

**2021 FIRE LIEUTENANT
AND FIRE CAPTAIN**

STUDY GUIDE

September 2020

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

This Study Guide is designed to assist candidates in their preparation for the Fire Lieutenant and Fire Captain examinations. The examinations consist of three phases:

Phase I	Closed-Book Multiple-Choice Examination
Phase II	Tactical Exercise
Phase III	Oral Board Examination

The examinations are designed on the basis of information obtained from an extensive job analysis of the Columbus Fire Lieutenant (lieutenant) and Fire Captain (captain) classifications conducted by the Civil Service Commission (CSC). The job analyses provide descriptions of the duties of lieutenants and captains and identify the knowledge and tasks required to perform effectively in these jobs.

For the Fire Captain exam, a "cut-off" score will be established following the administration and scoring of Phase I. Only those captain candidates whose score is above the cut-off will be invited to participate in Phase II. All captain candidates who participate in Phase II will be invited to participate in Phase III. For the Fire Lieutenant exam, a "cut-off" score will be established following the administration and scoring of Phases I and II. Only those lieutenant candidates whose score is above this cut-off will be invited to participate in Phase III.

All viable candidates who participate in Phases I, II, and III will be placed on the eligible list according to their final score, which is based on the scores from all three phases and the addition of seniority points. These final scores will determine the ranks on the eligible lists.

This study guide contains information on study skills and test-taking strategies that may help you improve your score. Several different study techniques are discussed so that you may try different methods and find one that works for you. Also contained in this booklet is information about all phases of the exam. Areas covered include test formats, test-taking strategies, and grading methods specific to each phase of the exam.

B. INFORMATION SESSIONS AND WEBSITE

Information sessions are designed to help you prepare for the test. The information sessions will be prerecorded and placed on the CSC website. The sessions include information covering the testing processes, each phase of the exams, scoring procedures, and test security practices. The CSC website at <https://www.columbus.gov/civilservice/Uniformed-Fire-Series/> contains information relevant to the exams such as exam reading lists and important test-related dates. The website will also include a listing of the questions asked by candidates during the examination period. It is to your advantage to review the information available on the Commission's website so that you have a clear understanding of what to expect during each phase of the test.

SECTION II: STUDY SKILLS

The following section describes study techniques that may be useful in preparing for the examination. You may use your method of studying or use one or a combination of the methods presented here. To find a more effective method, you may try the alternatives discussed below to determine a method that works best for you.

A. CONCENTRATION TECHNIQUES

You must comprehend the material if you expect to remember it during the examination. There are several things that you can do that will help you comprehend the material.

1. **Make the material more interesting or meaningful.** One way to do that is to apply it to yourself by relating it to your personal experiences. For example, when studying, try to relate the concepts to something you have done or something you have seen someone else do.
2. **Eliminate distractions from your environment.** These distractions compete for your attention, interfere with your concentration, and "turn off" your memory of the material. It is difficult for people to pay attention to several things at the same time. Instead, they usually switch back and forth, paying attention first to one thing and then to another. Any material that did not receive attention will not be remembered. This means that listening to the radio while you are studying or studying in a noisy area may leave gaps in your memory of the material you are trying to learn.
3. **Eliminate internal distractions.** Avoid trying to learn or memorize material when you are tired or hungry. Fatigue reduces the amount of material that you can remember. Both fatigue and hunger make concentration difficult. One way to avoid internal distractions is to schedule study times and to set realistic goals.
4. **Use the check-mark technique.** This technique involves keeping a separate sheet of paper beside you and marking a check on it each time your mind wanders. This makes you aware of how often you are not concentrating and forces you to keep focused. Too many checks might indicate that a different study time could allow you to concentrate better and use your time more effectively.

B. READING COMPREHENSION TECHNIQUES

1. **Page-at-a-Time Method**
This method involves stopping at the bottom of each page and summarizing the content in a few sentences. Ask yourself, "What did the author say on this page?" The page-at-a-time method makes you concentrate by forcing your mind to focus on the material while it is still fresh.
2. **Organizational Pattern Method**
This method involves determining how the author is presenting the material. Once you have identified an author's organizational pattern, you can better organize both your note-taking and thinking. There are several types of organizational patterns:
 - a. **Process Pattern**—in this pattern, steps are presented in sequence. A fire

- suppression procedure, for example, would be described step-by-step.
- b. Increasing Importance Pattern—this pattern presents information from the least important to most important.
 - c. Decreasing Importance Pattern—using this pattern, the author organizes information from most important to least important.
 - d. Cause and Effect Pattern—with this pattern, when you identify a cause or a problem, you are prompted to look for the effect or the solution.
 - e. Compare or Contrast Pattern—this pattern involves presenting similarities or differences among theories, ideas, procedures, etc.

3. Paragraph Method

This method involves stopping at the end of each paragraph and summarizing it into one sentence. Simply ask yourself, "What was this paragraph meant to convey?" This helps to ensure that you understand what you are reading. It will also be helpful to identify the types of sentences and paragraphs you are reading. This approach allows you to identify where the important information is in the material.

- a. Identify types of sentences by function.
 - Topic sentences are controlling ideas
 - Supporting sentences explain and prove the main idea
 - Concluding sentences sum up the discussion
- b. Identify types of paragraphs.
 - Introductory paragraphs give the main idea
 - Expository paragraphs present new information
 - Transitional paragraphs tie information together
 - Summarizing paragraphs restate main ideas and draw conclusions

4. SQ3R: A Method for Studying

The symbols SQ3R stand for SURVEY, QUESTION, READ, RECITE, and REVIEW. These five elements make up a set of study habits that have proven successful for many test-takers.

