

# Sharpen Your Firefighter Trainee Interview Skills



## **Prepare Yourself for the Firefighter Trainee Interview and for the Position**

- Research the city of Las Vegas Fire and Rescue Department and its mission, vision and customers. <http://www.lasvegasfire.org/>.
- Review the Firefighter Trainee job description. Analyze all qualifications, duties, essential functions, knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Draft a summary of your qualifications and work, school and volunteer experiences.

## **Know What to Expect from an Oral Board Interview.**

- Raters can only evaluate your responses based on the information that you communicate during the interview. Do not assume that they know other information about you.
- Answer the questions being asked. You will be evaluated on your responses to the questions as they pertain to the position.
- If you don't understand a question, you may ask the rater to repeat the question.
- Raters will be taking notes and may not be looking directly at you during the interview.
- The board will be comprised of a combination of sworn Fire and Rescue personnel and other staff who are involved in the testing process.
- Remember that the raters want you to do well!

## **Practice for the Firefighter Trainee Interviews**

- Practice listening to questions with multiple parts, taking a few notes about the questions, and then answering all parts of the questions.
- Analyze and be able to explain how your training, education, and work experience are related to the position

- Think about specific situations from your work, school, and volunteer experiences and practice talking about those.
- Make an audio and/or videotape of your practice sessions or practice in front of a mirror.
- Identify and correct any distracting mannerisms that you may have. Avoid using words like “um”, “like”, “you know”, “man”, “dude”, etc.
- Draft potential interview questions and answer them.
- Consider seeking feedback from a coworker, friend, family member, etc.

### **Be Professional**

- Dress appropriately in business attire.
- Avoid overwhelming smells like smoke, cologne, perfume, etc.
- Arrive on time and be sure that you are at the right location. If you are late you will not be allowed to interview.
- Electronic devices (including cell phones or tablets) will not be allowed in your interview.
- Please leave devices at home, or secure them in your car when you arrive for your interview.
- Dispose of gum and tobacco.
- Remove sunglasses and hats.

### **During the Interview**

- Listen carefully to the questions before you answer.
- Ensure that your answers are detailed and complete. You may refer to your preview notes and you may also make additional notes during the interview.
- Relax and breathe.
- Sit up straight.
- Please do not be intimidated by raters who seem serious - they are supposed to be that way!

### **Reflect on the Interview Afterward**

- What went well?
- What could you have done differently or better?
- Were you adequately prepared?
- How should you prepare for the next interview - even if you get this position?
- Remember, all testing information is confidential. Do not record or discuss the interview questions.