

Battalion Fire Chief



General Orientation Guide



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXAMINATION.....	2
A. Test Date, Time, and Location.....	2
B. Test Security and Candidate Pledge.....	2
C. Description of Test Format.....	3-9
1. Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise	
2. Structured Oral Interview	
3. Short-Answer Essay Examination	
4. Written Multiple-Choice Examination	
5. Response Levels, Apparatus Staffing, and Initial Functions	
6. Suggested Reading List	
D. Administrative Logistics.....	9-10
1. Oral Assessment Exercises	
2. Written Assessment Exercises	
E. Final Scoring.....	10-11
1. Exam Score	
2. Seniority Score	
III. PREPARATION STRATEGIES.....	12
A. Preparation Strategies for the Oral Assessment Exercises.....	12-13
B. Preparation Strategies for the Written Multiple-Choice Test.....	13-21
IV. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION POLICIES.....	22
A. Examination Make-up Policy.....	22
B. Post Examination Review Policy.....	23
C. Examination Cancellation Policy.....	23
D. Study Groups.....	23
V. CONCLUSION.....	23
VI. SAMPLE MATERIALS FOR EACH COMPONENT.....	24
A. Sample Item from the Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise.....	24
B. Sample Items from the Structured Oral Interview.....	27
C. Sample Item from the Short-Answer Essay Examination.....	28
D. Sample Items from the Written Multiple-Choice Examination.....	34

Note: This version of the Battalion Fire Chief General Orientation Guide was posted on November 30, 2012. Changes were made to the content of this guide. The changes are highlighted for your convenience and appear on pages 5, 7 and 28.

The consent decree announcements for Battalion Fire Chief have not yet been approved by the USDOJ; however, candidates who wish to begin preparing for this Battalion Fire Chief Examination may use this Orientation Guide. If changes to the guide are required by the USDOJ, these changes will be added to the website at a later date.

I. INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission has prepared this orientation guide for the Battalion Fire Chief promotional examination. The information in this booklet may help candidates understand the testing process and answer some of their questions about how to prepare for the examination. The exam for promotion to Battalion Fire Chief will consist of the four following components:

#	Component
1	Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise
2	Structured Oral Interview
3	Short-Answer Essay Examination
4	Written Multiple-Choice Examination

All candidates will be permitted to participate in each of the four test components.

The exam has been designed on the basis of information obtained from a job analysis of the position of Fire Battalion Fire Chief in the State of New Jersey. The job analysis provides a description of the tasks performed by incumbents and identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities that are required to perform each of these tasks effectively.

We are providing this orientation guide in recognition that a considerable amount of the anxiety associated with participation in the promotional assessment process is related to the novelty of the procedures that candidates encounter. From the information presented in this guide, candidates should be able to get a better understanding of the types of questions they will encounter on each exam component and a systematic method of study which they may use in preparing for the exam.

We encourage candidates to review this guide carefully and to take advantage of any and all opportunities to prepare for the exam.

GOOD LUCK!

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXAM

A. Test Date, Time, and Location

For specific information regarding the test date of the current Battalion Fire Chief examination, please check the Civil Service Commission's website by clicking [HERE](#).

Approximately two weeks before the test date, candidates will receive a notice in the mail that shows the date, time, location, and room to which they should report for their examination. The exam will be administered in two day increments. The Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise and the Structured Oral Interview Scenarios will be held on one day and the Short-Answer Essay Examination and the Written Multiple-Choice Examination will be scheduled on a different day. Candidates will be notified regarding the test date, time, and location of each component.

B. Test Security and Candidate Pledge

All candidates will be required to sign a pledge form at the examination center, stating that they understand that the current examination will be administered over different days and that they will not discuss the content of the examination with any other person, study group, or potential make-up candidate. No one is permitted to take notes, or copy, or remove test material during the administration of the examination.

With the threat of high-tech cheating on the rise, possession of personal communication devices such as cell phones, blackberries, pagers/beepers, photographic equipment, MP3 players, or other similar electronic communication devices is prohibited at test centers. Candidates who are seen with these devices in the test center, even in a power-off mode, will be disqualified. The device may also be confiscated to ensure that an attempt was not made to compromise the testing process.

Most candidates scheduled to take the Oral portion of the exam will be sequestered (held in a separate room) either prior to their scheduled test time or after they have taken the examination. This sequester period is required in order to prevent candidates who have taken the exam from interacting with candidates who are scheduled to take the same exam later in the day.

Upon completion of the written testing and oral sequestering process, candidates must leave the testing premises so that other candidates (still involved in the testing) will not be disturbed/distracted by outside conversations. Failure to obey the rules and instruction before, during, and after the examination may result in a candidate's disqualification from the examination.

C. Description of Test Format

1. Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise

For this exercise, candidates will be presented with a realistic job-relevant situation for which a new Battalion Fire Chief might be confronted. Candidates will be asked to study the material related to the problem and then prepare a presentation to present to a monitor acting as a superior officer or other party. Candidates will be given a preparation period to study the material and prepare their presentation. For the purposes of this exercise, candidates are to assume the role of a Battalion Fire Chief and assume that their presentation is being made to superior officer or other party. Following the 20 minute preparation period, candidates will be taken to another room where they will make their presentation to their “supervisor.” Candidates will be given 10 minutes to deliver the presentation itself. Candidate presentations will be both audio and video-recorded.

The particular dimensions measured in the Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise area are:

1. Management/Supervision
2. Analysis/Decision Making

2. Structured Oral Interview

This exercise is designed to generate behaviors similar to those required for success in the Battalion Fire Chief position.

The questions will be given to candidates prior to giving their response. Candidates will have a 25 minute preparation period in which they will have a chance to read and review the three scenarios and take notes in preparation for their response period.

The Structured Oral Interview exercise consists of three job-relevant scenarios about what they would do in certain situations. The questions deal with management activities and with emergency situations. Candidates will have seven minutes to respond to each of the three questions.

The particular dimensions measured in the Structures Oral Interview area are:

1. Management/Supervision
2. Analysis/Decision Making

Management/Supervision Defined

Knows when to take action and what action is appropriate. Takes action to achieve goals beyond what is necessarily called for. Is proactive, is able to effectively and appropriately schedule the work assignments of subordinates. Takes action to monitor the results of delegated assignments and projects. Demonstrates initiative in dealing with problems. Is effective in motivating others. Is assertive and self-confident. Accepts responsibility for the behavior of self and subordinates.

Analysis/Decision Making Defined

Knows how to size-up a situation; isolate the problem. Evaluates alternative courses of action and makes decisions based on reliable information and the outcomes of a thorough investigation. Can analyze facts, information, and evidence so that he/she can see the similarities, differences, and relationships between facts, situations, and events.

All oral scoring guidelines are determined, prior to the examination administration date, by a panel of Subject Matter Experts. Scoring decisions are based on Subject Matter Expert-approved guidelines that address the situations that are presented.

The assessors for both the Structured Oral Interviews and the Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercises will be fire service personnel with Battalion Fire Chief or higher experience. Before actually evaluating any of the interviews, the assessors are given training on the dimensions to be measured and on how to observe and evaluate behavior associated with these job-performance dimensions.

3. Short-Answer Essay Examination

This part of the examination will consist of two scenarios in which candidates are to respond as the Battalion Fire Chief who arrives with or prior to the first responding unit. Each scenario is a realistic situation that has been developed and reviewed by senior fire service personnel familiar with New Jersey situations.

The two scenarios will be administered and timed concurrently and will appear in the same booklet. Candidates will have one hour to respond to both scenarios. Candidates will have to budget their time so that they can respond to both essays within the one hour test period. A time warning will be given at the 30-minute mark to remind candidates that if they are still working on the first essay, they should consider moving on to the second.

