



# COMMISSION COMMENTS

*Show Up on Test Day!*

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## Be There or Be Square

Don't miss **your** opportunity! You see a position with the City of Columbus that would be perfect for you. Your application is approved and you are assigned a test date. What should you do next?

### *SHOW UP TO THE TEST!*

Far too often we see candidates that were approved to test, not follow through with the examination. However, for many exams, simply by showing up to the test you have already surpassed two-thirds of the applicants. This is because some examinations consistently have a no show rate of 35% or more! Certainly there are times when circumstances come up that can't be avoided, those instances are understandable. However, there are some situations that may be avoidable. In these situations, we want to make sure all who apply and are qualified, have the opportunity to test. Therefore, if you find yourself using one of the commonly cited reasons listed below for not attending an exam, we hope you will utilize the tips provided and are able to test.

**You're square since you're not aROUND!**



### *I'm a bad test taker/I get nervous taking tests.*

A civil service examination is your opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and ability to perform in an area that you are experienced. We take steps for each examination to match the skills required on the job as closely as possible. For example, the Equipment Operator Examination has a driving test, while Administrative Secretary tests typing and other skills necessary for the job. Positions dealing heavily with the public

may have a component to the examination that tests the candidates' oral communication and interpersonal skills. Examinations are designed for candidates with experience in the selected areas to flourish. Your task is to demonstrate the skills you already possess. Show us what you got!

If you would like to review some general test taking tips, we also have a study guide on our website at <https://www.columbus.gov/civilservice/Guides-and-Resources/>. Also, keep an eye out on our main website for the next time we are taking reservations for an upcoming Civil Service Testing Clinic Workshop.

Civil Service wants to make the best possible job matches for each position within the City of Columbus. The best match is one that is filled with a highly qualified employee that enjoys the work they do. We also want to provide as many opportunities as possible to our community. These goals can be met and the City of Columbus can run smoothly, but first you have to **SHOW UP TO THE TEST!**

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**You miss 100% of the shots you don't take.**

*- Wayne Gretzky*

## Tips From an Anonymous Application Reviewer

When you submit an application to the City of Columbus for an exam, there are two primary steps to determine if you meet the minimum qualifications (MQs) and will be invited to take the test.

The first step is automated. Exam applications have a section with Yes or No "Supplemental Questions." These questions are designed to determine if you can self-identify if you meet the MQs. Since MQs often have multiple ways to meet them, via specific experience or education combinations, you should not automatically answer "yes" to these questions. You need to look at each question and decide if the education and experience included on your application supports a "yes" or "no" response. Anyone who answers yes to an appropriate combination of these questions, moves on to the second step.



The second step is performed by someone like me, a *human* application reviewer. We do NOT use software to determine if you meet the MQs or look for key words—a real, live person is reading what you wrote. I look at what you included on the application and determine if the work duties and education you've described meet the stated minimum qualifications for the job. Depending on many factors, it may take me hours, or even days, to get through a list of hundreds of applications. Once I've finished reviewing every single application, we send out rejections, clarifications, and test dates.

One thing that makes my job difficult is "résumé speak." Résumé speak is when an applicant tries to make their job sound very complicated and uses bigger words than is really necessary under the "work duties." All I am looking for on your application is some sort of proof that you have the required experience or education. For example, recently I was reviewing applications where the MQs required "two years of experience in public contact." Here are some examples

of candidate work duties that used résumé speak:

- Implemented a system that tracked quantitative and qualitative aspects of the training and development programs and converted tracked data to improve and streamline output of new hires and existing staff members.
- Methodically surveyed the organizational structure for efficiency and analyzed how they were suitable to the company's strategic goals.
- Worked with team leaders on a wide range of training platforms in setting, fine tuning and optimizing mission specific objectives for quarterly and annual readiness quota.

These statements do not tell me anything about public contact. They take time to read, and I need to read them multiple times to ensure I didn't miss something important. The applicants who wrote these work duties

may have been rejected because they didn't clearly list what they actually did at those jobs.

