



Fire Cadet Structured Oral Interview Austin Fire Department

Candidate Introduction

Welcome to the *Firefighter Structured Oral Interview*. This brief introduction has been provided to familiarize you with the format of this interview and offer advice to help you perform to the test of your ability.

Entering the Interview Room

You will be escorted to the interview room. Enter the room when you are instructed and go immediately to your designated seat. You may say hello to the interviewers upon entering the room, but we ask that you refrain from shaking hands or engaging in lengthy introductions. For the sake of time, you must take your seat quickly so that the interview can begin. The raters will read a brief introduction and will then deliver your first question.

Introduction to the Assessment

During the assessment you will be asked a series of five questions. You will be allowed a maximum of three minutes to respond to each question. A count-down timer will be placed in front of you for each question to allow you to manage your time.

You will be given a laminated sheet containing each of the interview questions so that you can follow along while the question is being read aloud to you and review the question at any time during your response period. You will also be provided with a notepad and pen to take notes to aid you in answering each question. You may find it helpful to outline your response to each question prior to responding. You will not be penalized in any way for silently outlining your response before you deliver it to raters; however, the clock will be running during this time and you are cautioned to manage your time effectively. These resources are provided to assist you, but you are not obligated to take advantage of them.

Responding to Interview Questions

Once the rater finishes reading the question aloud to you, your time will begin. You may use as much or as little of your time limit as you deem appropriate. If you exceed the specified time limit for a particular question, the raters will ask you to stop and will move on to the next question. If you finish before time has expired, please indicate to the raters that you are finished with your response and they will proceed to the next question.

You will be assessed according to your ability to answer each question in a comprehensive and thoughtful fashion. Carefully listen to what each question is asking and provide a response that best answers the question. The most frequent error candidates make in this type of assessment is failing to answer the stated question or providing an incomplete response. In order to help you organize your response, each question contains, in bullet-point format, the specific questions you should be answering. Take care to answer each point. The questions you will be

asked will require you to indicate how you would respond to hypothetical scenarios; however, in no instance will you be evaluated based on your knowledge of firefighting principles, practices, policies or conventions. When answering questions, please communicate ALL of your thoughts and actions. You will only be assessed on what you actually say, so it is critical to say everything you think is necessary to fully answer the question.

Completing the Interview

When you finish responding to the last interview question, please leave all your notes, the laminated question sheet and all other materials on the table. These will be collected and discarded by the raters. Removing materials from the interview room may result in disqualification from the testing process. Once you exit the room, you should leave the facility. You are asked to leave immediately so as to avoid speaking with any other candidates, especially those who have not yet participated in the interview.

Confidentiality

The contents of this interview are confidential and you are prohibited from discussing the questions, your responses, or any other features of the interview with anyone. You may be questioned about your compliance with this confidentiality mandate during a future portion of the selection process. If you are found to have violated the confidentiality of this process in any way, you will be disqualified. Additional legal remedies may also be pursued.

Conclusion

The goal of this document has been to familiarize you with the interview process such that you are well-prepared for the interview and so that the interview can begin quickly once you enter the interview room. For this reason, if you have any questions about the interview process, please ask these questions of the proctor before you enter the interview room.

Remember, each interview question is rated separately, so a poor performance on one question does not inhibit you from performing well on the interview as a whole. On behalf of the City of Austin and the Austin Fire Department, we wish you success in this important hiring process.