Each scenario will contain:

- The background of the incident, including the situation, weather, day, and time as well as other pertinent information.
- Diagrams of the structures involved and the area around them, indicating streets, alleys, fire hydrants, hazards, and other information.
- Response levels and apparatus staffing. Candidates are to apply these levels to the two scenarios. These include a description of available response apparatus, and the staffing of each. The initial response is designated and all subsequent alarms will consist of an identical response. Available apparatus will be assigned identifiers that aid in referring to their type (e.g., engine, ladder, etc.) and a number. The number will correspond to their sequence of expected arrival (e.g., E1 refers to the first fire engine responding to the scene, while the second fire engine responding to the scene will be referred to as E2. The first ladder truck responding to the scene will be referred to as L1, while the second ladder truck responding to the scene will be referred to as L2.

Response forms will be included in candidates' packets that they will use to indicate:

- The chronological order in which the order/action would be given.
- To whom the order/action is directed.
- The objective/purpose for the order/action.
- What action/order will be given (what will you say or do?).

Candidates may give short answers or the command they would actually give. Candidates' responses do not need to be in complete sentences. **Candidates will NOT be evaluated on their writing skill, spelling, or grammar.** Long essays are neither needed nor desirable. **However, candidates' responses must be in sufficient detail and legible enough to allow the raters to evaluate their actions.**

If there is not enough space to write the order or action, candidates may continue into the next space. Also, if a candidate wishes to add a command in between two previous commands, the candidate may rewrite the chronological order (# column) to reflect the order in which the commands should have been given.

Candidates should state their objectives even though they may be obvious and seem simple. For example, if a candidate calls for a 2nd alarm, it may seem obvious that everyone will know that the candidate is doing so to obtain additional apparatus or firefighters. But, candidates should still state in their “objective/purpose” section “to get additional engines for water supply,” or whatever it is that they are trying to accomplish. Candidates might call a second alarm not because they want additional apparatus, but simply to get more firefighters to accomplish other tasks, such as search and rescue, or rotation of manpower, or simply to ensure a sufficient reserve of additional assistance if the fire spreads to surrounding structures. Candidates do not have to describe everything they are seeking to accomplish; just enough to make sure that their major objectives or purposes are clear and easily understandable.

The following shows candidates the response form format that they will use to describe how they would handle the situation, and some examples of how to complete the form. Candidates can continue onto the next section of the form if they need more room. In the sample below, 3 different examples are given on how to give commands, orders, or other communications. Candidates do not have to follow either format. The important thing is to make sure the essential information is indicated on the form so that the raters can determine their competencies as a Battalion Fire Chief. NOTE: Do not assume that the examples given are the correct order or manner in which candidates should respond. These examples are limited to demonstrating how to fill in the form and are not intended to be the correct way to actually respond to any specific fire situation. The examples given below may not be appropriate for the actual scenarios provided in the test.

Directions: List the actions that you will take, and any orders you will give, <u>in the order</u> you will react. Use the first column to indicate the numerical order sequence. Be specific in your commands, objectives, assignments. General answer and responses will not contribute to your score.			
#	To Whom	Objective/Purpose	Order/Command/Assignment (What you would say or do)
1	Dispatch	To let dispatch know that we have arrived	Advise that I am on Scene with the 2 engines and the ladder truck [or: Dispatch: I am on the scene with E1, E2, and L1 at 2105 Grand].
2	Dispatch	To let dispatch and other responding units know what the nature and extent of the fire.	Radio that there is a single story, auto repair garage, fully involved [or: Dispatch: we have a single story, auto repair garage, fully involved].
3	E1 [or, First Arriving Engine Company]	To prevent fire spread to the adjoining structure on Side B.	Tell E1 to stretch a hand line to Side B [or: E1: stretch a hand line to Side B].

Candidates' responses to the scenarios will be rated by highly-experienced fire service personnel trained to rate this specific exercise. Raters will be supported by rating scale guidelines and lists of appropriate courses of action.

4. Written Multiple-Choice Examination

For this examination component, candidates will be asked to assume the role of a Battalion Fire Chief and respond to a variety of questions associated with situational-based written scenarios and diagrams reflecting or describing typical job experiences that a Battalion Fire Chief in the State of New Jersey might encounter. Scenarios might describe a problem situation followed by a number of questions asking candidates how they would address issues associated with the resolution of the problem situation.

The Battalion Fire Chief Written-Multiple Choice Examination is designed to elicit responses based on a subset of the knowledges from four topic areas:

1. **Size-up**
 - Knowledge of size-up factors
2. **Effects of Weather Conditions on Fire Responses**
 - Knowledge of the effects of weather and intense fire conditions on personnel
3. **Construction Relating to Firefighting (including collapse potential)**
 - Knowledge of occupancy collapse potential and characteristics
 - Knowledge of the effects of fire on a structure
 - Knowledge of design, construction, and their effect on fire behavior
4. **Conditions of Fire Spread**
 - Knowledge of fire behavior
 - Knowledge of fire spread and growth
 - Knowledge of fireload (building and contents)

This portion of the examination will be based on generally accepted fire department practices/procedures and, but not limited to, the reference materials included on the published reading list. All items will have four response alternatives. In responding to an item, candidates will be asked to choose the *best* response. Candidates will be given credit only for choosing the *best* response. **Candidates will have 2 hours to complete this test.**

5. Response Levels, Apparatus Staffing, and Initial Functions

SHORT-ANSWER ESSAY EXAMINATION

Both scenarios will contain the following response levels:

Initial Response: Engine (E1)
Engine (E2)
Ladder (L1)
Battalion Fire Chief (C1)

Each subsequent alarm that a candidate calls will consist of the **identical** response levels as indicated above (i.e., two engine companies, one ladder company, and one Battalion Fire Chief).

If, in addition to the above, candidates want to call on other companies or resources, they must specifically request them.

In each scenario, a candidate should assume that he/she is the FIRST arriving Battalion Fire Chief, arriving with or before any of the initial response companies. A candidate should also assume that he/she will remain in command of the **entire incident** (that is, no higher ranking chief will arrive or relieve them of command, even if they call for them).

Apparatus Staffing:

All engines have:	1 Captain	3 firefighters
All ladders have:	1 Captain	3 firefighters
All Chief's vehicles have:	1 Battalion Fire Chief	

Following each apparatus or vehicle type, we have provided a number to identify them. That is, the first engine is identified as "E1." You may use these same identifiers in the examination, if you want, to reduce the amount of writing, and to ensure clarity in what you are doing.

It is important that candidates make clear on the response form in some manner, the specific company or resources to which they are giving orders or making assignments.

If candidates request additional alarms or resources, they can assign a sequential number to those companies, using the same or similar numbering system. For example, if candidates were to call for one additional ladder, they could designate that as "L2."

6. Suggested Reading List

For specific information about the reading/reference list for the current administration of the Battalion Fire Chief exam, please check the Civil Service Commission's website by clicking [HERE](#).

D. Administrative Logistics

Candidates should ensure that they arrive at the test site on the correct day and time as indicated on their notification cards. Candidates are advised to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled time to ensure that all necessary administrative procedures can be conducted prior to the scheduled start time. Candidates should bring their Notification Card, two forms of identification (including one photo ID), two pencils, two pens and a highlighter to the Examination Center. Candidates will not be permitted to bring this Orientation Guide into the Examination Center. **CANDIDATES SHOULD MAKE SURE TO MAP OUT A ROUTE TO THEIR TEST CENTER IN ADVANCE AND PLAN TO ARRIVE AT THE EXAMINATION CENTER EARLY, SINCE NO ONE WILL BE ADMITTED LATE.**

1. Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise and the Structured Oral Interview

Due to the number of jurisdictions participating in this administration, the Structured Oral Interview and the Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise will be administered over multiple days with alternate test forms being used. Candidates will only be required to attend the day their jurisdiction is being tested. When administered, one-half of the candidates for a given day will report in the morning and have the exercises administered to them. When finished, the morning group will be sequestered while the afternoon group registers. Once the afternoon group is registered, the morning group will be released.

