

A photograph of a large, two-story house engulfed in flames. Firefighters in orange gear are spraying water from a hose onto the burning structure. The scene is dramatic, with bright orange fire and thick smoke against a dark sky. The text 'Ace Your Promotional Interview!' is overlaid in the center in a large, white, bold font with a black outline.

Ace Your Promotional Interview!

- Steve Prziborowski -

What Do You Expect From
To Get From This Session?

Objectives

- Anticipate questions you will be asked in a promotional interview
- Develop an opening and closing statement to separate you from the other candidates
- Formulate unique answers to any type of question
- Determine how to best prepare for the interview

Objectives

- Understand dimensions you are being evaluated on
- Develop a promotional resume to highlight your key points and accomplishments
- Identify techniques to ensure you will ace your next promotional interview

Understanding the Fire Service Promotional Interview Process

Before you can be the best you can be, you have to understand the interview process!!!!!!

Oral Board Makeup

- Typically three to five members
- At least one rank above
- Proctor from own department
- May include chief officers, company officers, city/county officials, civilians

What To Bring

- Positive attitude
- Yourself with a smile, enthusiasm, and a firm handshake
- Updated resume
- Appropriate/newly cleaned uniform
- Spare uniform
- Clean vehicle

What Not To Bring

- Resume (if nothing has changed)
- Your portfolio of certificates, transcripts
- Negative attitude
- Improper uniform

Oral Interview Dimensions

- Oral Communications
- Problem Solving Ability
- Judgment
- Ability to Work Well With Others
- Leadership Ability
- Ability to Enforce Rules & Regulations
- Ability to be a team-player

Oral Interview Dimensions

- Decisiveness
- Listening
- Interpersonal relations
- Decision making ability
- Strategy/tactics/ICS knowledge
- Time management
- ?????

Types of Grading Scales

- 100 to 90%, 89 to 80%, 79 to 70%, Below 60%
- Excellent, Above Average, Competent, Not Ready
- Typically some form of sliding scale with anywhere from three to ten choices for the rater to score the candidate

Types of Oral Interview Questions

- Opening Statement
- Closing Statement
- Situational Questions
- Personal, Department & Fire Service Knowledge Questions
- Personal Preparation Questions
- Personal Career Focused Questions

Opening Statement

- Tell us how you have prepared for the position of _____.
- Tell us about yourself.
- Tell us how your education, training and experience have prepared you for.....

Opening Statement

- Information from resume
- Information from application
- Education, training, experience, special skills, community service
- Personal characteristics, values, beliefs
- Two to four minutes in length
- Chronologically or categorizing format

Closing Statement

- This concludes all of the questions, is there anything else you would like to add?
- Shoot for 30 to 60 seconds in length
- Include items you may have left out
- Don't repeat things, unless to summarize

Closing Statement

- Three ways to close an interview:
 - Thank them and leave
 - Ramble on and on, repeating things in a disorganized fashion
 - Have a strong, powerful, jaw-dropping closing statement that has been prepared and rehearsed (my personal favorite)

Closing Statement

- Three goals of your closing statement:
 - Include things left out or forgotten
 - Let them know how much you want the position, ask for the promotion!
 - Leave them wanting to hear more about you, and have some form of jaw-dropping statement to offer

15 Methods To Ensure You Will Ace Your Promotional Interview

Ace Your Promotional Interview

1. Write out your opening & closing statements, rehearse your lines
2. Write out any possible interview question, rehearse your lines
3. Know yourself inside and outside
4. Know why you want the position
5. Talk to people already in the positions

Ace Your Promotional Interview

6. Know where you are going in advance
7. Prepare to be at the site at least one hour early
8. Have your attire prepared and ready
9. Research the department, the position, and the community
10. Attend seminars and workshops

Ace Your Promotional Interview

11. Practice using a video and audio recorder
12. Participate in mock orals
13. Get plenty of sleep the night before
14. Speak every chance you get
15. Most importantly, prepare for the position, not just for the interview!

The Two Most Important
Tips To Use When
Answering Oral Interview
Questions

TIP #1: Don't Just Answer The Question – Answer The Question!

- Think back to the typical oral grading scale
- 70 to 80% scores do not get you the promotion!
- Be detailed, provide examples to back up your statements.
- Show the importance of what you are saying to the position you're testing for

TIP #2: The Introduction-Body-Conclusion Concept

- The introduction is one sentence to set the stage/motivate the raters to listen
- The body is three to five bullet points, your outline
- The conclusion is one sentence to wrap things up, bring closure or summarize

TIP #2: The Introduction-Body-Conclusion Concept

- Too many people go straight to the body, and forget about an introduction or a conclusion
- You would not write a research paper going straight to your main point, would you?

TIP #2: The Introduction-Body-Conclusion Concept

- Basically:
 - Tell them what you're going to tell them (Intro)
 - Tell them (Body)
 - Tell them what you told them (Conclusion)
- This concept can be used for answering any question, and make you sound organized and professional

THE PROMOTIONAL RESUME

Resume Versus Application

- The primary difference between a resume and the job application is:
 - They tell you what to put on the application
 - You put what you want on the resume

The Promotional Resume

- For company officer and lower, one page
- For chief officer positions, two pages is acceptable
- Start with a blank Word (or similar program) document
- No more than three lines of text at once

The Promotional Resume

- Utilize major headings, such as:
 - Objective
 - Education
 - Experience
 - Community Service
 - Organizations and Affiliations
 - Special Skills / Training

The Promotional Resume

- Do not forget to ***ACCENTUATE*** things!

- **BOLD**

- **Bold**

- *Bold*

- Underline

- Do not forget to ***ACCENTUATE*** things!

- UPPERCASE

- Sentence case

- *Italics*

- Underline

The Promotional Resume

- Do not forget to ***ACCENTUATE*** things!
 - Dashes
 - Bullet points
 - Bullet points
- Do not overuse one style, alternate to accentuate

The Promotional Resume

- Spell check, spell check, spell check!
- Have someone else proof it
- Compare it to the application
- Instead of putting job descriptions, consider "significant accomplishments" or "significant duties & responsibilities"

An Interesting Study Showed:

- 71% of job applicants misrepresent number of years on job
- 64% exaggerate accomplishments
- 60% misrepresent size of the organization they managed
- 52% indicate a partial degree as a full degree

Source: www.workingwounded.com

The Bottom Line.....

- The Oral Board is there to determine which candidates ARE ready to immediately step into the position they are testing for!
- Those who have prepared for the position, and not just for the test, will succeed!
- Be yourself and do not try to sell the oral board someone you are not.

Questions?

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR TIME
AND FOR BEING HERE!**

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Also, visit my website at www.code3firetraining.com
For valuable promotional and entry-level preparation information.