Being the BEST Firefighter Candidate you can be!

Steve Prziborowski
Deputy Chief
Santa Clara County (CA) Fire Department
Objectives:

- Identify 21 Key Points to assist you in becoming the best FF candidate

- Define 25 reasons a FD would NOT want to hire you

- Define 25 reasons a FD would want to hire you
Objectives:
• Identify 21 Key Points to assist you in becoming the best FF candidate
• Define 25 reasons a FD would NOT want to hire you
• Define 25 reasons a FD would want to hire you
21 Key Points to assist you in becoming the best firefighter candidate you can be
#1 - Know your strengths & weaknesses

- Take *every* test
- Ask others their honest opinion
- From watching others & seeing the good & not-so-good & realizing you do the same thing
- Once you know them, do something
- Common oral board question
# 2 - Know as much as you can about the position

- Talk to those doing the job
- Internet
- Read / understand job flyer
# 3 - Educate yourself on the Fire Service

- Talk to those doing the job
- Subscribe to trade magazines
- Subscribe to email lists
- Internet
# 4 - Learn time management skills

- Get a calendar / organizer

- If you’re early – you’re on time; if you’re on time – you’re late
# 5 - Keep certificates up-to-date

- Don’t disqualify yourself
- It’s not your employer’s responsibility
# 6 - Get some buddies involved

- Fire service is based on teamwork
- Helps reduce costs
- Pick your buddies carefully
# 7 - Be in this for the long haul

- Have a plan b, c, etc.
- Be willing to move back home, make sacrifices
- Ensure your family is on board
- Once you give up, you give up
# 8 - Volunteer, Volunteer, Volunteer

- Fire vs. non-fire
- 1 hour a month for 8 months is better than 8 hours today and nothing for the next 8 months
- None can be a kiss of death
- Common oral board question
# 9 - Stay out of trouble

- Can cost you a job / career
- Think about your actions; for every action, a consequence
- Includes school, work, home
# 10 - It’s a full-time job getting a job

- Yes, social life may suffer
- Prepare family & friends
- Must be organized
- Always look for opportunities
# 11 – It takes money to make money

- Save up, you’ll need it
- Nothing comes cheap
- Be prepared to make financial sacrifices
- May have to step back to step ahead
# 12 - Understand diversity

- Agree or disagree, here to stay
- Common oral board question
- Understand your background, how you will fit in, how you will be an asset
# 13 - Get yourself in shape

- Cause of some not getting through academy
- Number 1 reason FF’ers get injured or killed
- Many in the U.S. (including FF’ers) are not in shape
# 14 - Have solid work & personal background to offer

- Clean up loose ends now
- It will get scrutinized
- Be able to explain mistakes
- Don’t get caught by surprises
# 15 - Know yourself inside & out (past, present & future)

• Helps prepare for oral board questions

• Helps prepare for questions outside of the oral board
# 16 - Find why you are UNIQUE

- May be an oral board question
- Why pick you?
# 17 - Take responsibility

- For yourself, your actions, your non-actions
- If you are having trouble, it may hold you back
- Fire service is looking for people that take responsibility
# 18 - Be a great family member, friend, neighbor, worker & person

- Makes you happy, pays dividends
- All may be contacted about you
- Rebuild burned bridges, past mistakes
- Never too late for a fresh start
- If nothing else, right thing to do
# 19 - You’re being watched, heard, read, evaluated

- We tend to forget this at times
- You never know who is......
- You’re on duty 24/7/365, even as a future firefighter
- Includes fire station visits, testing process, social media posts
- No 2nd chance for 1st impression
# 20 - Best predictor of future behavior......is past behavior

• Bad habits are hard to change
• If you’ve done something once, it may have been a fluke; more than once shows us you are who we think you are
• 1 wrong choice, comment, and/or decision can doom you
**Last, but not least....**

# 21 - You are in control of your own destiny, nobody else!
25 reasons to NOT hire you

1. Arriving late
2. Poor listening skills
3. Poor driving history
4. Poor scholastic record
5. Lack of career planning
25 reasons to NOT hire you

6. Only want to save lives & property; are doing it for the wages & benefits

7. You have minimal interest in the FD or the industry

8. Poor oral communication skills

9. Poor written communication skills

10. Poor personal appearance or presentation
25 reasons to NOT hire you

11. Lack of maturity
12. Arrest or conviction record
13. Excessive drug / alcohol use
14. Lack of confidence/poise; nervous
15. Lack of interest & enthusiasm
25 reasons to NOT hire you

16. Inability to maintain certifications
17. Inability to provide required info
18. History of not playing nicely
19. History of poor decisions/choices
20. Poor employment track record
21. Poor physical conditioning
22. Failure to follow directions
23. You don’t fit into the culture
24. You pissed off someone
25. You made a poor 1st impression
25 reasons to hire you

1. We want you to join our family
2. We think you’ll fit into our culture
3. You are passionate about the fire service, our FD, and our community
4. You have excellent written communication skills
5. You have excellent oral communication skills
25 reasons to hire you

6. Extensive & diverse life/work experience
7. Not getting hired to fight fire/save lives
8. Extensive & diverse community service
9. Mechanical ability knowledge
10. Not getting hired for the wages, benefits and/or working conditions
25 reasons to hire you

11. You have a contagious enthusiasm in whatever you’re doing
12. Positive track record of dependability
13. Excellent computer skills
14. Demonstrated leadership
15. Demonstrated ability to play nicely with others
25 reasons to hire you

16. Clean background
17. Bilingual ability
18. Physically & mentally fit
19. Capable of being low maintenance
20. Demonstrated decision making ability
25 reasons to hire you

21. You’re motivated; a self-starter
22. Military experience
23. You’re a hard worker
24. You understand the words ethics & integrity
25. You are unique in a positive way; the oral board remembers something great about you
REMEMBER

Don’t just prepare for the test.
Prepare for the position!!!
Resources:

» Soft cover

» EBook

• Available at:
  – iTunes
  – Amazon
  – www.chabotfire.com
QUESTIONS?
Thank you very much for your time!

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Steve Prziborowski
408-205-9006
sprziborowski@aol.com
www.code3firetraining.com
www.chabotfire.com