Once candidates begin the test they will not be allowed to leave the test site for any reason until the administrators have released them. While at the testing site, candidates will not be allowed to move about without the specific approval of the administrators. Access to bathrooms is restricted and all candidates must receive approval and be escorted to and into the bathrooms. Anyone not following these rules may be disqualified. **Absolutely no exceptions** will be permitted. Candidates will be informed as to the date, time, and location of the Structured Oral Interview and the Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise two weeks prior to their scheduled date.

2. The Short-Answer Essay and the Written Multiple-Choice Examination

The Short-Answer Essay and the Written Multiple-Choice Exercise will not be administered the same day as the Structured Oral Interview and the Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercises. Remember that this is a closed-book test. Candidates will not be permitted to bring reading list reference materials to their test site. In addition, candidates will not be allowed, under any circumstances, to make or receive telephone calls and pages. Again, cellular phones and other electronic devices are prohibited in the examination center.

All candidates will be given the appropriate test materials at the same time. Once instructions have been given, the test material will be distributed to all candidates (there is no preparation period). All candidates will respond to the Short Answer Essay scenarios first and then given the Written

Multiple-Choice test afterwards. Candidates, who complete the Short Answer Essay examination prior to the end time, will be sequestered and not permitted to interact and/or speak with other finished candidates, make phone calls, or disrupt those candidates still taking the Short Answer Essays. Upon completion of the Multiple-Choice test, candidates will return all test materials to the test administrator, and may leave the test site.

E. Final Scoring

1. Exam Score

The Battalion Fire Chief promotional exam will consist of four components and are weighted as follows:

#	Component	Weight
1	Short-Answer Essay Examination	23.74%
2	Written Multiple-Choice Examination	28.89%
3	Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise	47.37%
4	Structured Oral Interview	

The scores for each component will be standardized, weighted, and combined to formulate each candidate’s overall examination score.

The final score is a sum of the weighted standardized overall examination score plus the weighted standardized seniority score. The component weights for the final exam score are 70% for the overall examination score and 30% for the seniority score. Score calculations will be done following the same procedures used for the 2009-2010 Battalion Fire Chief examination. A more detailed description and explanation of the score calculation process will be given to candidates during the examination review period that follows the administration of the exam.

The scoring criteria for this examination has been determined prior to the administration date by a panel of Subject Matter Experts using generally approved fire command, administrative and supervisory practices as well as reference materials. Scoring decisions are based on the situations that are presented. Only those responses, which depict relevant behaviors that are observable and can be quantified, will be assessed in the scoring process.

All scores are standardized and only candidates with passing examination scores will have their overall test score weighted 70% and seniority score weighted 30% in determining the final score. Candidates will be ranked based upon this final score.

Please note that appointments made from the eligibility lists are conditional, pending results of the appeal and make-up processes.

2. Seniority Score

To a base score of 70.000, one point is added for each year of eligible service up to a maximum of 15. The maximum score for the length of service component is 85.000.

Ten additional points are given for record of service. The record of service component is reduced by disciplinary suspensions occurring within five years of the closing date, by the following rules:

.0025 times the number of days suspended, up to three years from the closing date, and

.00125 times the number of days suspended, from 3 years to 5 years from the closing date.

The maximum possible seniority score is 95.000.

EXAMPLE: BATTALION FIRE CHIEF PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATION

Captain Brown was made permanent in the Captain title on March 22, 1996.

The closing date for the Captain announcement was September 30, 2004.

Brown was suspended for 3 days in 2002, and 2 days in 2000.

a.	3-22-96	Date of regular appointment
b.	9-30-04	Closing date of announcement
c.	8 years, 6 months, 8 days	Time from a - b
d.	8 years, 6 months, 3 days	Minus 5 suspension days
e.	No reduction for layoffs or leaves of absences	
f.	70.000	Base seniority
g.	8 years = 8.000	Points for seniority based on years
	183 days = 0.501	Months converted to days (1 day = .0027397)
	8.501	Subtotal
h.	78.501	Subtotal f + g = length of service component
i.	10.000	Added for record of service
j.	0.0075	3 days suspended within the last 3 years times 0.0025
k.	0.0025	2 days suspended over 3 years up to 5 years times 0.00125
l.	9.990	$i - (j + k) =$ record of service component
m.	88.491	(h + l) = Brown's total seniority score

III. PREPARATION STRATEGIES

A. Preparation Strategies for the Oral Exercises

Try Your Best – The exercises are designed to test candidate abilities. A candidate’s overall evaluation is based on his or her performance on each exercise. Even if candidates believe they did poorly on one exercise, they should continue to try to do their best on the remaining exercises.

The Exercises Are Set In A Hypothetical Fire Department – This is done intentionally so as not to give an advantage to someone with a particular work background. Candidates should not assume the hypothetical fire department is modeled after a specific New Jersey fire department. Consequently, when responding to the exercises, candidates should take action and make decisions based only on the information that will be supplied to them in the exercises and not on assumptions they may make about a “modeled” New Jersey fire department.

Developing strategies for how to attack a problem is a good test taking technique, in that an organized approach is better than a disorganized approach or no approach at all. Predetermined strategies are fine as a starting point but cannot take the place of true problem-solving skills of the critical thinking that can be applied to changing circumstances and demands, either in simulation exercises or in real-world events.

How Do You Prepare?

As with the other portions of the examination, preparation should be an on-going experience and endeavor. The single most important thing to remember is that candidates are going to be assessed on their performance at a higher level, and the nature of those duties and responsibilities at a fire or other emergency scene may be somewhat different than as a fire captain. Thus, it is important to understand the role and the unique command responsibilities of a Battalion Fire Chief.

Carefully study the Battalion Fire Chief job. What are the duties and responsibilities at the fire scene? How does the Battalion Fire Chief go about performing these duties? Are there certain things that are done no matter what? If so, what are they, how are they done, and when are they done? How does the Battalion Fire Chief go about deciding what to do? What does he expect his fire captains to do without being told, and what does he expect to have to tell them?

Candidates know that they will be required to respond to major fire scenes and other emergency situations. Candidates should think back about recent incidents they have responded to and try to remember what the Battalion Fire Chief did. Candidates should create their own scenarios and then go through the process of “commanding” that situation, using a format similar to that described in this orientation information to respond to it. Candidates should try to recreate the test situation as much as possible, sitting down, filling out the forms within the 30-minute time limit, and filling in the information they think they would provide on the test. When candidates review their work, they should do it objectively, looking for what they missed, did not make clear, or did out of order. If candidates have a study partner or group, each of person should develop scenarios and then critique each other’s responses.

B. Preparation Strategies for the Written Multiple-Choice Test

Applied knowledge, multiple-choice tests are designed to test candidate knowledge of a particular subject area. Candidates can improve their performance on multiple-choice tests in three different ways. The first and most obvious way is to have a working knowledge of the relevant material that will be covered on the test. The second is to know and understand the test situation so to avoid making mistakes caused by a failure to understand the meaning of the test questions, the test format, or the test procedures. Finally, candidates can try to gain an understanding of their own test-taking behavior. If candidates become aware of the kinds of errors they commit on multiple-choice exams, they can try to avoid them in the future. This guide provides suggestions for improving candidate performance in each of these areas:

How to Study: Understanding the Material Covered on the Test

This section provides some strategies to assist candidates in preparing for the test. A method for studying, based on well-established learning principles, is included. Many of the suggestions are directed toward enhancing candidates' ability to recall information by requiring them to do more than simply read the material. Some suggested strategies include: (a) surveying the material to be read in order to break it down into reasonable study "chunks," (b) formulating questions to be answered after each section has been read, and (c) reciting and reviewing the main points of each section.

General Multiple-Choice Test-Taking Strategies: Understanding the Test Situation

This section provides some strategies that candidates can apply when taking the test. These strategies are of relevance when taking any multiple-choice examination. They include such suggestions as marking questions in a way that will make them easier to understand and answering easier sets of questions first.

Error Analysis: Understanding Your Own Test-taking Behavior

This section provides candidates with some information about common test-taking errors, as well as strategies for avoiding such errors. Candidates are encouraged to identify the kinds of errors they tend to make when taking multiple-choice examinations. In this way, candidates will be more aware of the tendency toward these errors when they actually take the examination and can determine what steps they can take to avoid these errors.

