

**Firefighter
Sworn Applicant Process
Test Sections**



GENERAL PREPARATION TIPS FOR THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION

1. **ON THE DAY OF TESTING**

- A) Wear comfortable clothing
- B) Arrive early
- C) Get a good rest the night before
- D) Eat a good meal before you arrive

2. **LEARNING THE STUDY GUIDE**

- A) You must put in a lot of study time. The study session is scheduled to last for two (2) hours. Simply reading through the study guide once is not enough to fully comprehend the materials.
- B) Read and memorize all of the material in the study guide.
- C) Pay particular attention to the instructions of each section.
- D) Write an outline - you cannot use your notes during the exam but writing an outline will help you to memorize and organize the material.
- E) Test yourself on the material - think of the types of questions which will be asked on the exam (reading it through is not enough to really learn it).

3. **WHILE TAKING THE EXAM**

- A) Take your time - The written exam is scheduled for 1 ½ hours, which should be more than enough time to complete the exam. However, it is your responsibility to complete your test within the allotted time period.
- B) Don't get stuck on any one question - if you don't know an answer, leave the question and come back to it later
- C) If you don't know an answer, then guess - there is no additional penalty for guessing, and guesses are usually correct
- D) Select the alternative which you feel is correct but also review the alternatives which you feel are incorrect just to make sure - don't jump to hasty conclusions

SECTIONS OF THE FIREFIGHTER APPLICANT EXAM

1. ABILITY TO SOLVE WORK-RELATED ARITHMETIC

The Study Guide will present examples of math problems and their solutions. You will need to understand how to solve these basic math problems for the test.

2. LEARN AND USE TECHNICAL INFORMATION

This section of the written examination will evaluate your ability to learn and use technical information. It will contain several articles and instructions relating to firefighting. You must read and learn these materials in order to answer relevant questions that will appear on the test.

3. LEARN AND RECALL VISUAL INFORMATION

This section of the exam will evaluate your ability to learn and recall various mechanical objects, symbols, blueprints, and room layouts. On the test, you will be asked to identify the details contained within these drawings.

4. OBSERVE AND REPORT EVENTS ACCURATELY

This section of the written exam will evaluate your ability to observe, remember, and report details about situations and events. The Study Guide will present pictures with short scenarios describing an event. For the test, you will be required to recall specific details about these events.

SECTION 1:

ABILITY TO SOLVE WORK-RELATED ARITHMETIC PROBLEMS

1. *WHAT TO LEARN*

- A. Learn how to solve the types of job-related mathematical problems listed in the Study Guide. The actual word problems in the Study Guide do not need to be memorized—they are provided to help you learn.
- B. Be sure that you understand how to solve the following types of mathematical problems:
 - 1. Addition
 - 2. Subtraction
 - 3. Multiplication
 - 4. Division
 - 5. Percentages
 - 6. Mileage
 - 7. Averages
 - 8. Military time
 - 9. Angles
 - 10. Measuring space and volume
- C. If you are confused by any of the mathematical problems listed above, then you should consult a basic math book or request assistance.

2. *WHAT WILL BE ON THE TEST*

Questions on the test will assess your ability to solve word problems and basic math problems. Be sure to read each question carefully so that you understand the type of mathematical operation that should be used to solve the problem.

SECTION 2:

ABILITY TO LEARN AND USE TECHNICAL INFORMATION

READING MATERIALS

1. *WHAT TO LEARN*

- A. During the Study Session, read the articles, essays, and instructions carefully to learn all of the facts and principles that are presented. Note that you will not have the Study Guide available when you take your test, so you must remember the details.
- B. It is often helpful to take notes on important ideas and facts. (Be aware, that you may take notes during the study session to help organize your thoughts. However, you will not receive your notes back when you complete your test.)
- C. Be sure to read all passages several times. You will learn more and retain it better each time you read the passage.
- D. Be an active learner—write out questions that you think may be on the exam.

2. *WHAT WILL BE ON THE TEST*

- A. Some questions will be straightforward and ask you specific facts.
- B. Some questions will ask for your understanding of the principles. These questions may ask you to apply the ideas to different situations.
- C. Remember, there is only one correct answer for each question. If you feel that there is more than one correct answer, then choose the best answer.

SECTION 3:

ABILITY TO LEARN AND RECALL VISUAL INFORMATION

PART 1: MECHANICAL DEVICES

1. *WHAT TO LEARN*

- A. Learn how to recall and understand visual and mechanical material as presented in various diagrams which appear in the Study Guide.
- B. Be sure to remember the label of each diagram since the labels may not appear on the test.
- C. Study each diagram and take notes on what may make a particular mechanical device or object unique. Even though you may not use your notepaper for the test, writing down details will help you to learn and recall this information.