The types of work duties I would prefer to see are more plainly explained, such as:

- Responded to inquiries from the public via email
- Answered customer questions over the phone
- Responsible for community relations of the department
- Worked with customers to resolve billing issues

These types of statements clearly show the applicant meets the minimum qualifications and I can quickly approve their application.

Next time you are filling out an application, please pause and remember that I **want** to approve your application and get you in to test. We want the finest people to work for the City of Columbus, and the best way to find them is to test as many people as possible. Please help me approve YOUR application, by plainly telling me about yourself and your work duties. Leave the résumé speak for your actual résumé!

## ?? Ask Eyestein ??

Dear Eyestein:

**I took the test for a job earlier this year, and now I've received a "Notice of Canvass" letter in my email. What is it? And where do I turn it in? I really want the job!**

**Signed, I Usually Paint  
on a Canvas**



Dear Job Artist:

A Notice of Canvass means that a department is canvassing an eligible list due to a special circumstance. Sometimes it's because the position is third shift, or it's part-time, or there is a language requirement for the position; it can be anything that would make the job

more difficult to recruit for. A Notice of Canvass lets us at Civil Service know that you are interested in the position. Your notice will have a deadline to turn in your letter indicating your interest, as well as a physical address and fax number. You can also just hit "reply" to the email and say "I'm interested!" and we'll add you to the list of interested candidates. Once the deadline passes, we forward the list of all the interested candidates to the

department, and they follow up regarding the next stages in the interview process. If you have any questions regarding your Notice of Canvass, Notice of Certification, or the hiring process in general, don't hesitate to call us at (614) 645-8369. The Applicant and Employee Services line is there just for you!

## Better Serving Our Communities



*Under the leadership of Mayor Andrew J. Ginther, the City of Columbus was named America's Opportunity City. The administration is committed to fostering a culture of inclusion, unity, and upward mobility, all of which helps to build a stronger Columbus. Two ways the Commission has embraced this commitment are the Testing Clinic and our Community Liaison.*

### Testing Clinic

The Commission's Testing Clinics were created to help individuals be better prepared on test day. These clinics are designed for applicants who want to learn about the application and testing processes for City employment. At the clinic, you will be able to receive help from our staff setting up an online profile and entering employment and education information into your profile. This is an opportunity for you to learn about the Commission's job analysis and test development processes. The Testing Clinic will also give attendees information about subtests and let them take a sample exam.

The Testing Clinic is designed to provide more information about the testing process but is also intended to help alleviate test anxiety that can prevent you from doing your best. Go to our website at [Columbus.gov/civilservice](http://Columbus.gov/civilservice) for more information. When we are accepting reservations, you can follow the red link on our homepage for upcoming dates and to get scheduled.

### Community Liaison

The Civil Service Commission has a new position dedicated to community outreach. One of our current employees, Pamela Cole, is now our Community Liaison Outreach Coordinator.

Her main goals are to provide information to the community regarding employment opportunities in the City of Columbus and to convey that the City of Columbus is a great place live and work. She reaches out to organizations and covers topics such as: how employment with the City of Columbus works, jobs in the City of Columbus, employment benefits, current job openings, creating an applicant profile, registering/applying for jobs, and an overview of our most common subtests.



Pam Cole

Pam also represents the Commission at job fairs, meetings, recruiting events and many other events in the community. She is also responsible for conducting our Testing Clinics.

## We Have A Form For That!

In this paperless age, many of our forms are available online and/or able to be submitted via email. We do our best to save resources and reduce the amount of paper we use. However, there is one form that we always print out and you must get it from us in person; in fact, we think it is so important that we give it to every candidate with their testing materials when they take a non-uniformed exam—the candidate feedback form, otherwise known as the "pink sheet."

*"The pink candidate feedback form is optional. However, if you have any questions, concerns, complaints or compliments about your test experience today, write that down. Your name is not mandatory, but if your question or concern is about your test specifically, write down your name and candidate ID number so that we can reflect back to your test materials." Our Test Center administrator says these sentences so often, that she claims she can recite them in her sleep.*

The main reason we give this form to every test-taker is so each person has a place to document any issues at the moment they happen. If you have an issue while testing, the best thing to do is to immediately notify a monitor so that the issue can be solved on the spot, if possible. However, sometimes the problem is more subtle, such as the wording of a question, and it is more appropriate to finish the exam and then bring it to our attention.