1. How to Study

The study strategies provided here are provided for candidates' consideration and should be helpful in preparing for the Written Multiple-Choice Test. They can be applied to any books on the reading list. Of course, in the final analysis, candidates should decide which study method is best for them.

A. Focus Your Attention

You must focus your attention on the material you are studying if you expect to remember it. There are three things you can do that will help you focus your attention on the material you read.

First, since you tend to pay closer attention to things that interest you than to things that don't, you can try to make the material more meaningful or interesting. One way to do this is to apply it to yourself. Try to think of examples of the material that can be tied to your work.

The next thing you can do is to eliminate distractions from your environment. These distractions compete for your attention and affect your recall of the material that you study. It is difficult to pay attention to several things at the same time. Instead, people usually switch back and forth, paying attention first to one thing and then the other. Unfortunately, you may not remember any material that did not receive attention. This means that listening to the radio while you are studying, or studying in a noisy area, will leave gaps in your memory of the material you are trying to learn.

Finally, you should avoid trying to learn material when you are tired. Fatigue reduces the amount of information that you can remember. This means that it might be better to get a good night's sleep and study in the morning rather than staying up a few hours extra and sleeping late. Surely, you must have noticed how your attention wanders if you go without sleep for long periods of time.

B. A Method for Studying: SQ3R

SQ3R stands for *survey, question, read, recite* and *review*. These five elements make up a set of study habits that will help you perform well on the test.

SURVEY

"Survey" means to find the limits or borders of an area. Survey the material you have to study to get a rough idea of the content and organization of the material before beginning in-depth study efforts.

To survey a body of information, scan it from start to finish. By skimming over the pages, you will get an idea of what is to come. In most documents, this type of survey is made much easier through the use of headings. Bold, large, or major headings introduce big or important elements; smaller headings introduce sub-areas of these important elements. Another helpful overview of the material can be found in summaries such as chapter summaries, overviews, or statements of objectives. By looking over such summaries, you can get a quick view of the important parts or pieces of the material covered.

Surveying the study material gives you an idea of how long it will take to cover the material. This will help you to break the assignment down into reasonable time blocks. Material should be read in chunks of a reasonable size. You should carve out a specific section that you will try

to understand before moving on. A chunk might be all of the material under a major heading. If the material under the heading runs for many pages, you might want to reduce the material to be understood to each of the minor headings, taking one at a time.

QUESTION

Most people need a reason to do things. In studying text material, a question becomes a reason. If you have some questions to begin with, the material that you are reading will take on more life and be more meaningful.

Before beginning each study session, look over the material you intend to cover. Develop some questions that you expect to be answered in the material. There are several ways to develop these questions. One way is to begin with the list of headings from the chapter or document outline. Write a question for each major and minor heading. Developing questions can provide a reason for reading the material and can help the information become more meaningful to you. For most people, reading means the same thing as studying. When they say that they have studied material, they often mean that they have read it through several times. Reading is important, but it will be done more effectively when the *survey* and *question* steps have been completed.

The most effective way to pace yourself is to decide on the number of chunks that will be read and understood in a given study session. You can use the questions you developed through the previous step as your definition of understanding. Once you can answer these questions, you can move on to the next section. A good time to take breaks is between these sections, not in the middle of them. This might be a way of rewarding yourself for successfully completing the reading of each section.

It's important to ensure that you understand the material you are reading. One way to do this is to look up the definitions of all new and unfamiliar terms. You should make a list of the words and phrases that you don't understand. If these terms are technical terms that you have not encountered before, the chances are that the answer is somewhere in the chapter or document that you are reading. Have a notebook available so that you can mark down each of these terms, leaving a space for their definition. The quicker you get to know the meaning of all the terms, the more effective your studying will be. If the term or word is not technical, but simply a large or uncommon word that you are not sure of, look it up in a dictionary. If you feel it would be helpful, record the definitions of these non-technical terms in your notebook, as well. You might want to use it to keep track of all of the important terms, even those you understand.

Another good way to make your reading time as useful as possible is to mark or underline the text while you are reading. This will make you a more active participant in the studying process. In addition, it will help you to focus on the major ideas and keep you from getting bogged down in details. Your underlining or highlighting can also make it easier for you to find relevant material later for review or to answer questions on the test.

In marking or underlining the text, you should actually go through the text and underline key words and concepts that are important in understanding the material in the chunk you are

reading. You might also make notes to yourself right on the text page. If you choose to use the underlining and marking method, here are a few guidelines:

1. Read the whole section before doing any underlining or marking.
2. Don't mark or underline too much. The value of the technique lies in highlighting only the most important material.
3. Use ink if possible so that the underlining and notes do not disappear or become unclear in the course of studying.
4. Use symbols as much as possible. For example, use a "?" as a symbol for questions you have; use a "*" to stand for a particularly important idea.

RECITE

It's very helpful to recite with another individual. He or she can ask you questions about portions of the material, which will make you recite or locate the relevant material in a formal way. It's not necessary to choose someone who is familiar with the material. The person only has to be able to recognize that what you have said is what is written in the reference material or in your notes.

In order to be most effective, recitation should take place quite soon after you've first learned or read the material. This is important because the greatest amount of information is lost or forgotten within a short period of time after it is first learned.

Don't try to cover too much information at once. Depending on the number of pages covered, this might be all of the information in one major section or chapter.

REVIEW

Reviewing the material to be covered in the test may help you to understand and organize the material better. Your review should also cover your outline of how the material is organized, and where certain topics can be found.

Review is done just before beginning a new study session. In this form of review, you are actually preparing yourself for new learning by strengthening old learning. This helps to ensure that any old learning that is needed as a basis for new learning is correct and available.

Another form of review is done before a test. This review can be done quite effectively in a group with other test takers. This cuts down on some of the drudgery of pre-test studying and also increases the meaning of much of the information. That is, while you are taking the test, you can more easily remember the information if you think back to who said what and how the review conversation went.

In summary, the SQ3R method of study is based on sound learning principles and
--

gives you a simple formula to follow:

<i>SURVEY</i>	skim the reading material and create manageable chunks to study
<i>QUESTION</i>	develop a purpose for reading by asking questions that you expect to have answered in the reading material
<i>READ</i>	read and re-read the material until you understand it thoroughly
<i>RECITE</i>	write down or talk about what you just learned to improve retention and integrate new information into your knowledge base
<i>REVIEW</i>	look over highlighted text and notes and integrate new information with old information

2. General Multiple-Choice Test-Taking Strategies

The purpose of the Written Multiple-Choice Test is to assess your knowledge of the specified areas contained in the “Evaluation” section located on as well as how well you can apply this knowledge to specific scenarios. At times, factors other than your knowledge of the tested material can influence your performance. The following suggestions may help you to reduce these extraneous influences and do your best on the multiple-choice component of the examination.

A. Make sure you understand the test format and requirements

Read, and/or listen to, all of the directions carefully.

Make sure you know how to correctly mark the answer sheet.

Make sure you know how much time you have to complete the test. Be sure to check your watch periodically so that you can keep track of the amount of time remaining in the examination period.

B. Make sure you understand the question

Read each question carefully.

Try to answer the question before you look at the choices. If you know the answer, compare it to the available choices and pick the closest alternative. A thorough understanding of the knowledge areas will allow you to answer the questions without looking at the answer choices.

Candidates will be allowed to write in their test booklet, so they should mark the test questions in a way that makes them easier to read.

Use slash marks to break down sentences into small segments. This will make you more attentive to each separate idea in a long sentence.

Circle key words that tell what a sentence or passage is about. If you skip the question and come back to it later, your markings can make it easier to remember what the question was about, without reading the full question or passage again.

Find and underline words which "harden" or "soften" statements.

AND means that one element of the alternative must be present or true in addition to another element for the alternative to be correct.

OR means that there is a choice of situations. Only one of the elements of the alternative must be present or true for it to be a correct alternative.

