

Sample Battalion Chief Oral Interview Questions

By Steve Prziborowski

1. Please tell the board how your education, training and experience have prepared you for the position of Battalion Chief with our department?
2. What are the critical responsibilities of a Battalion Chief today?
3. Why do you want to be a Battalion Chief with our department?
4. In your current rank (assuming it is Fire Captain), please give an example from your duties and responsibilities that you find the most difficult. What skills and techniques do you or did you utilize to minimize and/or address these difficulties?
5. What is your greatest character strength, and what is your greatest character weakness? Regarding the weakness, what are you doing to improve on that weakness?
6. You're talking with the Fire Chief about a very important matter that needs immediate resolution. However, you find yourself having an opposing view and approach to resolving the issue. How would you handle it?
7. What makes you the best candidate for the position of Battalion Chief?
8. As a Battalion Chief, you're part of the management team. What important assets/qualities do you possess that will contribute to the management team's goal of building a cohesive team with strong leadership.
9. You are a recently promoted Battalion Chief. You notice one day, as you are walking through one of your fire stations, that there seems to be negative undercurrents coming from subordinates. You observe people talking together, in whispers, not being productive. Tell the Board how you would approach the situation and what objectives you would focus on.
10. What are the three biggest issues facing this fire department today?
11. Please describe your first year goals as a newly promoted Battalion Chief. How do you intend to achieve those goals?
12. What is your five year plan?

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13. Please describe one area you feel the department is strong in, and one area you feel the department could use some improvement in, and how you think you may assist with the improvement.
14. Let's assume you are promoted to the position of Battalion Chief. Please describe your first day on the job in your new position.
15. Describe and define the type of relationships you'd like to foster with your subordinates. With the senior staff? What actions would you take to ensure relationships you've described would come to reality?
16. In your current role as a Captain, please give an example of a disciplinary issue you handled. Explain the incident and how you addressed the issue. Why did you choose this approach? What were the results?
17. What does integrity mean to you?
18. How do you motivate an employee?
19. A recent policy on cell phone usage has been approved by labor / management, and the Fire Chief has directed the Battalion Chiefs (through the chain of command) to present it to each crew, address the issue, outline the new policy, and answer any questions. You know this will be an unpopular policy; how do you intend to deliver the message?
20. What is the most important service we provide to the public? Why do you feel it is most important?
21. Please tell us what progressive discipline means to you, and explain the different levels found within the department.
22. What are the three most important qualities a Battalion Chief in this department should possess?
23. That concludes all of the questions; is there anything you would like to add to close the interview?