



LOS ANGELES **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

# ORAL INTERVIEW PREP SEMINAR

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FIREFIGHTER RECRUITMENT SECTION



# TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

- **The Interview Style**
  - Behavior Based Interview
- **Characteristics to be Evaluated**
- **Knowledge and Preparation**
- **Interview Format**
- **Strategies for Success**





# THE INTERVIEW STYLE

- What you “have done” not “what you would do”
- Use **real stories** to prove that you possess the qualifications to be a Firefighter for the LAFD





# BEHAVIOR BASED INTERVIEWING

- Focuses on experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that are related to the eight main criteria.
- You may use work experience, activities, hobbies, volunteerism, school projects, family life... any experience you feel is relevant...to provide examples of your past behavior.

## Why Behavior Based Interviewing?

### Effective

- Past behavior indicates future performance

### Objective

- What you did and how you did it

### Transparent

- Openness about skills/ competencies sought

### Legal

- Candidates are assessed on the same skills/ competencies



# IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS

You will be evaluated based on **8** main criteria:

1. Initiative in Learning
2. Practical Orientation
3. Role Adaptability
4. Service Orientation
5. Oral Communication
6. Job Motivation
7. Teamwork
8. Respect for Diversity





# EVALUATING YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

- Know yourself and what you have to offer
- Realistically appraise your strengths and weaknesses
- Inventory your assets, talents, interests, experiences and accomplishments
- Emphasize your strong points!





# CONTENT SKILLS

**Content skills, also known as technical, job specific or vocational skills, include those that relate specifically to your line of work.**

**Express these skills as nouns.**

**For example:**

- “I have a current National EMT Certification.”
- “I am a certified Human Resources Trainer.”
- “I am a licensed Vocational Nurse.”
- “I am a certified Forklift Operator.”





# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

**Skills such as organizing, managing, developing, communicating, etc.**

**These are expressed as verbs. For example:**

- “On my current job, I manage three other employees. I am responsible for opening and closing the store, as well as responding to customer complaints.”
  - “In my current position, I prioritize and coordinate the patient schedule for five different doctors in our surgery center. I am also responsible for communicating this schedule to all employees at the beginning of each week.”
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# ADAPTIVE SKILLS

Personal characteristics such as honest, dependable, trustworthy, loyal, hard-working, punctual, patient, etc.

Expressed as adjectives.

For example:

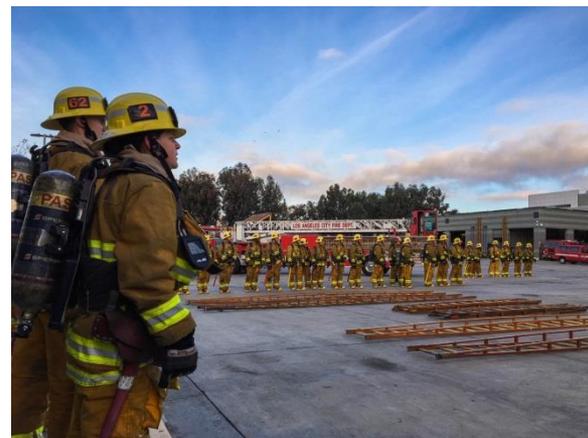
- “Because my boss considers me to be responsible and trustworthy, I am the only employee allowed to approve use of the petty cash fund.”





# GET TO KNOW THE LAFD

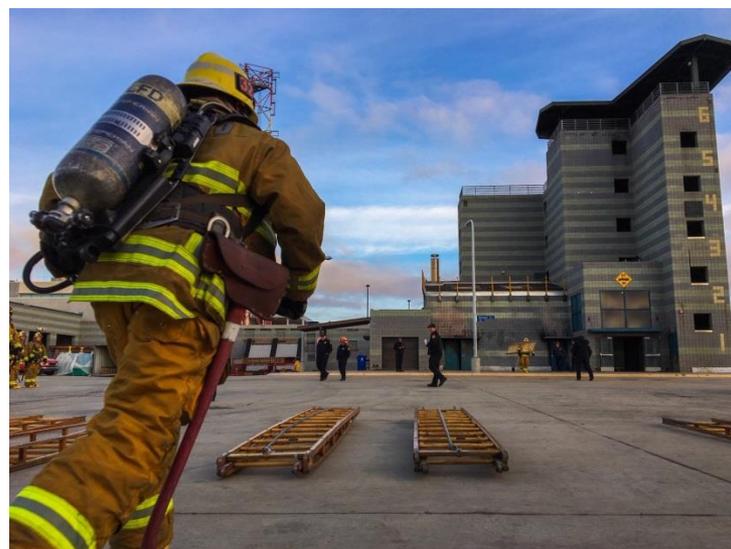
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the LAFD
- Core Values
  - **S**ervice
  - **C**haracter
  - **C**ompetency
  - **C**ontribution
  - **C**ollaboration
  - **S**afety
  - **K**nowledge
- How many LAFD Fire Stations are there?
- FF duties, apparatus, tools and equipment, specialized resources