- a. SURVEY: To survey is to find the limits or borders of an area. Surveying the material to be studied is the first step in the SQ3R method. This step allows you to distinguish between important information and trivial detail.

The most obvious way to survey a body of information is to scan it from start to finish. By skimming over the pages, you will get an idea of what is to come and how long it will take to cover the material. This will help you to break the assignment down into reasonable time blocks. In most textbooks, this type of survey is made much easier through chapter summaries. Chapter summaries can give a quick overview of the important parts or pieces of the chapter. If you look at the chapter itself, you will see that it is usually broken down into smaller parts or pieces through the use of headings. Bold headings introduce big or important elements; smaller headings introduce sub-areas of these important elements. These headings can provide an important road map through the chapter.

- b. QUESTION: Most people need a reason to do things. The same is true for studying or reading a textbook. Try to formulate questions about the text you are about to read. Finding the answers to these questions will give the material that

you are reading more meaning.

There are several ways to develop these questions. One way to begin is with the list of headings from the chapter outline. Write a question for each major and minor heading.

- c. READ: For most people, reading means the same thing as studying. Reading is important, but it will be done more effectively when the survey and question steps have been completed.

The material should be read in small "chunks" that you identified in the survey stage. One section might be all of the material under a major heading. If several pages are included under a major heading, divide it up into smaller sections separated by minor headings. Try to determine how many sections will be read in a given study session. Once you can answer the questions you developed in the previous step, you can move on to the next section. Be sure you understand the material in the section you are reading before you move on to the next section. A good time to take breaks is between these sections, not in the middle of them.

It is important that you understand the material you are reading. One way to do this is to keep a list of all unfamiliar terms and their meanings. The quicker you get to know the meaning of all the terms, the more effective your study practices will be. You might want to keep a notebook of these terms as well as all-important terms. You will find that this notebook of terms will be a big help in preparing for the closed-book examination.

To become a more active participant in the studying process, you might also want to mark or underline the text while you are reading. This will also help you to focus on the major ideas and keep you from getting bogged down with details. Reviewing the material will be easier since you have already given yourself some hints and associations that will aid in later recall.

Highlight or underline key words and concepts and make notes to yourself in the margins. If you choose to use the underlining and marking method, here are a few guidelines:

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

The act of identifying and choosing the most important material to be highlighted will make recalling this information in the chapter easier at a later point in time.

- d. **RECITE:** An important step in this method is the “recite” step. Recitation will help you to remember the information that you just read.

Recitation does not have to be out loud, but it should be formal. Don't just look over the information and say to yourself, "Now I know it." The point is that you should recite the information that you are trying to learn. This can be done in several ways. One popular method is to close the book and try to repeat what you have just read. Then check to see if you were correct. A second way is to answer questions about the material you have just read.

Reciting material with the assistance of another individual is also helpful. You can ask each other questions about portions of the material, which will make you recite the material in a very formal way. Choosing someone familiar with the material is not necessary. The person only has to be able to recognize that what you have said is what is written in the book or your notes.

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 right after it is first learned.

Don't try to recite too much information at once. Depending on the number of pages covered, this might be all of the information in one major heading or even one subheading. A whole chapter is certainly too large a unit for recitation purposes.

- e. **REVIEW:** The last step of the SQ3R method is review. When you have finished studying a block of material such as a chapter, you should review what you have learned. This can be done through reciting or by answering specific questions. The point is that you should go back over the material once you think it has been learned.

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

The final form of review is done before a test and is most effective in a group with other test takers. This cuts down on some of the drudgeries of pre-test studying and can increase the meaning of the information. It is sometimes easier to remember the information if you think back to who said what and how the review conversation went.

C. NOTE-TAKING SYSTEMS

1. Cornell Note-Taking System

This system involves drawing lines to leave margins of a couple of inches on the left and bottom part of the paper. The left margin is used for cue words or questions and the bottom is used to summarize. The note-taking process for this method is as follows:

- a. Record
- b. Question
- c. Recite
- d. Reflect
- e. Review
- f. Summarize

2. Questions-in-the-Margin System for Reading Textbooks

- a. Survey the entire chapter.
- b. Return to the first paragraph and read to determine "what is important?"
- c. Write a brief question about the key points in the margin.
- d. Underline or highlight key words, phrases, or sentences that answer your questions.

D. MEMORY TECHNIQUES

1. Distributive vs. Massed Practice

Distributive practice involves studying for 50 minutes with a 10-minute break each hour. This method reduces fatigue and boredom. Also, motivation is stronger in short blocks of time.

Massed practice is a method also called cramming. This method is generally useful for creative processes, for example, when writing a paper.

2. Recitation and repetition are important in transferring information from short-term memory to long-term memory. More material is retained when a greater proportion of study time is spent reciting.
3. Creating associations can be useful, as you will store new information next to related information in your memory.

E. VISUALIZATION

The left brain is used for reading, note-taking, and memorizing, while the right brain is used for looking at graphs, shapes, forms, and for visualizing and focusing on the whole. By visualizing while studying, you use both hemispheres of the brain and strengthen the ability to recall information at a later time.

A concept map or word diagram can help you to visualize the material. This is an outline in a flow chart format that shows key points and how they are related. It can be used to reinforce important facts, clarify difficult passages, organize and pull together ideas, and can be used as a review.

SECTION III: PHASE I—MULTIPLE-CHOICE EXAMINATION

A. TEST FORMAT

The first part of the lieutenant and captain promotional exams is a closed-book examination. This part of the exam is set in a multiple-choice format designed to test "active memory." A test of "active memory" covers the material you need to know or should know without the luxury of checking reference materials. Therefore, you will not be permitted to use your source materials during this portion of the examination.

