Prepare Yourself for the Firefighter Trainee Interview and for the Position


- Review the Firefighter Trainee job description. Analyze all qualifications, duties, essential functions, knowledge, skills and abilities.

- Draft a summary of your qualifications and work, school and volunteer experiences.

Know What to Expect from an Oral Board Interview.

- Raters can only evaluate your responses based on the information that you communicate during the interview. Do not assume that they know other information about you.

- Answer the questions being asked. You will be evaluated on your responses to the questions as they pertain to the position.

- If you don’t understand a question, you may ask the rater to repeat the question.

- Raters will be taking notes and may not be looking directly at you during the interview.

- The board will be comprised of a combination of sworn Fire and Rescue personnel and other staff who are involved in the testing process.

- Remember that the raters want you to do well!

Practice for the Firefighter Trainee Interviews

- Practice listening to questions with multiple parts, taking a few notes about the questions, and then answering all parts of the questions.

- Analyze and be able to explain how your training, education, and work experience are related to the position.
• Think about specific situations from your work, school, and volunteer experiences and practice talking about those.

• Make an audio and/or videotape of your practice sessions or practice in front of a mirror.

• Identify and correct any distracting mannerisms that you may have. Avoid using words like “um”, “like”, “you know”, “man”, “dude”, etc.

• Draft potential interview questions and answer them.

• Consider seeking feedback from a coworker, friend, family member, etc.

Be Professional

• Dress appropriately in business attire.

• Avoid overwhelming smells like smoke, cologne, perfume, etc.

• Arrive on time and be sure that you are at the right location. If you are late you will not be allowed to interview.

• Electronic devices (including cell phones or tablets) will not be allowed in your interview.

• Please leave devices at home, or secure them in your car when you arrive for your interview.

• Dispose of gum and tobacco.

• Remove sunglasses and hats.

During the Interview

• Listen carefully to the questions before you answer.

• Ensure that your answers are detailed and complete. You may refer to your preview notes and you may also make additional notes during the interview.

• Relax and breathe.

• Sit up straight.

• Please do not be intimidated by raters who seem serious - they are supposed to be that way!

Reflect on the Interview Afterward

• What went well?

• What could you have done differently or better?

• Were you adequately prepared?

• How should you prepare for the next interview - even if you get this position?

• Remember, all testing information is confidential. Do not record or discuss the interview questions.