

Tips for Taking Promotional Exams

Taking promotional exams can be very stressful.

Following these test taking tips can reduce your anxiety and enhance your performance.

Before the Exam

- Spend time working through practice tests well before your scheduled test date.
- You should become familiar with the testing location. (Usually a Public School)
This includes the testing location's proximity to public transportation, available parking (note the Saturday Parking restrictions), how long it will take you to get there on the morning of the exam?, are there nearby convenient stores to get a drink, sandwich, piece of fruit, candy bar etc?
I would suggest doing a "dry run" the week before the exam.
- Get a good night's sleep the evening before the test.
- Dress comfortably...this is not a fashion show...Hawaiian Shirts should be avoided.
- Bring water and a snack (Nuts and Chocolate).
- Be prepared to be at the test site for at least 5 hours. Do not plan to attend a birthday party right after the exam!
- Eat a healthy, protein-rich breakfast the morning of your test.
- Bring a dozen number 2 pencils so you have spares.
- Arrive at the testing facility at least a half hour before the start of the exam. I would recommend that a spouse or good friend drive you to the exam so you don't have to worry about public transportation or parking your vehicle.
- Try not to carpool with your coworkers. It could be unnerving when someone is late and you must rush to get to the site and find a last minute parking spot. Also, you want to take every minute for the exam and your coworkers may finish early and divert your concentration away from the more important item, the exam.
- Relax your mind before the test begins.
- You may want to develop a document with the most important facts about each of the orders so you can review these items so the fresh in your mind on the day of the exam..
- There are always questions regarding Inspector General and Department of Investigation(DOI) Issues.
- THINK POSITIVE!

During the Exam

- Read the instructions carefully. Answer sheets may vary from person to person. Some will have the numbering that is vertical (top – bottom) and others may be horizontal (left-right).
- Read each question and ALL the answers before marking anything on your scoring sheet.
- Pay attention to details. Find key words or phrases in the question that will help you choose the correct answer. You should underline important or key words.
- Pay special attention to ABSOLUTE words such as: Always and Never..... these are often used for safety related items.
- Make sure you understand what the question is asking. Be sure you are responding to the question that is being asked.
- Reading Comprehension – If the test requires you to read an order and answer a question based on your interpretation of that order, read the questions first. By doing this, you will know what you are looking for as you read.
- Math Questions - When using "scratch" paper on a math test, double check to make sure that you have copied the problem correctly from the test booklet! If your answer does not match one of the choices, reread the problem, recopy the numbers, and try solving it again.
- Pay attention to time passing in relation to the time allotment for that portion of your exam...a digital stop watch is very helpful. If you have 60 minutes to do 30 questions, you have an average of 2 minutes per question....you should have 15 questions done after 30 minutes.
- Don't get distracted by other testers in the room.
- If you come across a question that is difficult, don't spend all of your time on it. Move on and come back to it at the end. Do all of the questions you know first, then go back and find questions that you have some knowledge about and eliminate choices that you know are incorrect.
- Don't second guess yourself by changing your first answers unless you are 100% certain.
- Don't fall into the trap of looking for patterns in the answers. There really can be three (or more) "C" answers in a row.

- When you are finished, look closely to make sure that you haven't overlooked any questions.
- Remember that there may be fictional situations presented. Do not apply real, on the job procedures, to a fictional item. Read the paragraph/passage carefully and answer only based on the information given....your past experiences may be in conflict with the information presented.
- There may be 2 "correct" answers so you must choose the "most correct" answer.
- Use every minute that you are given.
- GOOD LUCK!