Candidates' scores will be based on the number of correct responses. Answers will be recorded on an answer sheet that will be scanned. Only responses on the scan enabled answer sheet will be scored.

B. MARKING THE ANSWER SHEET: MULTIPLE-CHOICE

All of the questions on this closed-book portion of the examinations are multiple-choice. You are to mark your answers (A, B, C, etc.) on the separate answer sheet that you will be given during the examination. The answer sheet will be scored by machine so it is important that you follow marking instructions carefully.

When you use the answer sheet during the examination, follow these instructions:

1. Make good dark marks that completely fill in the blank.
2. Completely erase any changed answers.
3. Make one, and only one, mark for each question.
4. Frequently check that the question number in the test booklet corresponds with the number of the space you are marking on the answer sheet.
5. Use a pencil with number 2 lead to mark your answers. Pencils will be provided during the examination. Do not use pens.
6. Follow the test monitor's instructions carefully for marking your person identification number on the answer sheet. This is extremely important because this is the only source used for identification.
7. Although you are encouraged to mark in the test booklet, your score will be based only on the answers recorded on the answer sheet.

C. TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

Here is a list of test-taking strategies you should remember:

1. Read the directions carefully.
2. Know how to mark the separate answer sheet correctly.
3. Know how much time you have to complete the examination.

4. Read each question carefully. Try to answer the question before you look at the answers provided. If you know the answer, compare your answer to the available choices and pick the closest alternative.
5. Find clue words. Words such as all, none, never, and every, harden the meaning of the sentence by indicating that there are no exceptions. As a rule, alternatives with these words have a lesser chance of being correct. Words such as some, sometimes, may, generally, and possibly, soften the meaning of a statement and leave more room for an alternative to be correct. A word of caution: The test item writers know these rules too!
6. Often, first instincts are correct, so if you are unsure of an answer, you may want to go with the first answer that comes to mind.
7. Answer the easy questions first and then go back to the harder ones so that you do not spend too much time on any one item. If you skip an item, be sure to also "skip" the item on the answer sheet.
8. If you don't know what the answer is to a question before looking at the alternatives, first eliminate those choices that are clearly wrong. This makes the chance of picking the correct answer easier. After eliminating the obviously wrong answers, pick the best alternative from those that are left.
9. Be careful not to be misled by alternatives that are only partially true.
10. When reading test questions, you may mark in the test booklet. Here are some suggestions:
 - a. Use slash marks (/) to break up sentences into smaller segments. This will make you attentive to each piece of information.
 - b. Circle key words that tell what the sentence is all about. This will help you get a "handle" on the sentence and will make it easier if you have to hunt for an answer later.
 - c. Underline words that harden or soften the meaning.
 - d. Put marks next to each alternative (e.g., "g" = "clearly a good answer," "x" = "clearly a bad answer"). When rereading the question or answers, these notations will save time.
11. There is no penalty for incorrect answers on this examination, so even if you must guess, answer every question.
12. If you have time, go back and look at every question and answer. Make any necessary changes, but keep #6 in mind--first instincts are often correct.
13. Remember, test monitors are there to assist all candidates with procedures and to help them perform to the best of their ability. However, they cannot provide answers that will give clues to the correct response. If you have any questions, ask for assistance before the examination begins or whenever a question arises.

E. ERROR ANALYSIS

Each one of us has weak areas in our test-taking behavior. There are several possible reasons for choosing an incorrect response. Once you've identified those potential problems, they can be avoided. The following are six possible reasons for incorrectly answering a question along with possible methods of avoiding those errors.

1. **You have accidentally marked the wrong space on the answer sheet.**

Since there are a limited number of questions on the exam, careless errors such as these are costly. Check 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 make sure the answers match. This will be easier if, you circle the selected alternative in the test booklet, as you go through the test.

2. **You have misread a question or answer by overlooking a key word or phrase.**

The solution to this problem is UNDERLINING. Underlining makes those 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 keep in mind you're looking for the best possible answer.

3. **You do not know the meaning of one or more key terms.**

This could be a problem in PREPARATION and/or VOCABULARY. In the outside textbooks, underline key terms and make sure you know what they mean as part of your study process. If an unfamiliar term is a technical term, it most likely will be defined in the books. 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 glossary of terms and their meanings.

When taking the exam, if you have difficulty with a term, reread the sentence to determine its overall meaning without worrying about the meaning of a particular word. Try to understand the general message of the sentence or paragraph. The meaning of the unfamiliar word should become clearer once you understand the general context within which it has been placed.

4. **You may have been unable to distinguish the important and unimportant parts of a question because it was complicated or difficult to understand.**

First of all, these are the questions you probably should skip until the end of the test. These are also the questions on which you can use the slash mark technique discussed earlier.

This technique is called divide and conquer. Use slash marks to break up the material into small segments, and then concentrate on one segment at a time. When you do go back to these difficult questions, first read the possible answers before reading the question. This tells you what to concentrate on while reading the question. Read for the general meaning and do not get bogged down by individual words or phrases you do not understand.

5. **You may miss a question because you are simply unaccustomed to comparing combinations of information.**

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

6. **You may have selected an answer that "looked good."**

There are a number of factors that can cause you to fall for incorrect answers that look good:

- a. An incorrect answer may contain an exact phrase from the question.
- b. An incorrect answer may contain a phrase or sentence that is used out of context. For example, an idea that is expressed but then rejected may be presented as an idea that was supported in the question.
- c. An incorrect answer may overstate what the question has stated. For example, if the correct response based upon the source says, "Some firefighters....," the incorrect answer may say, "All firefighters..."