The analyst in charge of the test is required to look at every pink feedback form they receive and determine if any actions are necessary. For example, if a candidate identifies a question that may have two correct answers, the analyst will review the question by researching source material, asking subject matter experts, and double-checking that the answer key awarded points appropriately. The analyst will then decide if there is clearly a best answer or if the question is faulty. If there is something wrong with the question, they will remove it from scoring consideration. That means that if a test had 80 questions and one is found faulty, the test will now be scored out of 79 possible and no one will receive credit for the deleted question.

The pink sheet is considered part of your test materials, and we will require you give it back to us whether it is blank or filled out. The reason for this is because we cannot allow notes about the exam to leave the testing room. We do our best to keep the testing process as fair as possible, and we need to keep the test secure to allow for an impartial comparison of candidates.

Some folks use it as scratch paper, others write us kind notes; however you decide to use the pink sheet, just know it is there when you need it, and we are definitely looking at it.

**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

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## Meet the Staff: Beth Dyke



*"People don't get promoted for doing their jobs really well. They get promoted by demonstrating their potential to do more."  
~ Tara Jaye Frank*

Many City HR employees have already met Beth Dyke at the Civil Service Commission; however, you may have some difficulty keeping track of her current job title. In June 2017, she was the friendly face you saw when dropping off paperwork at the Applicant & Employee Services Unit. After beginning work with the Commission as an Office Assistant I, Beth quickly moved up to Office Assistant II. In 2018, Beth was promoted to Personnel Analyst I.

Beth is now working on the Classification team and handles job classification updates, compliance reviews and job audits among other duties.

Originally from Warren, Ohio, Beth attended the University of Toledo and Central Ohio Technical College and obtained a bachelor's degree in Recreation Education and an associate's degree in Diagnostic Medical Sonography. During that time, she had the opportunity to study abroad in England.

Outside of work, Beth is married with a 17 year-old daughter and an 11 year-old son and they have one cat named Gink. Beth is a very busy sports mom who enjoys watching her kids play. She also enjoys cooking and baking.



Beth is enjoying her newest position and working with the various city agencies. She really likes learning about City Departments and the different jobs at the City of Columbus.

## WHERE IS IT?

See if you recognize the location in our title banner on the first page and email your guess to BSobieck1@columbus.gov

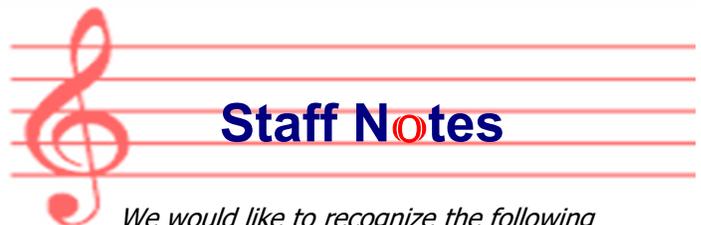
We will print the answer and the names of the first five correct entries in our next issue

### LAST QUARTER'S ANSWER:

Jackson Pike Wastewater Treatment Plant

#### Last Quarter's First Five:

Roberta Marion, *Sewers & Drains*  
Angel Shellow-Long, *Building and Zoning*  
Adrian Jackson, *Sewers & Drains*  
Tina O'Grady, *Public Utilities*  
Gerald Scott, *Division of Fire*



*We would like to recognize the following  
Civil Service staff members:*

### Welcome to:

**Kim Chafin**, *Office Assistant II*, Test Center

**Precious McElwain**, *Office Assistant II*, Applicant and Employee Services

**Nathan Forrester**, *Personnel Analyst I*, Uniformed Testing

**Mikey Federer**, *Office Assistant III*, Uniformed Testing

### Congrats to:

**Beth Dyke**, on her promotion to Personnel Analyst I

**Melissa Michel-Thomas**, on her promotion to Office Assistant II