C. Proceed through the questions strategically

Skim through all materials pertaining to each scenario at least once before starting to respond to the multiple-choice items.

Read each scenario and examine each diagram pertaining to the scenario for a general understanding. Next, read each of the items associated with that scenario and return to the scenario and diagrams to check the details.

Answer items in a set at the same time.

The Multiple-Choice Test items will be grouped according to their scenarios and/or diagrams. As a general rule, you should answer all test items involved with a set of materials (scenario, diagrams) at the same time. It is very time-consuming to re-familiarize yourself with all of the materials for an item left unanswered in a set. If the set of items looks difficult in general, it could be more time efficient to skip the entire set of items and then come back to them later. Whenever you do skip a set of items, be sure to mark them as skipped in your test booklet so that you can easily spot the items you skipped.

Tackle difficult questions methodically.

Don't get bogged down if there is a word or sentence you do not understand. You may get the main idea without knowing the individual word or the individual sentence.

Use the process of elimination.

If you don't know the answer to a question, first eliminate those choices that are clearly wrong. Then, put a mark next to each remaining choice to indicate what you think about it (e.g., bad, good, or possible). This will save you time by reducing the number of choices you have to re-read and re-evaluate before selecting your final choice(s)

Guess.

You will not lose any more credit for an incorrect response than you will for no response, so even if you must guess, respond to every question. If the examination period is about to end and you believe that there will be a substantial number of questions (e.g., more than 5 or 10) that you will not be able to complete, reserve some time toward the very end of the examination period to respond to these questions, even if you must guess. While your guesses may not be correct, the alternative is to leave these questions blank and be assured of getting them wrong.

D. Use extra time wisely

If you finish the examination before the test time expires, go back and review your responses. Make any changes that are necessary. Also make sure that you have placed your answers on the answer sheet correctly.

Finally, remember that Test Monitors will be there to help every candidate with testing procedures. If you have any questions about the testing procedures, ask for assistance before the test begins.

3. Error Analysis

There are several possible reasons for choosing an incorrect response to a question. Six of these reasons are presented below along with suggestions for avoiding such errors. Consider past tests that you have taken and identify the errors (from among the six provided here) that tend to characterize your test-taking behavior. Once you have identified the reasons for your errors, you

can take steps to avoid repeating such errors when answering questions on this and future examinations. As previously mentioned, the suggestions laid out below are geared towards selecting the one best alternative. Listed below are various reasons why you might select incorrect answers:

A. Marking the wrong space on the answer sheet

Since there are a limited number of questions on each examination, careless errors such as these are costly. Check yourself as you mark each answer choice on the answer sheet to ensure you are marking the answer you have chosen. As an additional check, after you complete the exam, go back over every question and answer it again.

B. Misreading a question or answer by overlooking a key word or phrase

One solution to this problem could be UNDERLINING. Underlining makes key words and phrases stand out when choosing an answer. Once you have underlined the key words and phrases, check the details of the possible answers with the details you underlined, one-by-one. If every detail doesn't match, consider that answer suspect and try another, always keeping in mind you're looking for the best possible answer.

C. Not knowing the meaning of one or more key terms

This could be a problem in PREPARATION and/or VOCABULARY. In your study materials, underline key terms and make sure you know what they mean. If an unfamiliar term is a technical term, it most likely will be defined within the relevant document. If an unfamiliar term is not a technical term, go to a dictionary and look it up. It is a good idea to build your own glossary of terms and learn their meanings.

When taking the test, if you have difficulty with a term, re-read the sentence to determine its meaning. Try to understand the general message of the sentence or paragraph. The meaning of the unfamiliar word could become clearer once you understand the general context within which it has been placed.

D. Difficulty understanding complex or difficult questions

Divide and conquer! Use slash marks to break up the material into small segments, then concentrate on one segment at a time. One approach to difficult questions is to first read the possible answers and then re-read the question. This tells you what to concentrate on while reading the question. Concentrate on the parts of the question directly related to the possible answers even if you do not understand the entire question. You may not need to understand the entire question to find the correct answer. Also, focus on the topic sentences that are usually the first and last sentences of a question. Read the difficult questions twice. The first time, read for the general meaning and do not get bogged down by individual words or phrases that you do not understand. The second time, read for more precise understanding. The first reading will provide the context so that the second reading is more meaningful.

E. Comparing combinations of information

This is a problem of rearranging information in the correct way so that it makes sense. Underline critical pieces of information in the test question and then compare the information with the possible answers, point-by-point. Also, concentrate on eliminating wrong answers first.

F. The alternative you chose looked correct

Several factors can cause you to select incorrect alternatives:

1. An incorrect alternative may contain an exact phrase from the relevant material (i.e., from the test question itself or the study material).
2. An incorrect alternative may contain a phrase or sentence that is used out of context. For example, an idea that is expressed but then rejected in the relevant material may be presented as an idea that was supported.

Some strategies for avoiding the tendency to fall for incorrect alternatives include:

1. Have an answer in mind before you look over the alternatives. This will make you less susceptible to choosing an incorrect alternative merely because it looks good.
2. Use the method of marking each alternative to indicate what you think about it (e.g., bad, good, or possible) before choosing one.
3. Stick strictly to the facts or rules of the relevant material. Don't fall for alternatives that stretch or exaggerate the facts or rules described in the relevant material.
4. Be wary of alternatives with words or phrases taken exactly from the relevant material. Don't simply assume that such alternatives are correct.
5. Prepare a defense for your answer. Find something in the relevant material that will give a strong, direct defense for your answer.

IV. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION POLICIES

A. Examination Make-Up Policy

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 4A: 4-2.9, make-up examinations for public safety promotional examinations may be authorized only in cases of:

- I. Error by the Civil Service Commission or appointing authority.
- II. Death in the candidate's immediate family as evidenced by a copy of the death certificate; or
- III. Catastrophic injury or illness requiring an extended convalescent period provided the candidate submits a doctor's certification containing a diagnosis and a statement clearly showing that the candidate's physical condition precluded his or her participation in the examination, as well as documentation from the candidate's employer noting the candidate's related leave from work.
- IV. Military leave, which will be handled as stated in NJAC 4A:4-2.9(c).
- V. Exoneration from pending disciplinary or criminal charges will be handled as stated in N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.9(d).

Make-up requests must be submitted in writing, with supporting documentation, to: NJCSC Public Safety Make-Up Exam Unit, P.O. Box 310, Trenton, NJ 08625-0310 within 5 days upon receipt of your Notification Card.

NOTE: All requests for medical make-up examinations must be accompanied by the Civil Service Commission's Medical Authorization for Make-up Examination form (DPF-728), completed by the treating physician. The Medical Authorization for Make-up Examination form can be obtained through the Make-up Unit or from our website at <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/about/publications/forms/>.

Candidates with special situations/ADA concerns must contact Marty Berrien at (609) 292-4144 extension: 199-1001, upon receipt of their examination notification in order to request/discuss special needs, if you have already been approved for ADA accommodations with CSC.

Candidates with first-time request for ADA accommodation must check Box 8 on the front of your application. You will subsequently be contacted for information regarding your special need(s).

B. Post Examination Review Policy

A detailed review policy will be provided at the examination center. Subsequent to the date of the examination, candidates who participated in the examination process will be provided the opportunity to review their examination scores. An appointment to review the Written Multiple-Choice exam must be within 5 days of the administration. To review the Short Answer Essay, Oral Analysis/Presentation and Structured Oral Interview exams will be given the opportunity upon receipt of an INELIGIBILITY/ELIGIBILITY NOTICE.

C. Examination Cancellation Policy

In the event that circumstances force cancellation of the examination administration, the Civil Service Commission will attempt to contact your department head, as soon as that decision has been made. In the case of inclement weather, please call CSC's Information Center to find out the status of the examination or listen to your local radio station for further information. To contact the Civil Service Commission's Information Center, call (609) 292-4144.