Listed below are some specific strategies for avoiding the tendency to fall for incorrect answers that look good:

- a. Have an answer in mind before you look over the alternatives. This will make you less susceptible to choosing an answer that looks good.
- b. Do not forget to use the method of marking each alternative to indicate what you think about it (e.g., bad, good, or possible) before choosing one.
- c. Stick strictly to the facts or rules of a question and don't fall for answers that stretch or exaggerate the facts or rules described in the test question itself. This is the time to watch out for words that harden or soften a phrase such as only, never, always, whenever, all, etc.

B. MULTIPLE-CHOICE APPEAL PROCEDURES

You will be permitted to mark answers in your test booklet during the test for later use during the appeal period. These markings are solely for your use. The official answer sheet is the **ONLY** document that CSC will use to determine your raw score.

No appeals will be accepted at the test site on the test date. However, you are permitted to submit appeals for Phase I during a three-day period following the test administration. If you participate in appeals, you will be provided with the answer key and your test booklet. You must bring your source material to reference for appeals. You are strictly prohibited from writing in those source materials or from removing any test materials (original, machine-copied, or hand-copied notes) from the appeal site. You are prohibited from using cell phones, smartwatches, and other communication devices in the appeal room. Only exam candidates and CSC staff are permitted in the appeal room.

For appeals, you will be permitted to attend one day of the multiple-choice appeals. Once you turn in materials and leave you will not be permitted to return. If appeals for

multiple phases occur during the same time frame, candidates will be permitted to participate in both phases during that day or may attend the appeal for the other phase on a separate day. Once a candidate turns in a phase's materials they will not be permitted to file any additional appeals for that phase.

Basis of Multiple-Choice Appeals: Candidates must indicate the basis on which the appeal is being filed. Appeals which are ambiguous, do not refer to one of the four reasons listed below, or are unsubstantiated, may be summarily dismissed. For each appeal submitted, the candidate must clearly indicate the reason the appeal is being filed and explain their rationale. An item may be appealed for one of the following reasons **ONLY**:

1. No correct alternative: The appellant must specify the reason the keyed alternative is incorrect.
2. Multiple equally correct alternatives: The appellant must demonstrate that an unkeyed alternative is at least as proper as the keyed alternative.
3. Item content is not contained in a source on the reading list: The appellant must demonstrate that the item was based solely on reference material not included on the reading list.
4. Item is incorrectly keyed: The appellant must demonstrate that the keyed alternative is incorrect **AND** a different alternative is correct.

Due to allegations that candidates did or could communicate with appeals-review SMEs, using some clandestine system of stray marks or extraneous statements (e.g. Thank you, Have a good day, etc.) is not permitted. The CSC may summarily dismiss appeals forms containing stray marks or statements irrelevant to the appeal at hand. The prohibition of extraneous statements or marks does not prevent candidates from trying to persuade SMEs to rule in their favor. As such, the requirement for a consensus of three SMEs to delete or re-key a question will further reduce the likelihood of inappropriate influence some candidates may attempt over SMEs. The Commission may deviate from the SMEs' consensus recommendation when there is compelling evidence or clear justification. Any changes to the key as a result of the appeals will change the key for all candidates.

Resolution of Appeals: Each appeal submitted will be reviewed by subject matter experts (captain and above). In the event an appeal for one of the reasons outlined in 1-3 is granted, the item will be deleted on any test on which the item appears. If an appeal is granted on the basis that the alternative was incorrectly keyed (4), the key will be corrected. ***The decisions of these appeals are final.***

SECTION IV: PHASE II—TACTICAL EXERCISE

A. TEST FORMAT: LIEUTENANT TACTICAL

1. Lieutenant Tactical

The tactical exercise for the lieutenant exam will assess the candidates' knowledge of emergency response as a company officer. This exercise will consist of a series of image-based emergency scene simulations. The candidates will respond to the scenarios in a written multiple-choice/forced-choice format. This tactical exercise is designed to assess "active memory" job knowledge and the ability to apply the knowledge within the context of emergency situations. A test of "active memory" covers the material that is typically memorized and utilized without reference to written materials when performing the job. For this reason, this phase of the examination will be "closed-book."

Each of the exam scenarios will show a video relating to an emergency scene, possibly with multiple views. You will be given two sheets of scratch paper to take notes. While the video is initially playing, you are encouraged to take notes on the scratch paper because the images will only be shown during a designated time during the scenario. You will then be asked to respond to questions displayed on the video screen by marking a scan enabled answer sheet. Your printed test booklet will contain questions only. The alternatives to the questions will only be displayed on the video screen for a limited time. The alternatives will not be in your test booklet. The video may instruct you to choose the best answer, choose all that apply, or choose up to a certain number of responses. There could be one to ten questions per scenario, with two to twelve alternatives per question.

To prepare for this phase, you should become familiar with the preferred response to various types of emergency situations. Consider, review, and discuss typical emergency runs that are taken by various fire companies led by company officers and determine appropriate responses to each situation. You should also prepare for this phase of the exam by studying SOPs and other reading list sources related to Phase II.

B. MARKING THE ANSWER SHEET: LIEUTENANT TACTICAL

All of the questions on this closed-book portion tactical exercise will be verbalized through the video and contained in your test booklet. The video will provide the possible responses verbally and in writing. The possible responses will not be included in the test booklet. You are to mark your answers (A, B, C, etc.) on the separate answer sheet that you will be given during the examination. The answer sheet will be scored by machine so it is important that you follow marking instructions carefully.

When you use the answer sheet during the examination, follow these instructions:

1. Make good dark marks that completely fill in the blank.
2. Mark your selections quickly, as the response time for each question is limited.