# GET TO KNOW THE LAFD

- What is a typical day like for a LAFD Firefighter or a Probationary Firefighter?
- Learn as much as you can about the LAFD
- You can find a local LAFD Fire Station by visiting [www.LAFD.org](http://www.LAFD.org) (“Find Your Station” tab)
- Call the business phone and ask to speak with a firefighter on duty
- Ask questions, take notes





# GET TO KNOW THE LAFD



**LAFD DRILL TOWER 81**  
Panorama City



**LAFD DRILL TOWER 40**  
San Pedro





# GET TO KNOW THE CITY OF LA

- How big is the City? How many square miles?
- What is the population? Demographics?
- You should know what sets this City and the LAFD apart and why you want to work for ***this*** Department.





# ORAL INTERVIEW FORMAT

**Interview Panel will be comprised of 2 representatives:**

- One from City Personnel Department
- One LAFD Captain





# ORAL INTERVIEW FORMAT

**There are 3 basic components of the interview:**

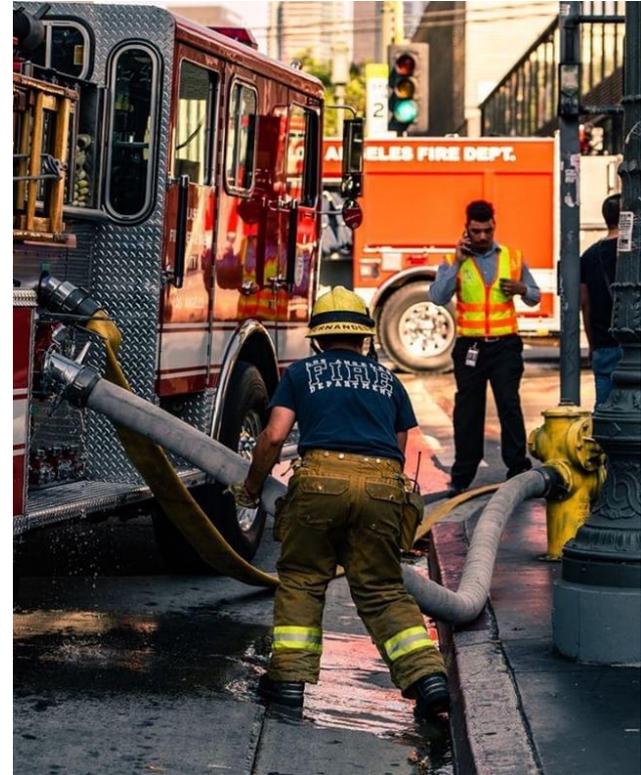
1. Opening Statement
2. Body (Questions)
3. Closing Statement





# OPENING STATEMENT

- You will be given an introductory question in your interview (usually the 1<sup>st</sup> question)
- This question will lead to your Opening
- Introduce yourself and highlight 4 or 5 of your strongest qualities that relate to the job of FF.
- Be concise and to the point, you will be able to elaborate more as you answer questions in the body of the interview.





# BODY OF THE INTERVIEW

You will be evaluated based on **8 main criteria**:

1. **Initiative in Learning**
2. **Practical Orientation**
3. **Role Adaptability**
4. **Service Orientation**
5. **Oral Communication**
6. **Job Motivation**
7. **Teamwork**
8. **Respect for Diversity**





# INITIATIVE IN LEARNING

## Initiative defined:

- The power or ability to begin or to follow through energetically with a plan or task; enterprise and determination.
- A beginning or introductory step; an opening move: took the initiative in trying to solve the problem.

## Considerations:

- What learning opportunities have you been involved with, or participated in? What examples can provide for how these experiences have helped you, or benefitted others?





# PRACTICAL ORIENTATION

## Considerations:

- We may describe people as practical when they make sensible decisions and deal effectively with problems.
- Practical ideas and methods are likely to be effective or successful in a real situation.





