

Fire Promotional Written Work Sample Practice

The Fire Chief has directed you to revise the current recruitment plan for the Columbus Division of Fire to increase the number of minorities. Upon completion, you will present this plan to the Fire Chief and his Executive Staff, followed shortly thereafter by a meeting with the Mayor and his Executive Staff. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the City of Columbus is 28% Black and 44% minority. Sworn personnel in the Division of Fire are currently 7% Black and 9% minority.

Please provide your plan to increase our diversity numbers within the next five (5) years, concluding in 2026. The Civil Service Commission is scheduled to administer the Entry-Level Firefighter Examination in 2022, 2024 and 2026. Assume this will be approved and coordinate that in your plan. Include with your plan a goal percentage to increase the total number of minorities in the Division of Fire and the necessary steps.

Fire Recruitment Outreach currently includes two (2) Firefighters and one (1) Lieutenant. If you have staffing suggestions, please provide detailed explanations. If your suggestion includes additions, please provide any possible financial savings to help support the change in personnel.

Currently the recruitment plan includes the following:

Job Fairs and other Expos such as the Arnold Schwarzenegger Classic
Speaking engagements/Panel discussions/school functions
Fit and Informed– Information Sessions regarding the testing process
Firefighter Mile Introductions – Practice test for the Physical Phase of the test
One-on-one sessions by request
Get Fire Ready – workout sessions at the Training Academy with Firefighters
Facebook page
Advertising on radio, print, billboards
Partnerships with organizations such as The Ohio State University that have a large base of potential candidates

*In your plan, assume all the above information is correct and that there are NO COVID-19 restrictions.

Scoring

Written Communication – (Clearly define the problem)

Clear, concise, well communicated plan of action that includes the next four areas
Answers should generally be in the order the dimensions are listed

Information Gathering – (Measure the problem)

Meet with current recruitment team (what is working, what is not working, what have you wanted to try but were not able and why, what training is completed, any equipment necessary for purchase, etc.)

Meet with the Battalion Chief to determine if any future plans have been researched

Meet with others involved in the Selection Process: Civil Service, Background, Safety Director's Office and Fire HR manager

Research other U.S. cities that more closely match the community they serve

Speak with community members for potential assistance

Request budget allowance for potential added programs

Inquire about overtime or alternate work schedules when necessary for recruiting team

Meet with current minority Firefighters for any possible insights

Determine what message will likely draw minorities (community service, benefits package, etc.)

Information Analysis – (Analyze the problem)

Research every step in the selection process to determine if any patterns exist where minorities are lost at a higher rate than non-minorities

Review the number of minorities included in the last ten (10) years of Fire Academy

Classes to determine any trends or patterns

Identify strengths and weaknesses (may also list an idea and why it was rejected)

List approximate costs if known (may be simply staffing costs if it can be accomplished during a work day on site, or the cost of supplies)

Decision Making – (Improve the problem)

Effectively communicate the plan in its entirety and how it will be implemented (If applicable provide an overall feel to the plan i.e. focus on local candidates)

Explain which programs will remain intact as is, which programs will be revised, which will be discontinued and which will be added with full detailed descriptions

Include any costs involved with each program, if additional costs or cost savings

Provide the timeline for each portion of the plan

Provide staffing needs for each portion of the plan

Provide some alternatives when applicable

Commit to the plan

Explain why or why not additional staffing will be requested/added and any costs involved, avenues to defer the cost (may be savings in producing better candidates)

Consider and addresses the public perception of a diversity push (some may assume lowering standards, others may assume no interest in non-minorities)

Include in plan the message that diversity means diversity in thought, experience and demographics

Follow-up – (Control the problem)

Provide specific points in the plan when evaluations will be made

Provide the specific ways in which the plan will be evaluated (comparing test statistics, Fire Training Academy class statistics, etc.)

Provide alternatives if the programs perform poorly

Keep all involved parties updated on how the programs are progressing

Provide any suggestions for the plan after 2026

*This list is NOT all inclusive, but illustrates examples for each section

**The actual examination MUST BE in narrative form