3. Try to mark only what you believe are correct response(s) and avoid marking a response and, then changing your answers. Since you have limited time to respond, this may impact your ability to mark all of your intended responses in the time allotted. If you do change a response, completely erase any changed answers.
4. Listen carefully to the number of responses requested in the video. In some cases, you should mark only one or a specified number of the responses. In some cases you should mark all that apply.
5. Only mark the responses that you believe are the best and most correct responses. Some of the responses may have negative point values.
6. Frequently check that the question number in the test booklet corresponds with the number of the space you are marking on the answer sheet.
7. Use a pencil with number 2 lead to mark your answers. Pencils will be provided during the examination. Do not use pens.
8. Follow the test monitor's instructions carefully for marking your person identification number on the answer sheet. This is extremely important because this is the only source used for identification.
9. Your score will be based only on the answers recorded on the answer sheet.

C. TEST FORMAT: CAPTAIN TACTICAL

1. Captain Tactical

The tactical exercise for the captain exam will assess the candidates' knowledge and ability related to emergency response as a company officer. This tactical exercise is designed to assess "active memory" job knowledge and the ability to apply knowledge within the context of emergency situations. A test of "active memory" covers the material that is typically memorized and utilized without reference to written materials during the course of performing the job. For this reason, this phase of the examination will be "closed-book."

The captain tactical exercise will consist of a series of audio-visual emergency scene simulations. You will be tested in individual test rooms. You will respond to the scenarios verbally, and your recorded audio responses will be scored at a later date. On test day, you will be provided with information about the constructed simulations. This information may include the number of personnel assigned to each ladder, engine, etc. and will include test-specific instructions. You will be situated in front of a video monitor. CSC test monitors will start video cameras and then exit the exam room, at which time the recorded test will begin. CSC staff can view candidates in real-time, as well as review recorded footage to confirm that inappropriate actions, such as referring to prohibited notes, did not occur.

You will view and listen to a video with emergency scene prompts and will be instructed by the video when you should respond. The video will allow for a designated response time, but may continue to show the various views to the scene already provided. The video will automatically continue to the next prompt. This will repeat until the exam is complete. Depending upon the prompt, response time will range from approximately one to five minutes for your verbal response. The full

duration of the test is anticipated to be approximately one hour. Candidates will be sequestered without access to communication devices. This will ensure that no candidates can access test information prior to the exam administration.

If you have questions about the test instructions or test procedures, ask a test monitor *before* your test begins. Due to the reliance on technology and the use of individual rooms, if a problem occurs while you are taking the test, immediately open the door to your test room and speak to a test monitor. Problems could include, the video not advancing while the audio continues to play or the audio and video stops, stalls, or pauses for a period of time outside of the timed/scheduled pauses designed for your response.

To prepare for this phase, you should become familiar with the preferred response to various types of emergency situations. Consider, review, and discuss typical emergency runs that are taken by various fire companies led by company officers and determine appropriate responses to each situation. You should also prepare for this phase of the exam by studying SOPs and other reading list sources related to proper emergency response procedures.

D. TACTICAL KEY DEVELOPMENT

1. Lieutenant Tactical Key

The key for the tactical exercise and the video scenarios will be developed with the help of outside SMEs. These SMEs will be fire professionals at the rank being tested or higher and from jurisdictions outside the state of Ohio. CSC analysts and the SMEs will rely heavily on the materials listed on the reading list for Phase II to develop the key. Since judgment and application of knowledge are key aspects of this phase of the test, some keyed points will rely on the consensus of the SMEs and may not be derived from the source materials. The tactical exercise will then be pilot-tested by other outside SMEs who will also review the draft key and make recommendations for appropriate modifications. The key will include keyed responses with varying assigned weights and may include some incorrect answers with negative values.

2. Captain Tactical Key

The key for the captain tactical exercise will be a check-off type key and will also include a command demeanor section with ratings on a 0 to 2 scale for each observed behavior related to command demeanor. The keys will be developed with input from outside SMEs. These SMEs will be fire professionals at the rank being tested or higher and from jurisdictions outside the state of Ohio. CSC analysts and the SMEs will rely heavily on the materials listed on the reading list for Phase II to develop the key. Since judgment and application of knowledge are key aspects of this phase of the test, some keyed points will rely on the consensus of the SMEs and may not be derived from the source materials. The tactical exercise will then be pilot-tested by another group of outside SMEs who will also review the draft key and make recommendations for appropriate modifications. The key may include keyed responses with varying assigned values and may include some incorrect answers with negative values.

E. TACTICAL APPEAL PROCEDURES

1. Lieutenant Tactical Appeals

You are permitted to submit appeals for Phase II during a three-day period following the test administration. If you participate in appeals, you will be provided with the answer key and test booklet designed for the appeals. In addition to the test questions, this version of the test booklet will include the response options that were provided only through the video on test day. The test video will be played at various times during each appeal day. You must bring your source material to reference for appeals. You are strictly prohibited from writing in those source materials or from removing any test materials (original, machine-copied, or hand-copied notes) from the appeal site. You are prohibited from using cell phones, smartwatches, and other communication devices in the appeal room. Only exam candidates and CSC staff are permitted in the appeal room.

The appeal process for the tactical exercise will be similar in nature to the multiple-choice exam appeal process. The appeal process may result in changes to the final key including items being deleted from the exam. Appeals of forced-choice tactical items will be accepted with the following rationales:

- No Correct Alternatives OR Alternative(s): _____ is/are incorrect
- Additional Correct Alternatives: _____ is/are also correct
- Incorrectly Keyed Alternatives: _____ is/are correct instead of what's indicated on the key

Those appeals will then be reviewed by a group of internal SMEs who will be tasked with recommendations for finalizing the keys.