# ROLE ADAPTABILITY

## **Adaptability defined:**

- The ability to change (or be changed) to fit a unique situation or circumstances.
- Synonyms: flexibility, versatility, adjustability

## **Considerations:**

- Have you ever been in a position of responsibility, or in a role where you helped someone else in a position of responsibility?
  - Have you ever had to adapt to a new or different role in order to accomplish an important task?
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# SERVICE ORIENTATION

## Considerations:

- Are you interested in a career that involves helping people, or serving your community?
- Have you ever helped someone in need?
- LAFD Core Values
- Our success and failure as an Organization depends on the SERVICE we provide to the citizens of Los Angeles.





# ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Are you able to communicate well and resolve conflict when necessary?
  - This skill is demonstrated both in your communication skills throughout the course of the interview and in your examples, also.
- Firefighters communicate with the public in emergency and non-emergency settings everyday and need to be able to clearly and confidently express themselves.





# JOB MOTIVATION

## Considerations:

- Do you understand the role of the fire service in the community?
- Do you understand what a career as a Firefighter with the LAFD entails?
- What things have you done to prepare for this position?





# TEAMWORK

## Considerations:

- Have you worked in a team environment?
- Has there ever been a time where you participated in a project or endeavor that required coordination with other people?
- You will need to demonstrate the ability to work effectively as a member of a team.





# RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

## Considerations:

- How do you define “Diversity”?
- Do you know anybody with different opinions or beliefs than your own?
- Have you had any interaction with people from a different background than your own?
- Diversity in a service organization is what makes the service provided great! We can better understand, communicate with and connect with the community we serve.





# BODY OF THE INTERVIEW

Consider using the “**STAR**” model to structure your answers.

**Situation**



Identify the **SITUATION** or problem you solved or encountered.

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**Task**



What was the specific **TASK** or targets? (who, what, when, where, what's required)

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**Action**



Detail your specific **ACTION**. What did you do? How did you do it?

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**Results**



Explain the **RESULTS**. Quantify. (savings, accomplishments, recognition, etc.)

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# ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- Let's practice using the **STAR** model!
- Sample Question:

*"Tell me about a time you worked together as a member of a team to accomplish a common goal."* (TEAMWORK)

**S** – Identity the **Situation**

**T** – **Tasks** you needed to accomplish

**A** – **Actions** you took to get the job done

**R** – **Results**





# ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- **Bridge** your answers directly over to the Fire Service, **specifically** to the **Los Angeles City Fire Department**, as a **Firefighter** serving the people of the **City of Los Angeles**.
- “As a member of the Los Angeles Fire Department...”





# CLOSING STATEMENT

- At the end of the interview, you will be asked if there is anything you would like to add.
- Mention any specific items in your background or personal qualifications you didn't already share
- Clarify earlier points, if necessary
- Briefly sum up what you believe makes you a good candidate for the job of Firefighter for the LAFD





# INTERVIEW BASICS

## Before the Interview...

- Make sure your suit fits!
  - Look the part!
    - Present a neat, businesslike appearance
  - Practice, Practice, Practice!
    - Practice your answers out loud and in front of others
    - Consider video recording yourself!
    - Be aware of body language, voice inflection, nervous habits
    - Force yourself out of your comfort zone in order to learn how to manage your anxiety
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# INTERVIEW BASICS

## During the Interview...

- Think before responding
- Ask for clarification if you need it
- Be confident and enthusiastic
- Make good eye contact with both Board members
- Smile!





# PRE-INTERVIEW CHECK-IN

- The City of Los Angeles Personnel Department will conduct a check-in with you on the Monday the week before your interview.
    - The check-in appointment will be assigned to you based on the interview date you select
    - The check-in is 5 minutes long, so it is crucial that you are ready to go prior to your check-in time
    - The specific date and time of your check-in appointment will be sent in a separate email after the deadline to self-select your interview appointment
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# PRE-INTERVIEW CHECK-IN

- The purpose of the check-in to ensure that all hardware and software requirements are met, verify your identity, and ensure that there are no issues with your potential interview panel.
  - Create a quiet, neutral environment for the check-in
  - Business attire is not required for the check-in
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# PRE-INTERVIEW PLATFORM

- ***READ THE ENTIRE EMAIL ANNOUNCING YOUR SELECTION!***
  - There are links and online forms that will need to be filled out in order to secure your interview appointment.
    - Candidates who complete all of these steps will be emailed again after the sign-up deadline to confirm both their Check-In and Interview appointment dates/times, as well as to provide the Google Meet links and further instructions for these appointments.
    - You will not be emailed if you don't complete the steps outlined in the interview notice.
  - If you are unable to make your scheduled interview, call the Personnel Department as soon as possible at (213) 473-9311.
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# QUESTIONS?

Please type your questions into the chat box on the right, and we will address them one at a time.

