. Some of my friends use drugs.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as **"Strongly Disagree."**)

- This question states that you have friends that use drugs which shows the character of the people you associate with.

11. If I knew a coworker was using an illegal drug at work, I would report it to a supervisor.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as **"Strongly Agree."**)

- Anytime you know of anyone using an illegal drug at work, even if it's a friend, you should immediately report it to a supervisor. This is a safety hazard, not only for the worker but for the individuals working with this person.

12. Do you believe that stealing is part of growing up?

(We believe this type of question should be answered as **"Strongly Disagree."**)

- That would be saying that you believe stealing is a part of everyone's growing up and that is totally incorrect.

13. Marijuana is okay when its use doesn't affect your work.

(We believe this type of question should be answered as **"Strongly Disagree."**)

- The use of an illegal drug is never okay. Whether it affects your work or not, it is wrong.

14. It's alright to show up to work under the influence once in awhile.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree.")

- It's never okay to show up to work under the influence – whether it is a drug or alcohol.

15. Everyone steals something at some point in their life.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Disagree.")

- The key word here is "everyone". This would imply that you think that everyone is dishonest and everyone steals.

16. Borrowing supplies from work will usually lead to stealing.
(We believe this type of question should be answered as "Strongly Agree.")

- Borrowing supplies could lead to stealing – you may not return them. No one should ever borrow supplies from work unless a superior is informed.

TEST TAKING STRATEGY FOR THE VIDEO PORTION OF YOUR EXAM

It states in your tutorial that you will be able to watch each video up to 3 times before answering the questions. It is highly recommended that you do that to make sure you don't miss any information in the video.

The training guide booklet that will be supplied to you when you take the examination will have information that you will need to answer questions. During the video, it is extremely important that you take numerous notes so that you can compare those notes to the information that is presented in the training guide you will receive in order to determine the correct answer.

We highly recommend that you view the tutorial for the New York Firefighter Examination, available online at the following address:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcas/html/employment/firefighter_cbt-tutorials.shtml.

As you saw in the video, information is presented to you verbally that is not in your simulated training guide. There is also information presented in a sentence format on the screen that is not in your training guide. It is extremely important that you take notes on that information also.

Remember that the key to your scoring well is to take as many notes as possible on the information that is presented to you during the video. Do not just sit back, watch the video, and then answer the questions with only the training guide as your reference.

You can also have a friend or family member read you some of the paragraphs we have included in our Reading Comprehension section while you take notes on what is being read to you. They could ask you their own questions on the information that was read to you or you can answer the multiple-choice questions supplied for that passage. You can also have someone read you newspaper or magazine articles while you take vigorous notes. Then, have them ask you questions about what was read to you. Go back and use your notes to answer the questions.

In one of the sections of your video exam, you will be given information to read on the screen and the corresponding questions will be read to you verbally. The answer choices will be displayed on the video for you to choose the correct answer. For practice for this section, you could have someone read our Reading Comprehension paragraphs to you, then have them read you the questions, and then you look at the answer choices only to determine the correct answer.

Again, we can't emphasize it enough that it is extremely important that you practice for this portion of the examination. The more you practice your note-taking techniques and your listening skills, the better you will perform on your actual firefighter examination.

STRATEGIES BEFORE THE EXAMINATION

While taking these practice examinations, highlight the areas and questions that you find difficult. Go back over these areas continuously until you understand the strategies and philosophies behind these questions. This is the time to find out what you don't understand and the time to correct any testing deficiencies you may have.

Find a comfortable area that is well lit. The area should be free from distractions, and located as far away as possible from any potential distractions, such as televisions, radios, or where conversations are taking place. Set aside a time of day where your concentration is at its peak. For some individuals, this may be early morning, while for others it could be afternoon or evening. Try to study for 1-2 hour sessions, which are more productive than several 20-25 minute sessions.

For those individuals who are smokers, remember that during examinations, all smoking will be prohibited. This means that you will not be allowed to smoke for this entire 2-3 hour period. You should try eliminating smoking for 2-3 hour periods so that you will not have high anxiety or frustration from not smoking during the examination.

Exercise regularly and stay in good physical condition. People who keep themselves in good physical condition have a competitive edge over their competition. A good, physically fit body makes for a good, mentally fit mind.

Finally, it is important that you receive an adequate amount of rest, not only the day before the examination but also for the preceding period. If you are used to going to bed at 11:00 p.m. and getting 7 hours of sleep, do so. Do not think that if you go to bed at 9:00 p.m. the day before the examination, those extra two hours will help you. More than likely, you will wake up two hours earlier and this will cause you more anxiety and a tendency to be more tired during the examination.