Internal Division of Fire SMEs will review the appeals. Due to allegations that candidates did or could communicate with appeals-review SMEs using some clandestine system of stray marks or extraneous statements (e.g. Thank you, Have a good day, etc.), the Commission may summarily dismiss appeals forms containing stray marks or statements irrelevant to the appeal at hand. Appeals will be organized by test question and SMEs will provide independent judgments as to the merit of each appealed test question. A consensus of the SMEs will generally be required to modify the key or delete an item; however, the Commission reserves the right to make the final determination. The prohibition of extraneous statements or marks does not prevent candidates from trying to verbally persuade SMEs to rule in their favor. As such, the requirement for a consensus of three SMEs to delete or re-key a question will further reduce the likelihood of inappropriate influence some candidates may attempt over SMEs. The Commission will only deviate from the SMEs' consensus recommendation when there is compelling evidence or clear justification. Any changes to the key as a result of the appeals will change the key for all candidates. Candidates will not be provided with their own test booklets for purposes of appeals.

For appeals, you will be permitted to attend one day of the appeals for the tactical. Once you turn in your materials and leave, you will not be permitted to return.

2. Captain Tactical Appeals

You are permitted to submit appeals for Phase II during a three-day period following the test administration. If you participate in appeals, you will be provided with the answer key and a test instruction booklet. The test video will be played at various times during each appeal day. You must bring your source material to reference for appeals. You are strictly prohibited from writing in those source materials or from removing any test materials (original, machine-copied, or hand-copied notes) from the appeal site. You are prohibited from using cell phones, smartwatches, and other communication devices in the appeal room. Only exam candidates and CSC staff are permitted in the appeal room.

The appeal process may result in changes to the final key including items being deleted from the exam. Appeals of keyed responses will be accepted with the following rationales:

- Delete item from key
- Clarify/change an item on key
- Add item to key

Those appeals will then be reviewed by a group of internal CFD SMEs who will be tasked with recommendations for finalizing the keys. Due to allegations that candidates did or could communicate with appeals-review SMEs using some clandestine system of stray marks or extraneous statements (e.g. Thank you, Have a good day, etc.), language is being added to the appeals form indicating that the Commission may summarily dismiss appeals forms containing stray marks or statements irrelevant to the appeal at hand. Appeals will be organized by keyed response-number or scenario and SMEs will provide judgments as to the merit of each appeal. A consensus of the SMEs will generally be required to modify the key or delete an item; however, the Commission reserves the right to make the final determination. The prohibition of extraneous statements or marks does not prevent candidates from trying to verbally persuade SMEs to rule in their favor. As such the requirement for a consensus of the SMEs to modify the key will further reduce the likelihood of inappropriate influence some candidates may attempt over SMEs. The Commission will only deviate from the SMEs' consensus recommendation when there is compelling evidence or clear justification. Any changes to the key as a result of the appeals will change the key for all candidates.

For appeals, candidates will be permitted to attend one day of the appeals for the tactical. Once a candidate turns in materials and leaves they will not be permitted to return.

D. SCORING PROCEDURE

1. Lieutenant Scoring Procedure

Once the Lieutenant Tactical key is finalized through the appeal process, the tactical exercise component will be scored using the Commission's scanning software application. The candidate answer sheets will be scanned and read into the software program. The software compiles the data and analysts use an Excel spreadsheet to calculate the results for scoring, analysis, and reporting. The weighted key and negative point values will be assigned within the Excel spreadsheet to calculate final scores.

2. Captain Scoring Procedure

The Fire Captain Tactical Exercise will be a check-off type key with a judgmental portion related to command demeanor. Operationally, there will be three assessors per candidate per scenario. Using the check-off list, each assessor initially independently indicates whether a candidate has met a keyed response by providing a checkmark in the space allotted on the key for each keyed response. For the command demeanor section, each assessor provides a rating on a 0 to 2 scale for each observed behavior related to command demeanor. Once the independent scoring of the candidate has been completed, the panel will go through the check-off portion of the key line-by-line to indicate whether the candidate's response meets the keyed response. In cases where two of the three assessors deem the candidate meets the keyed response, the candidate receives credit. In cases where only one of the three assessors indicates the candidate meets a keyed response, the monitor will replay the audio for the entire panel, to locate and determine whether that specific candidate's response in fact merits credit for the given keyed response. With respect to the command demeanor section, the judgmental scores of the assessors are averaged by behavior to obtain an average for each command demeanor behavioral component.

E. PAPER INSPECTION (Formerly Clerical Review)

For paper inspections, for both lieutenant and captain, candidates will be permitted to attend one day of the paper inspection for multiple-choice, one day for tactical, and one day for oral board. Once a candidate turns in materials and leaves, they will not be permitted to return. If the paper inspection for multiple phases occurs during the same time frame, candidates will be permitted to perform the inspection for multiple phases during that same day or on different days. Once a candidate turns in a phase's materials they will not be permitted to view those materials again.

1. Lieutenant Paper Inspection

The tactical exercise phase paper inspection will allow you the opportunity to see the final key/scoring sheet after appeals. During the paper inspection, you will have the opportunity to compare the final revised scoring key with a copy of your answer sheet to ensure you were given proper credit. You will be able to tally the correct answers with point values to verify the accuracy of your reported score. If

you believe you identified an error bring it to the attention of CSC staff for investigation.

2. Captain Paper Inspection

The tactical exercise phase paper inspection will allow candidates the opportunity to see the final key/scoring sheet after appeals, which includes the keyed responses for which credit was given. You will be able to conduct a manual count of correct responses and compare them with the scores calculated by Civil Service. If you believe you identified an error bring it to the attention of CSC staff for investigation.