D. Study Groups

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission is not affiliated with any "study group" in the business of preparing individuals for examinations, nor does the Civil Service Commission recommend participation in any "study group." Further, the Civil Service Commission does not have authority to control or regulate the activity of "study groups." No "study group" has been involved in the development or review of Civil Service Commission examinations and, at no time has any examination material been provided to such groups. Finally, the Civil Service Commission is not responsible for any claims made by "study groups" or the manner in which they represent themselves for advertisement purposes.

V. CONCLUSION

This preparation guide represents an attempt to familiarize candidates with all aspects of the Applied Knowledge Test and Oral Exercises, including the items and materials, logistics and evaluation approach. It also provides some suggestions for preparation. The suggestions provided here are not exhaustive — we encourage candidates to engage in whatever additional preparation strategies they believe will enhance their chances of performing effectively on the exam and on the job.

We hope that this Orientation Guide is helpful to you.

VI. SAMPLE MATERIALS FOR EACH COMPONENT

The following pages contain examples of materials from the Written Multiple-Choice Examination, Short-Answer Essay Examination, Structured Oral Interview, and Oral Analysis/Presentation. The following examples are provided as samples so that you may become familiar with some of the types of materials and response formats that you will encounter. The actual assessment materials will be different from the ones presented here. These problems are merely illustrative of the kinds of problems which you may face during the Oral Assessment Exercises and Multiple-Choice Test.

A. Sample Item from Oral Analysis/Presentation Exercise

ORAL ANALYSIS/PRESENTATION EXERCISE

You have been assigned as a new Battalion Fire Chief in your jurisdiction. Your predecessor, recently retired Battalion Fire Chief Tim Connaly, was from the old school of firefighting in terms of station training. He felt that after-hours were meant for fellowship and for talking through the events of the day. Training was a necessary evil that occasionally broke through the routine.

As part of your new assignment, you have been asked by Fire Chief to investigate the quality of station training in the Department, beginning with Station 6, and to compare the amount and quality of training there with that of the other five fire stations in the department.

Based on the text, The Fire Chief's Handbook, and your experience, answer the following questions:

Question 1: What steps should you take to investigate the levels of training at Station 6?

Question 2: What information should be used to compare the training level of Station 6 to the other five stations?

Please note that you have 20 minutes to review and prepare a response to this scenario.

In responding to the questions, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score.

Please note that you must answer ALL the questions within the 10 minute response period.

B. Sample Items from Structured Oral Interview

**NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
BATTALION FIRE CHIEF EXAMINATION**

Structured Oral Interview – Form A

Scenario 1: There is a captain under your command who has been a rising star. He has taken advantage of many opportunities to contribute to and move up in the department. Recently, you have noticed some minor rule infractions on his part. Today, for example, while on the fire ground, you observed him wearing a cracked face shield that you had ordered him last week to replace. Later, you questioned him and he replied that he had checked with the supply room, but was unable to find a replacement. He added that just like everything else, it's on order, and he walked away. How should this situation be handled?

Please note that you have 25 minutes to review and prepare a response to all three Structured Oral Interview scenarios. Be sure to budget your time accordingly.

In responding to the question, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score.

Please note that you must give your full response within the 7 minute response period.

**NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
BATTALION FIRE CHIEF EXAMINATION**

Structured Oral Interview – Form A

Scenario 2: You arrive on the scene where a first alarm crew is responding to a warehouse fire. The warehouse contains the excess stock from a local furniture outlet. One of the threatened exposures is a 5,000-gallon pressure tank. The fire is burning in the northeast corner of the warehouse, and the pressurized tank is located near the southwest corner of the warehouse. What are your initial orders to the companies and what changes in conditions are you going to be alert for to evaluate the exposure hazards?

Question 2: What actions should you take to address this incident?

Please note that you have 25 minutes to review and prepare a response to all three Structured Oral Interview scenarios. Be sure to budget your time accordingly.

In responding to the question, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score.

Please note that you must give your full response within the 7 minute response period.

**NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
BATTALION FIRE CHIEF EXAMINATION**

Structured Oral Interview – Form A

Scenario 3 - Follow-up to Scenario/Question 2: The 5,000-gallon pressure tank has exploded and there are numerous mayday reports.

Question 3: Based on this new information, what actions should you now perform to address this incident?

Please note that you have 25 minutes to review and prepare a response to all three Structured Oral Interview scenarios. Be sure to budget your time accordingly.

In responding to the question, be as specific as possible. Do not assume or take for granted that general actions will contribute to your score.

Please note that you must give your full response within the 7 minute response period.

C. Sample Item from Short-Answer Essay Examination

1. Sample Instructions

NJ BATTALION FIRE CHIEF

FIRE SCENE SCENARIOS

In the two scenarios, candidates are to assume the role of a Battalion Fire Chief called to the incident. **For each scenario, candidates are to describe, on the attached Response Forms, the actions they would take in the order that they would take them. Also, candidates should put their name or identification number at the top of each sheet.** For each action, note:

- (1) the chronological order your actions/orders are given.
- (2) the action you would take or the order you would give.
- (3) to whom the order would be given and how it would be conveyed (face-to-face, radio, etc.).
- (4) what you expect to achieve by the action.

You may give short answers or the command you would actually give. Your responses need not be in complete sentences. You will not be evaluated on your writing skill, spelling, or grammar. Long essays are neither needed nor desirable. However, your responses must be in sufficient detail and clear enough to allow the assessors to evaluate your actions, just as your commands would be given on the fireground. The Response Forms allow you to give order or actions in numerical order. If there is not enough space to write your order or action, you may continue into the next number. **You must give the actions or orders in appropriate sequence or say why they are not in sequence.**

The two scenarios will be administered and timed concurrently and will appear in the same booklet. Candidates will have one hour to respond to both scenarios. Candidates will have to budget their time so that they can respond to both essays within the one hour test period. A time warning will be given at the 30-minute mark to remind candidates that if they are still working on the first essay, they should consider moving on to the second.

Each scenario gives:

- A narrative description of the emergency, including the type of structure and pertinent information (e.g., time of day, weather, type of structure, etc.).
- A diagram (plot-plan) of the specific structure involved in the emergency, and the surrounding area, including the location of hydrants, exposures, streets, etc.
- A three-dimensional depiction of the structure, including any fire, smoke, and other environmental relevant factors.

2. Sample Background Information

New Jersey Battalion Fire Chief Fire Scenario 1

- Type of Building: A pre-1950, four-story, multiple-tenant dwelling that is one of seven, side-by-side attached buildings. Each building has two apartments per floor for a total of eight apartments per building. The seven buildings share a common cockloft. There are closed scuttle openings in the roof of each building.
- The front of the buildings (Side A) faces a 4-lane street (Belle Road) with 2 lanes in each direction. A similar set of buildings (numbers 210-222) fronts the south side of Belle Road.
- The back of the buildings (Side C) faces a 20-foot wide alley. Located in the alley are immovable dumpsters. Fire escapes descend at the back of each building. Gas mains are also at the back of each building. The backs of a similar set of buildings are across the alley and front on Poole Road, another 4-lane street with 2 lanes in each direction.
- About the Fire: The fire originated on the second floor of a unit in building #217 and is blocking and extending up the stairway leading to the third floor. There is heavy smoke showing from the fourth floor. Smoke is also showing from the second and third floors. Alarms are sounding. There were numerous calls reporting the fire.
- Day/Time: Saturday, 0100 hours
- Weather: The temperature is 45° F/7.2°C with a 5-10 mph wind coming out of the SW. It has recently rained, and additional showers are forecast.
- Other Information:
- Internal fire alarms are sounding.
 - There were numerous calls reporting the fire.
 - You are the first arriving fire unit's Battalion Fire Chief and you have arrived simultaneously with the unit. The unit consists of two engines and a ladder truck.
 - Upon arrival you notice three people hanging out of the windows on the second floor.

3. Sample Response Levels, Apparatus Staffing and Initial Functions

Initial Response: **Engine (E1)**
Engine (E2)
Ladder (L1)
Battalion Fire Chief (C1)

Each subsequent alarm that a candidate calls will consist of the **identical** response levels as indicated above (i.e., two engine companies, one ladder company, and one Battalion Fire Chief).