FINAL DAYS BEFORE THE EXAMINATION

Diet: Try to eat foods high in carbohydrates two-three days before the examination to give you the extra energy you will need. You will be nervous the day before and the day of the exam; much of this nervousness and high anxiety will cause you to use up energy. The night before the exam it is a good idea to have a pasta dinner to load up on carbohydrates to give you the needed energy for the test.

It is a good idea to have someone call you to make sure you don't oversleep the morning of the exam. If you have a friend who is also taking the exam, you should follow each other. In case your car would break down on the way to the exam, you could ride along with your friend and still arrive at the examination.

ARRIVING FOR THE EXAMINATION

Make sure you know the exact location of the examination. It is a good idea to do a test run to find out the time frame it will take you to get to the examining site. Remember that if it is a weekday and the examination is at 9:00 a.m., you will have to factor in rush hour traffic. Remember, an accident on your route could cause you to be late for the examination. Allow yourself at least an additional 45-50 minutes if you will be driving at a busy time period. You should arrive at the examination site at least 30 minutes ahead of time. This gives you adequate time in the event of any problem. Bring along this booklet to review the strategies and questions during the extra time you will have.

Upon arriving at the examination site, give yourself a chance to get your thoughts together and relax. To relieve anxiety, take 4-5 deep breaths, inhaling and exhaling slowly. This will help release any anxiety that you may have. Always remember, it is better to have some anxiety and be well prepared for your examination than to have no anxiety and be unprepared.

Many examinations are held in large auditoriums or halls. It is a good idea to bring a light sweater or sweatshirt that you can put on before the test.

You will find that most firefighter examinations have a 2-3 hour time limit. You should build up to concentrating for these extended periods of time. If the examination is 3 hours, you want to be just as sharp at the end as you were at the beginning. Take some type of snack with you to eat after the second hour of testing to keep your blood sugar up. This

TEST-TAKING TACTICS: EVALUATING ANSWER CHOICES

Answer on the basis of the information given in the question. When answering test questions, you must base your answer solely on the information contained in the test question. The test for a Firefighter requires no previous knowledge of the job. The test questions do not have to reflect the way the job is really done or the actual procedures of the Fire Department.

Problems arise when a person who is familiar with procedures of the fire department encounters a test question based on something which contradicts actual practices. It is in this kind of situation which you must ignore actual practices and answer on the basis of what the test question says. For example, you might know that kitchen stove fires are usually extinguished with a portable fire extinguisher, but a test question might describe a stove fire being put out with a fire hose attached to a hydrant. In this kind of test situation, never mind the actual practice; go by the information in the question.

Tell yourself the answer to a question before you look at the answer choices. Sometimes the question is too vague for you to anticipate the answer ahead of time. But often the question stem is a question precise enough for you to answer it before you look at the answer choices. For instance, suppose you had studied the diagram of an apartment and then the question asked, "The most direct route from the dining room to the fire escape is...." You should be able to answer this kind of question in your head before you look at the four answer choices. If you answer the question in your head before you look at any of the four answer choices, you are more likely to get the right answer.

Remember that part of the test maker's job is to provide three false answers for every correct one. It is a multiple choice test, not a true/false test. A skillful test maker will offer you some false choices which seem pretty good in order to distract you from the correct answer. Among test makers these false choices are called "distractors." But if you have already decided what answer you should be looking for, you will not be distracted so easily by bad answers which might look pretty good and which come before the correct answer. A seductive and a half-true will not prevent you from reaching a correct answer if you know what you are looking for.

Sort answers into three categories. As soon as you read a particular answer choice, decide if it is True, False, or Uncertain. If you are quite sure that an answer choice is True, use your pencil to write a "T" in front of that answer choice. But continue to read the other answer choices because you might find another True one and then have to make a final choice.

If you are quite sure that an answer choice is False, use your pencil to write an "F" in front of that answer choice. You may find that an answer is False even before you have finished reading the whole answer. Stop reading it as soon as you are sure it is false and mark with an "F".

If you are Uncertain about whether a particular answer choice is correct, use your pencil to put a question mark (?) in front of that answer choice.

When you have finished reading all four answer choices, each one should be preceded by a "T" or an "F" or a question mark (?). If there is only one with a "T", that is probably your answer. If you have more than one with a "T", or a "T" and a question mark, you may need to think a bit before choosing your final answer. But you should not have to bother any more with answers you have already given an "F".