2. *WHAT WILL BE ON THE TEST*

Questions on the test will assess your ability to recognize and remember shapes and locate objects in space. Some questions may refer to the object by name while others may ask you how the object is used.

SECTION 3:

ABILITY TO LEARN AND RECALL VISUAL INFORMATION

SECTION 2: BLUEPRINTS & MAPS

1. *WHAT TO LEARN*

- A. This section presents various blueprints and maps. You must learn where different rooms and objects are located on each diagram.
- B. Be sure to remember the title of each diagram since the actual diagram may not appear on the test.
- C. Take notes and draw each diagram on your notepaper. Even though you may not use your notepaper for the test, writing down details will help you to learn and recall this information.
- D. Pay particular attention to the relationships of objects/rooms (i.e., where is one room/object in relation to another). Be sure that you can navigate around the blueprint or map. In other words, an understanding of compass directions (North, South, East, and West) may be helpful.

2. *WHAT WILL BE ON THE TEST*

Each question is straightforward but it emphasizes the location of rooms/objects. Some questions will refer to the diagram by name. Other questions may provide an outline of the diagram but you will need to know the details.

SECTION 4:

ABILITY TO OBSERVE AND REPORT EVENTS ACCURATELY

1. *WHAT TO LEARN*

- A. Learn the details of the pictures and the stories which follow each of the pictures in the Study Guide.
- B. Be sure to remember the title for each picture since the pictures themselves will not be on the exam.
- C. Look at each picture more than once and write down what you see.
- D. Pay particular attention to numbers, dates, and details.

2. *WHAT WILL BE ON THE TEST*

Each question is straightforward but they emphasize details. Questions will refer to the scene by its name and topic. You must be able to recall the details of the scene from memory.

**EVANSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
2013 APPLICANT PROCESS**

***PREPARING FOR A STRUCTURED ORAL INTERVIEW
TUTORING SESSION AGENDA***

- I. Overview of oral interview procedures
 - A. Description of the preparation period
 - B. Interviews will be videotaped and audiotaped. A board of firefighters will evaluate the interviews at a later date.

- II. Review of methods for improving interview scores
 - A. How to present yourself during the interview
 - B. How to prepare yourself for the interview

- III. Review of scoring methods used by the interview board

- IV. Listen to two sample interview responses on audiotape

*****This is only a sample of the interview procedures. The exact procedures may or may not match those presented in this document.***

EVANSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Dear Applicant:

Welcome to the oral interview phase of the application process. You will be asked to answer a total of ten (10) questions, however your interview will be divided into two sessions. A representative from the Institute for Public Safety Personnel (IPSP), Inc., a private consulting firm working with the Evansville Fire Department to administer this process, will conduct each of your interview sessions. One IPSP interviewer will ask you to answer the first five (5) questions. Then you will return to the registration area. Another interviewer will ask you the second set of five (5) questions.

Each oral interview session will be videotaped and audiotaped to provide a complete record of the procedures used. During your videotaped interviews, it is considered appropriate for you to look at the interviewer rather than the camera. Be sure to speak clearly and loudly, because your interviews will be recorded for scoring at a later time.

Before each interview begins, the interviewer will ask you to state your name, spell your last name, and state the last four digits of your social security number. Then, the interviewer will ask you to answer five (5) questions. These questions will also be provided to you in written form so that you can read the questions as the interviewer asks them. **You will have a maximum of ten (10) minutes to answer each set of five (5) questions.** This should be plenty of time for you to answer all of the questions, so do not feel that you will be rushed for time. Instead, it is very important that you answer all questions as completely and thoroughly as you can. **Note that you will be responsible for monitoring your own time using the timer in the interview room.**

Because of the procedures that have been adopted, the interviewers will not be able to help you interpret or evaluate the questions. It is entirely permissible to read the questions directly from the list provided as you listen to the interviewer. You may also wish to take a few seconds before you answer each question to collect your thoughts. **Also, you will need to let the interviewer know when you are completely finished answering each question. Successive questions will not be asked until you indicate that you have completed your previous response.**

The oral interviews that you will participate in will be structured. This means that each applicant will be asked the same questions, in the same order, as all other applicants. This may give you the feeling that the interview procedures are somewhat stiff and formal. This is not meant to cause you any concern or discomfort. Rather, these very routine procedures are simply meant to ensure the greatest level of fairness possible for all applicants.