If, in addition to the above, candidates want other companies or resources, they must specifically request them.

In each scenario, candidates will be the FIRST arriving Battalion Fire Chief. They will arrive with or before any of the initial response companies. Candidates will remain in command of the **entire incident** (that is, no higher ranking chief will arrive or relieve them of command, even if they call for them).

Apparatus Staffing:

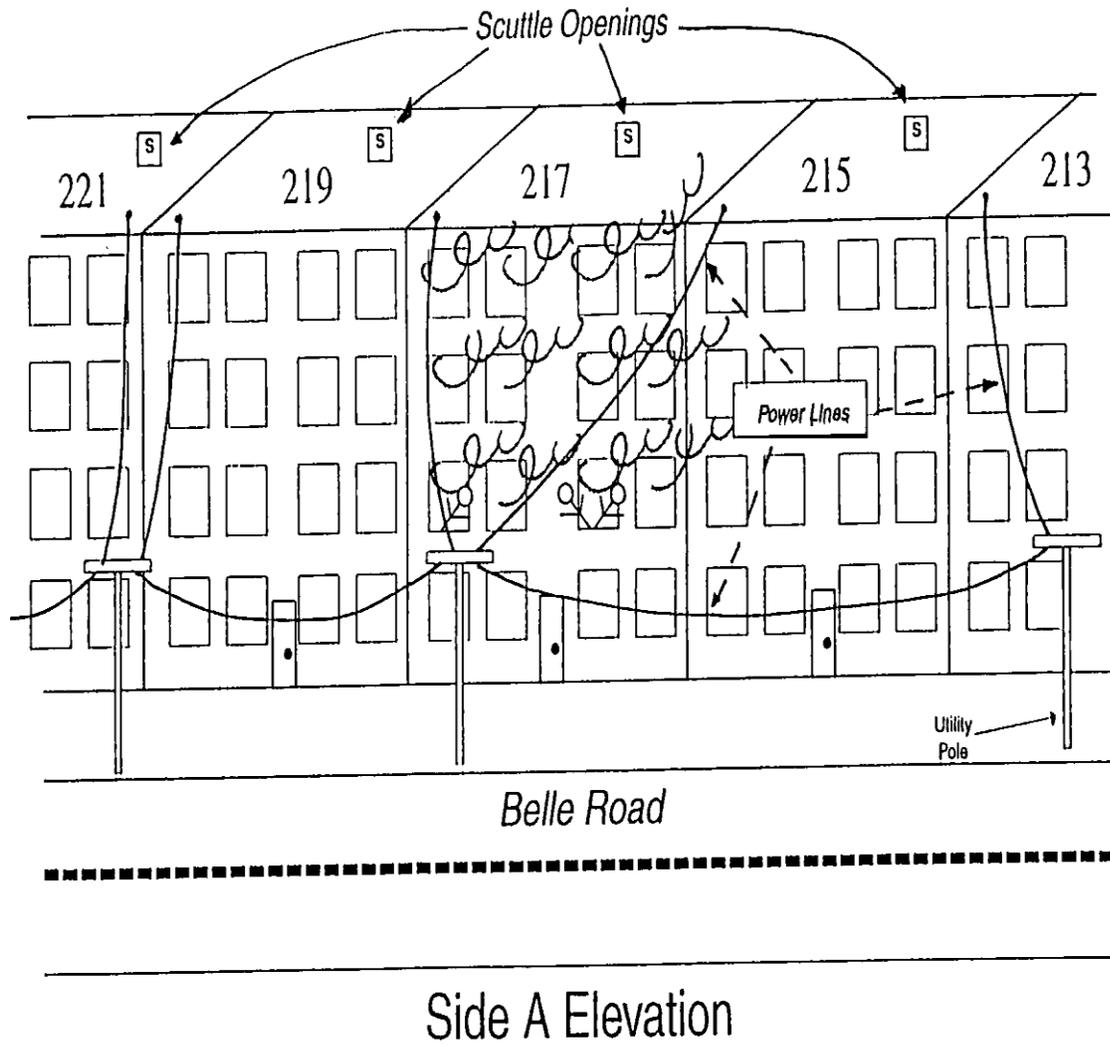
All engines have:	1 Captain 3 firefighters
All ladders have:	1 Captain 3 firefighters
All chief's vehicles have:	1 Battalion Fire Chief

Following each apparatus or vehicle type, we have assigned an identifying number. That is, the first engine is identified as "E1." You may use these same identifiers in the examination to reduce the amount of writing, and to ensure clarity.

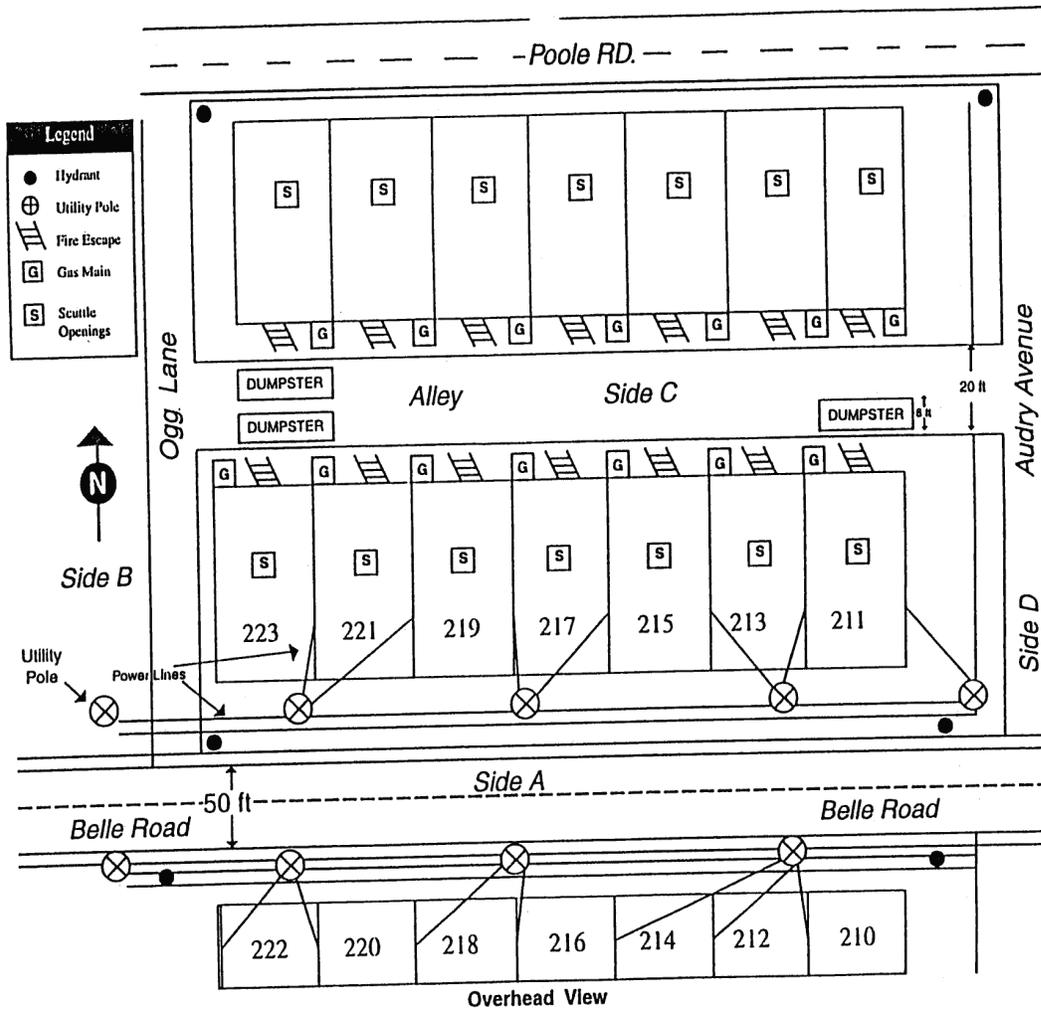
It is important that candidates make clear on the response form in some manner, the specific company or resources to which they are giving orders or making assignments.