Negative Questions: Using "T" and "F" to evaluate answer choices is better than using something like a check mark to denote a correct answer when it comes to answering negative questions. Negative questions are questions which ask you to pick out an answer choice which is "not true." If you are evaluating each answer choice one by one and marking each one "T" or "F", negative questions will be easy for you to handle.

Half-true Answers: Sometimes an answer choice really contains two different statements. For instance, an answer choice might say, "there is a bedroom on the right and the kitchen is on the left." Maybe it is True that "there is a bedroom on the right," but False that "the kitchen is on the left." With this kind of answer choice, put a slash mark between the two different statements, and write "T" or "F" over each separate part of the answer choice. But out in the margin write "F" since an answer choice must be completely True to be valid.

When it is difficult to choose between two answer choices, look back at the question stem. Sometimes there are two answer choices which both look good. Or maybe all of the answer choices look bad. When you find yourself having trouble making the final choice of an answer, stop staring at the answer choices. Go back and look at the question stem and the information the question is based on.

A skillful test maker tries to make two or three of the answer choices look very good. All the answer choices may contain some truth, which make them tempting. Or all may look wrong. But the test maker has to have put some detail into the "fact pattern" of the question to justify the claim that one of these answers is better than the others. If reviewing the answer choices themselves has not helped, the clue to which answer is correct is likely to be in the question stem or "fact pattern" rather than in the answer choices. So go back to the question stem and the fact pattern the look for the deciding factor.

Choose the best answer. A very common problem for test takers is the problem of recognizing that the best possible answer to a question has not been included among the answer choices. None of the answer choices seems to be fully adequate to the situation. In part, this is often a result of the way multiple choice questions are constructed. The exam maker does not have to include all the correct procedures in answer choices; that might make for terribly long answer choices. Hence, some correct answers are only partial answers. Sometimes you will be given more than one partial answer and asked to choose which is the best among these. In this sort of situation, work at eliminating the answer choices which are definitely wrong or most seriously incomplete. For your answer choose the best one remaining after this kind of elimination process.

TEST-TAKING TACTICS: WORD CLUES

With multiple choice questions, only one of the answers can be correct. If there are four choices, three must be wrong. An answer may be correct because it is precise or because it is vague. An answer may be wrong because it is too exaggerated or too restrictive. Consider the following question:

A firefighter is required to wear the mask at any fire scene where there is a lot of smoke and whenever there is clear danger of hazardous chemicals in the air. If a firefighter's mask fails to work properly, the firefighter is to report this immediately to the officer in charge at the scene. The officer will usually order the firefighter to work off the immediate fire scene, such as at a hydrant. The firefighter may attempt to get the mask working properly and then request to be reassigned to the fire area.

Based on the paragraph above, it would be most correct to say that:

- A) a firefighter should wear the mask only when there is a lot of smoke at a fire scene
- B) a firefighter must attempt to repair a mask which is not working properly
- C) a firefighter whose mask is not working properly will be assigned to work at a hydrant
- D) the firefighter whose mask has been repaired can be reassigned to the fire area

In the above example, certain key words are used to make answers right or wrong. The A) choice is wrong because it contains the word "only." Without "only" A) would be a correct answer. The B) choice would be correct if it said "may" instead of "must." The C) choice is wrong because it says "will." The C) choice would be fine if it said "may" instead of "will." The D) choice is correct; it only says "can." The D) choice would be wrong if it said "must" instead of "can."

When evaluating answer choices, the words to be on the lookout for are the little words which tend to either "harden" or "soften" statements. Words which "harden" statements, and make them difficult to defend, are strong words like: all, every, always, will, must, certainly, invariably, surely, no one, ever, any, no matter, nothing, etc. Words which "soften" statements, and make them easy to defend, are words like: some, many, sometimes, may, possibly, generally, probably, usually, often, can, could, might, occasionally, etc. Notice how these words appear both in the "fact pattern" and in the answer choices of the example.

There are times when a very "hard" statement can be a correct answer choice. For instance, in the example above, it would be correct to make up an answer choice which states, "If a firefighter's mask fails to operate properly at a fire where there is a lot of smoke, the firefighter must always notify the officer in charge." Do not automatically rule out "hard" statements, but be careful about accepting them.

Remember that the test maker must be able to defend the correct answer and defend the claim that the other three answers are wrong. These little words which "harden" or "soften" statements often help to justify whether an answer is right or wrong. (They also reflect the difference between prudent, reasonable statements and exaggerated or overly rigid statements.) Hence, be sensitive to these little words when you are reading questions and evaluating answer choices. Get in the habit of using your pencil to underline or circle such words.