SECTION V: PHASE III—ORAL BOARD EXAMINATIONS

A. TEST FORMAT

The last phase of the promotional examination is the oral board examination. Candidates will submit preferences for morning or afternoon time blocks. Oral board times will then be scheduled taking candidate preferences into consideration as much as possible. Candidates will be notified of their scheduled date and time.

During the oral boards, you will be given problem situations for which you must develop and present solutions. You will be given 60 minutes to prepare your responses to the scenarios. You may make notes or outlines during this time. You will then be given a designated amount of time to present the solutions and/or answer questions for each problem.

For the lieutenant oral board examination, each exercise will contain one or more visual prompts to which the candidate is to respond. This exam will be a video-based exam. The total response time will be 4 to 10 minutes per exercise. For the captain oral board examination, each exercise will be live face-to-face interaction with panel members/role players. The total response time will be 8 to 10 minutes per exercise.

If you have questions about the test instructions or test procedures, ask a test monitor before your response time begins. For the lieutenant oral boards, due to the reliance on technology and the use of individual rooms, if a problem occurs while you are taking the test, immediately open the door to your test room and speak to a test monitor. Problems could include, the video not advancing while the audio continues to play or the audio and video stops, stalls, or pauses for a period of time outside of the timed/scheduled pauses designed for your response.

The oral board scenarios may be of a number of different types. For example, one type of scenario might require the candidate to have a one-on-one discussion with a subordinate experiencing some difficulties. These difficulties might relate to performance, discipline, or personal problems.

Another type of scenario might require the candidate to address a group consisting of two or three subordinates. The candidate may be asked to discuss a critique of an emergency run with the group or to cover some other issue that is relevant to the position being

tested.

Another type of problem might require the candidate to address a civilian or a group of civilians on topics such as fire prevention or fire safety.

Finally, one of the exercises might be a structured interview or presentation followed by a structured interview. The candidate may be expected to present on a given topic or situation and may be required to respond to a set of pre-determined questions. The candidate may be expected to handle a situation or answer questions.

The oral exercises may be any of the different types or a combination of the different types. The goal is to present the candidate with job-related, realistic problems that will have to be resolved through verbal communication. Instructions for each problem will specify the form in which candidates are to provide their responses.

At the designated time, you will be seated in a preparation room, given the scenarios, and provided the opportunity to prepare. You will be permitted to use the sources listed on the reading list for this phase while preparing for the oral board exercises. You will not be permitted to bring reference sources in with you when you participate in the actual oral presentations unless the materials are part of the exam scenario packet provided to you as you enter the preparation room. **Note: You are not permitted to bring any prepared notes or outlines into the preparation room. Only the sources listed on the reading list as related to Phase III are permitted in the preparation.**

Only scenario materials provided by Civil Service and notes prepared by the candidate during the preparation period may be carried into the oral test rooms. Candidates will be permitted to use any notes during the responses that were generated during the preparation period. All such notes will be collected following each candidate's final oral response.

Each oral exercise will be video-recorded. CSC plans to have two panels of three raters score each response.

B. SCORING PROCEDURE

Three individuals will sit on each board and observe and evaluate candidate performance via video recordings. All raters will be uniformed fire officers of a rank equivalent to the rank being tested or above, from jurisdictions outside the State of Ohio. These individuals will receive extensive training that is tailored to the Columbus fire promotional oral board process.

You will be evaluated on four dimensions: **Oral Communication, Interpersonal Relations, Information Analysis, and Problem Sensing and Resolution.** A description of these dimensions is provided later in this booklet. The raters will evaluate independently based upon the four dimensions. After the independent ratings, the raters may discuss the scores and are given an opportunity to adjust the scores based upon relevant points made. For each board, ratings will be averaged by dimension. Thus, a candidate receiving a perfect score would have 144 points (a maximum of 9 points per dimension, 4 dimensions, and 4 boards 9x4x4).

C. SAMPLE SCENARIOS

Problem 1:

Your first assignment as a lieutenant (or captain) is to a ladder company at an outlying station. The previous lieutenant recently retired and the ladder driver, Firefighter Locke, is close to retirement. You have observed all of the following: Your company responded to a fire at an apartment complex last day, and Locke neglected to fully lower the jacks before raising the ladder. The ladder truck began to tip as a result. It was necessary to transfer power to the jacks to fully extend them before you could get into action. Fortunately, no one was hurt but the building sustained much more fire damage as a result of the delay. You have received several complaints from the other firefighters recently about Locke; they say he is not pulling his weight. Locke does not do any house chores unless you order him to do so.

You have scheduled a meeting with Firefighter Locke. What are you going to do and say to Locke?

For the captain's exam, one role-player may be identified to you as Firefighter Locke and you may need to interact with Firefighter Locke to resolve the situation.

Since the lieutenant oral exam is presented via video, the video may show Firefighter Locke who starts the exercise by asking you a question. There may be a specific response time before the next prompt by Firefighter Locke. Alternatively, you may be asked to respond to several structured questions about the situation.

Problem 2

Recently at Station 49, you have noticed a difference in the response to service from your engine crew on some of their runs. Once eager to enter a structure to determine the needs of citizens, your crew is now more hesitant when arriving on some of your scenes. This is especially the case in the Meadow Brook area. In fact, they have become so hesitant that last duty day your crew needed to be instructed to enter a house on an unknown emergency run in Meadow Brook. Your crew works together well and they enjoy the work that they do, so you are especially concerned with their recent behavior.

You have called a meeting with Engine 49 to discuss the situation.

For the captain's exam, you may interact with the role-players who are playing the roles of the engine crew.