If candidates request additional alarms or resources, they can assign a sequential number to those companies, using the same or similar numbering system. For example, if candidates were to call for one additional ladder, they could designate it as "L2."

4. Sample Diagram 1



5. Sample Diagram 2



6. Sample Response Form

B. RESPONSE FORM

Directions: List the actions that you will take, and any orders you will give, <u>in the order</u> you will react. Use the first column to indicate the numerical order sequence. Be specific in your commands, objectives, assignments. General answer and responses will not contribute to your score.			
#	To Whom	Objective/Purpose	Order/Command/Assignment (What you would say or do)

D. Sample Items from Written Multiple-Choice Test

1. Sample Scenario

You were promoted to First Level Fire Supervisor four months ago and assigned to Sector 6. It is 2000 hours on Thursday and the outside temperature is 82 degrees Fahrenheit with humidity of 85%. There has been a breeze blowing to the east all day at 5 mph. Your engine company is dispatched to a reported fire in an office building within your sector. Another engine company, a ladder company, and a Chief Officer are also dispatched.

You are the first company to arrive on the scene. There appears to be a significant fire in the coffee shop on the first floor of the building. You see smoke showing at the eaves. Some of the janitors and security guards have evacuated to a safe area.

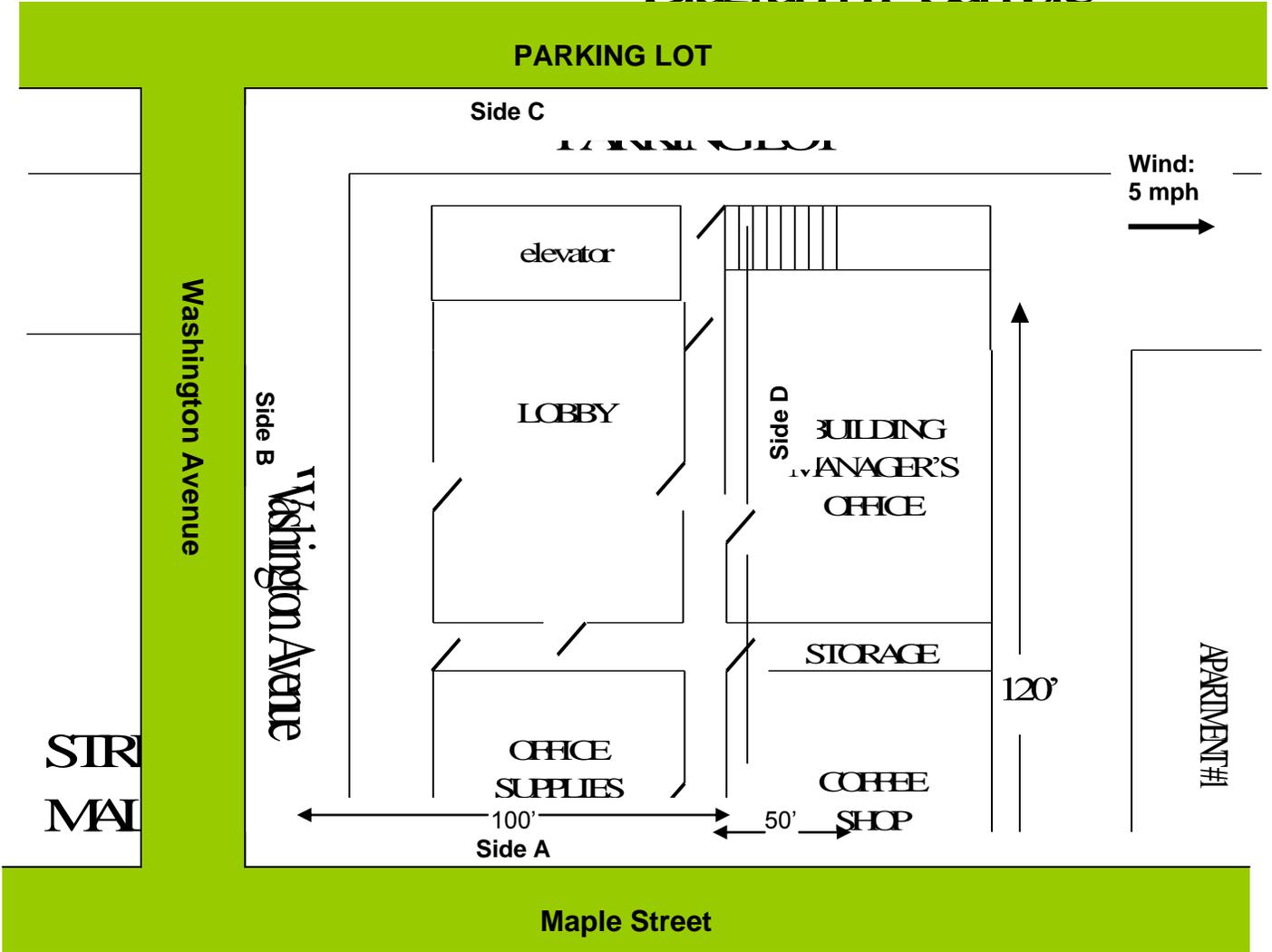
Upon your arrival, you confirm that the building is of fire resistive construction. It is four stories high with a flat roof. The dimensions of the building are 100 feet wide and 120 feet deep. The ground floor consists of the lobby, the building manager's office, an office supplies store, and the coffee shop. The other floors each have four business offices. One elevator serves every floor, and it has no firefighter emergency operation. There is a stairwell at the rear of the building.

To the east of the structure is a two-story apartment of brick wall, wood joist construction. The apartment building is approximately 30 feet from the involved building. A strip mall occupied by small retail stores is located across the street to the west of the structure. In the rear of the building there is a parking lot.

At this point, the other engine company has just arrived at the incident, the ladder company is a mile away, and the Chief Officer has been detained. You position your vehicle and assume command. An adequate water supply has been established, and your company has started to attack the fire. You are the highest ranking officer on the scene. You know that you will be in command for at least the next 10 minutes.

2. Sample Diagram

Diagram 1: Sample



3. Sample Items

1. The activities of the Search & Rescue Group of this incident would be managed by the
 - A. Operations Section Chief.
 - B. Branch Manger.
 - C. EMS Branch Officer.
 - D. Division 2 Officer.

The correct response is D. Because the Incident Commander has not delegated search and rescue management responsibilities, the Incident Commander is still responsible for managing them.

2. When considering if the apartment building next to the office building would be likely to be an exposure problem, you determine that
 - A. the distance between the two buildings makes it likely to be an exposure problem.
 - B. the wind conditions make it likely to be an exposure problem.
 - C. the construction type makes it likely to be an exposure problem.
 - D. it is not likely to be an exposure problem given the circumstances.

The correct response is D. The apartment building is not likely to be an exposure problem because the distance between buildings (response A), wind conditions (response B), and construction type (response C) depicted in the scenario and diagram are not conducive to enable the fire to spread to the adjacent apartment building.

3. While performing primary search operations, the second engine company radios you to say that they discovered a delivery of unprotected medical chemicals which were apparently left outside of a doctor's office on the third floor. You should have that company
 - A. continue with primary search of the third floor.
 - B. discontinue all search operations until the arrival of the Hazardous materials Response Action Team.
 - C. request that the crew evaluate the chemicals and determine the best method for containment and disposal.
 - D. notify dispatch.

The correct response is B. When confronted with hazardous materials, especially those that may have been exposed to high temperatures, the best response is to discontinue operations in the vicinity of the materials. Response A is incorrect because the firefighters could be in danger, depending on how the chemicals react to the heat. Response C is incorrect because the crew should not evaluate, contain, and dispose of hazardous materials. Response D is incorrect because the Incident Commander, not the crew, should notify dispatch of the situation.