Note that each question will be scored individually. If your answer to a question seems to overlap with your response to a previous question, you may need to repeat yourself to receive credit for that response.

Your responses will be evaluated solely on what you say during the interview. The review board has **not** seen information regarding your background and, therefore, is not aware of your educational or professional experience. However, the accuracy of your statements may

be verified by a review of your background information. Each of your responses will be evaluated based on quantity and quality. **Therefore, you should answer each question as completely and thoroughly as you can, giving as much information as possible with regard to each question.** Short answers with limited detail are not likely to receive high scores. Please remember, however, your time will be limited to a maximum of ten (10) minutes per interview.

The members of the department wish you the best of luck with this interview. It is our hope that these procedures will provide each applicant with the very best opportunity to tell us about himself/herself.

We are also interested in your comments about the interview process. After you have completed your interview, you will be asked to express your opinions about the process on a form. Your responses to the questions on the form will be kept confidential and will have no bearing on the outcome of your interview.

After you have read this document, please sign below and notify the monitor that you are ready to begin.

I have read and I understand these instructions and procedures.

Signature

Date

Name (Printed)

APPLICANT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I _____ (signature) agree that I will not disclose the content of the interview questions that I will see or hear during this evaluation session. In particular, this agreement precludes me from discussing the interview questions with anyone until all interviews have been completed.

EVANSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
2013 Applicant Process

Oral Interview Recommendations

The following tips will help you to maximize your interview score:

- 1. Take a few minutes to organize your answers before you start your response.**

Try not to ramble with your responses – the more organized you are in your responses, the easier it is for the board to score your answers.

- 2. Make your answers as lengthy and thorough as you can within the time that is allotted.**

The more discussion and information that you include in your response to each question, the higher you are likely to score on that question.

- 3. If specifically asked about your background, confidently describe your previous experiences and abilities. NOTE: The actual interview questions to be asked have not been determined.**

If you don't tell the board about yourself, they won't get the information through any other source. Remember – the board will rate you on what you say during the interview, and not what they previously know about you.

- 4. Be sure to address the specific topic(s) of each question.**

Your answers will be scored based on how well you address the topics of each specific question. Credit will not be awarded when you discuss an unrelated issue, so be sure to remain focused on each question that is asked.

- 5. Repeat answers if necessary.**

The board will be scoring each question individually. If your answer to a question seems to overlap with your response to a previous question, you may need to repeat yourself to receive credit toward that question.

6. Be aware of your time.

You should have enough time to answer all of the questions, but be aware that you will not be allowed to continue past the allotted time.

Practice, Practice, Practice

1. Go to the library and find out what are the types of questions that are typically asked during an interview.

The more you know what to expect, the more relaxed you will feel during your interview.

2. Practice interviewing with a friend, in front of a mirror, or using a video or tape recorder.

The more feedback you have regarding how you present yourself, the more effective you can be in your responses.

3. Be relaxed.

Exercise and reduce both caffeine and sugar prior to your scheduled interview. The more relaxed you seem, the stronger an impression you will make on them. Additionally, the board may be rating you on your communication skills and stress management skills at the conclusion of the interview.

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW TIPS:

- 1) Be sure to note your scheduled interview time and arrive in a timely manner
- 2) The interview situation is formal, and applicants should dress appropriately
- 3) Take your time - There should be plenty of time during the interview session
- 4) Read the preparation materials carefully
- 5) Get a good night's rest before the interview
- 6) Try to relax, but don't appear overly casual.

**EVANSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
2013 APPLICANT PROCESS
ORAL INTERVIEW ORIENTATION**

Format of Interview Anchors

To understand how the oral interview will be evaluated, consider the chart below, which reflects the anchor format to each rating:

RATING LEVEL	NUMERICAL VALUES	GENERAL DEFINITION
LOW	1 2 3	Responses are scored within the LOW anchor level when they contain few correct responses or when the answer is insignificant in nature
MIDDLE	4 5 6	Responses are scored within the MIDDLE anchor level when they generally correct but may lack the specific details needed to back-up the ideas.
HIGH	7 8 9	Responses are scored within the HIGH anchor when they contain both the right idea and the details that substantiate the fact that the candidate truly understands the issues or concerns raised by the question.

- A. Consistent procedures for all candidates
- B. Board uses behaviorally anchored rating scales to score each rating.
 - 1. Positive answers are defined in the high category of the anchor.
 - 2. The positive answers listed are only **guidelines**. Candidates will receive credit for all positive responses, whether they are listed on the anchor or not. All board members are experienced in firefighting and will recognize when the applicant provides a good answer.