TEST-TAKING TACTICS: UNDERSTANDING THE TEST MAKER'S TACTICS

As a test taker, you will be more skilled if you know how a test maker thinks. Your test taking strategies must anticipate the test maker's strategies. With multiple choice questions, the problem for the test maker is to create three bad answers for every good answer.

To appreciate the test maker's problems and to improve your own ability as a test taker, you should practice making up a few questions yourself. Here is some material to work with. Below is a short reading passage from a Fire Academy training manual, followed by four answer choices. As it appears below, all the answer choices are correct. You should try to come up with some other answer choices which would be wrong, or make some little changes in these answer choices so that they are no longer correct.

Sometimes it is necessary to cut holes in the roof or floors of a building to release bottled up heat and smoke. During roof or floor cutting operations, everyone in the vicinity of a saw in operation shall observe, as near as possible and practical, a 20 foot radius Circle of Danger. Only the Officer, the Operator and the Guide Man may enter this circle. All persons directly to the rear of the operating saw blade must be warned away, as the saw may throw debris 20 feet or more.

Side pressure or twisting of the blade when operating should be avoided. The saw should never be forced. If too much pressure is applied to the blade, the hazard of blade breakage (carbide tipped) or blade shattering (aluminum oxide or silicon carbide discs) is increased. A blade which breaks or shatters during cutting may cause serious injury to the Operator or others in the area.

Based on the information above, it would be most correct to say that:

- A) *No one should be within 20 feet of the operating saw except the Officer, the Operator and the Guide Man.*
- B) *Even someone who is 20 feet away can be in danger if the person is directly behind the saw when it is operating.*
- C) *Carbide tipped blades will break, not shatter, if too much pressure is applied.*
- D) *Side pressure may cause shattering of the blade if the blade is an aluminum oxide or silicon carbon disc.*

No doubt, you can think of many ways to make three of the above answer choices wrong. But you probably would not want to make an answer choice so obviously wrong that no one would ever choose it. There is no point making up answers if no one will choose them. The idea is to make an answer wrong, but still give it some appeal so that it will be an effective "distractor" from the right answer. Here are some test maker tactics for doing that:

1. **Overstate the point.** In the example, you could change 20 feet to 25 feet. Or you could say that side pressure will definitely or always cause the blade to break or shatter. Or you could insist rigidly on the 20 foot circle, forgetting that the rule says, "as near as possible and practical." Or you could say that the Officer must be in the circle instead of that he may be in the circle.
2. **Ignore the fine points.** In the example, you could substitute something general like "a safe distance" for the exact rule of 20 feet. Or you could ignore the detail that 20 feet may not be adequate for someone directly behind the saw. Or you might overlook the fact that these rules apply only when the saw is actually in operation.
3. **Change just one detail.** In the example, you could switch "breaking" and "shattering" for the different kinds of blades. Or you could switch the kinds of blades. You could change the rule about people directly behind the saw to make it people directly in front of the saw.

4. **Provide some bait to make false answers attractive.** An easy way to do this is to keep some exact words from the "fact pattern" in the false answers. Another way to do this is to make a two part answer; start with something that is correct, then add something that is wrong. For the example, you might say, "Other firefighters should remain at least 20 feet away when practical, and the Operator should especially warn anyone directly in front of him."
5. **Twist the meaning around.** In the example you could say that the saw operator must go at least 20 feet from other people instead of the rule that other people must keep 20 feet from the saw operator. Or you might try saying that the saw cannot be used less than 20 feet from the edge of a roof.

TEST TAKING STRATEGY FOR VERBAL COMPREHENSION

Since your exam will be a written one, not an oral one, your verbal comprehension will be measured only by means of reading comprehension. Hence, as far as your exam is concerned, verbal comprehension measures your ability to read and understand the types of written materials that a firefighter might be expected to read on the job. You will be presented with a reading passage and then asked to answer questions about the passage. All the information needed to answer the questions will be included in the passage itself.

In answering the questions based on the reading passage, it is important that you answer the questions only according to the information given in the passage. If you have information from your own experience and knowledge, you should not use it to answer a question of this type. Even if you think that there is a mistake in the reading selection, you must still answer the question on the basis of the information given in the reading passage.

The kinds of Reading Comprehension questions which appear on a civil service exam tend to be somewhat different from the reading comprehension questions on a school related exam. That is because there are different kinds of reading--skimming, reading for general understanding, reading for details, etc. Your exam will be based mostly on reading technical materials, not anything like a novel or essay. Hence, your exam will have more focus on exact grasp of details.

There are certain techniques that will help you do well on reading comprehension questions. Here is a summary of the most important techniques.

Use your pencil. To begin with, use your pencil as a pointer. Using the pencil to guide your eye along a line of text helps you to focus on the details in the reading; it holds your attention to the precise words in the passage. In a long test, attention may weaken. Fatigue may blunt your attention to details. But using your pencil as a pointer will help to preserve your attention to details.

Another benefit of using the pencil as a pointer is that it will probably speed up your reading. The steady flow of the pencil across the page with each line of text draws they eye along at a steady pace. Do not go faster than you can grasp the text, but do try to keep your reading going at a steady pace set by the pencil.

Circle key words and phrases. In a Reading Comprehension test you are not reading for just a vague general understanding of the passage. You usually have to read for detailed understanding. There will be individual words which are important for grasping a point exactly. You do not want to write so much on a passage that it is hard to read a second time if you need to go back to check a detail. But you do want to circle key words or phrases which will enable you to zero in on precise points needed to answer a question.

Read short questions carefully the first time. When you are reading a short question for the first time, read it carefully. A short question is one that is only seven or eight lines long. You can retain all of the main ideas and remember where particular things are mentioned from one careful reading. Hence, you do not want to waste time reading this passage twice.

Besides wasting time, another bad consequence of reading a short question very carelessly the first time is that it may leave you with some false impressions of what you have read. Wrong ideas can get stuck in your head from a careless reading. Then it will be more difficult to get the correct answer.

- **For long questions, look ahead to see what is being asked.** Take a look at the "stem" of the question, the sentence which precedes the answer choices. And look at the kinds of choices which are being offered. Sometimes reading passages are long but the questions are asking only for particular details. In that case you can often skim a long passage to find the particular detail.

Keep forging ahead. Do not get bogged down if there is a word or sentence you do not understand. You may get the main idea without knowing the individual word or sentence. Sometimes you can sense the meaning of the word from the context. Sometimes the word or sentence may not be the basis of any question. If there is some idea you need to answer a question but do not understand, read it one more time. If you still do not understand it, move on. You can come back to this question later if you have more time at the end of the test.

Picture what you read. Try to form a picture in your mind as you read. School books used to teach reading contain many pictures because pictures aid comprehension. When reading material without pictures, it will aid your comprehension if you use your imagination to picture in your mind what you are reading. Read as if you were a professional illustrator who has been hired to do an illustration for the passage.

Ask yourself questions as you read. When you finish reading a sentence, ask yourself what the author was saying. At the end of a whole paragraph, ask yourself what the point of the whole paragraph was. If you ask yourself questions, you will find that you are paraphrasing the passage in your mind. That will help your understanding.

Know where the author stands. Sometimes a passage will contain an evaluation of some ideas or tools or procedures. The author may want to make the point that certain practices or procedures are bad or that certain tools may not be right for a particular job. Be sure you know if the author is accepting or rejecting something.

Do not rely on this guide alone in preparation for the exam. This was the information available to me in 2012. I have no knowledge of the upcoming test in any way. It may be completely different from the test given in 2012. Feel free to make this available to any and all who are taking the upcoming exam. The following info is based on my knowledge of the 2012 exam.

The most important part of the exam is the personality section. The questions are designed to weed out people that the administration deems to be unsuitable for this job. If you answer these questions as truthfully as possible you will likely find yourself thousands of list numbers away from a hireable score. You have to answer how the test makers want you to answer. Imagine the test maker's perfect candidate, and answer like they would. The information in this guide will give you some insight as to what they are looking for.

The other portions of the test are fairly easy. They have almost nothing to do with actual firefighting. As long as you pay attention, read/watch/listen carefully, and double-check EVERY answer (No matter how obvious the answer may seem), you should have no problem scoring perfect on these sections.

I highly recommend you take every opportunity to prepare for this exam that you can. Go to any review session that is available to you. For the price, they may not seem worth it, but if it gets you a single point higher on the exam; it will

be worth every penny. A single point can mean the difference between getting on the job, or just missing it.

The FDNY is pushing to hire only certain types of people into their ranks. If you do not fall into one of these categories, you are on your own. Do as best you can to prove you belong on this job. Some people will have it handed to them; others will fight tooth and nail for it and still be passed over. If you are fortunate enough to score high and get a hirable list number, you are in for a long and stressful process. But when all is said and done, you will have the greatest job in the world.

Best of luck!