Since the lieutenant oral exam is presented via video, the video may show the firefighters who provide various prompts. There may be a specific response time before the next prompt by the video-recorded role-players. Alternatively, you may be asked to respond to several structured questions about the situation.

SECTION VI: ORAL BOARD DIMENSIONS

A. ORAL COMMUNICATION

Oral communication can be defined as having two basic components:

1. The ability to make one's thoughts or ideas understood by others.

This involves the ability to organize thoughts and express them in a clear and logical manner. Candidates who speak slowly and distinctly, enunciating clearly to the oral board members, will be able to communicate their ideas better than candidates who rush or mumble.

2. The ability to understand thoughts or ideas expressed by others.

Oral communication also involves the ability to listen and accurately comprehend what others are saying or asking. Candidates who do not take the time to listen to what is being said or asked run the risk of misinterpreting information. As a result, candidates whose answers are not focused and rambling present themselves as being confused and unable to comprehend the information presented.

Outlining during preparation is one strategy that can help to enhance a candidate's communication skills. Thoughts and ideas will generally come across more clearly if they have been organized on paper. An outline can be very useful for generating oral responses to the scenarios.

Examples of Good Performance:

- Presents an organized, detailed outline of steps taken to gain control of the situation
- Expresses ideas clearly and concisely
- Listens carefully during both the role-play and follow-up questions
- Answers questions completely and precisely

Examples of Poor Performance:

- Presents a confused or unclear plan of action
- Voices ideas randomly and/or several at a time
- Fails to listen to questions asked by raters
- Responds to only portions of questions
- Contradicts self or previous statements
- Talks too long without making a point

B. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Interpersonal Relations can be defined as having two basic components:

1. The ability to work with other individuals in a cooperative and constructive manner

2. The ability to consider and respect the feelings, needs, and viewpoints of others

Interpersonal Relations involves the ability to establish and maintain cooperative and constructive working relationships with individuals and/or groups. Those candidates who are insensitive to the needs of others typically convey that insensitivity during the role-playing situations.

Candidates should be able to talk to others in a manner that is not demeaning or arrogant, thus establishing positive relationships during the sessions. However, having good interpersonal ability does not mean being wishy-washy or indecisive. Good performance requires the demonstration of sensitivity along with the assertiveness necessary to function in the position.

Listed below are some examples of behaviors reflecting effective interpersonal relations that may be displayed in face-to-face situations such as the oral board presentation:

- A. eliciting the input of others, particularly those individuals who may have trouble speaking up on their own
- B. avoiding the tendency to interrupt others
- C. giving others full attention when they speak by listening to and looking at them
- D. complimenting or giving credit to others for good ideas or performance
- E. disagreeing with others in a non-threatening manner
- F. offering support and assistance to individuals experiencing problems
- G. focusing on ineffective behavior when discussing performance problems rather than individual personality characteristics

Examples of Good Performance:

- Conveys empathy and respect
- Remains open and sensitive
- Asks questions and elicits information without being judgmental or condescending
- Initiates corrective action in a supportive, positive way

Examples of Poor Performance:

- Approaches others with disdain or arrogance
- Asks questions in an accusatory tone
- Adopts a condescending attitude
- Offers little or no help in the resolving problem(s)
- Becomes defensive
- Initiates corrective action in a non-supportive, negative way

C. INFORMATION ANALYSIS

Information analysis can be defined as having two basic components:

1. Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant information and focusing on the relevant information when resolving problems or performing tasks
2. Seeking out additional information that is needed to resolve problems or accomplish tasks

Information analysis begins with the ability to research and seek out information. It involves the ability to identify and include all relevant information in the presentation. When preparing, candidates should consider all facts relating to the problem and should be able to distinguish important from unimportant information. Candidates should present a plan of action encompassing all important information. Those candidates who include trivial information in their presentation are wasting time and indicate to the oral board that they really do not understand the important aspects of a problem.

When presenting the problem during a role-play, candidates should be specific with regard to the reasons for the solutions they offer to the problems. Candidates who consider possible causes of the problem and address solutions based on the underlying causes will convey to the oral board members a clear understanding of the problem. Candidates who listen carefully to information related by the board members during the role-play period and incorporate this information into their response will fare better than candidates who respond without actually listening to the questions.

There are two strategies that may help candidates to enhance their information analysis skills:

1. **Underlining:** Underlining the important parts of the scenario description during preparation helps to focus upon the important information.
2. **Outlining:** Outlining helps to organize available information and clarify what additional information is needed to make a sound decision.

Examples of Good Performance:

- Considers all available information
- Asks questions designed to elicit additional information
- Looks at underlying as well as surface issues
- Disregards unimportant or irrelevant factors
- Develops a logical plan of action

Examples of Poor Performance:

- Recognizes only surface issues
- Fails to consider all aspects of the situation
- Concentrates on unimportant or irrelevant details
- Develops an incomplete or illogical plan of action

D. PROBLEM SENSING & RESOLUTION

The category of problem sensing and resolution can be defined as having three basic components:

1. Evaluating situations to identify problems and issues
2. Evaluating and considering the implications of alternative solutions to problems and issues
3. Deciding on a solution to a problem or issue on the basis of the evaluation of that problem/issue

The dimension of Problem Sensing and Resolution involves the ability to critically evaluate a situation and formulate an effective, logical solution. Candidates who can evaluate alternative solutions to the problem will perform better than candidates who stick to only one possible solution or outcome.

Candidates should convey to the oral board members that they are aware of the implications of both the problem and the solutions they propose. Candidates who only touch the surface of the problem and concentrate on easy solutions convey to the oral board that they do not fully comprehend the problem or the consequences of their actions.

The following guidelines may help candidates enhance their problem sensing and resolution skills:

- A. Identify the key components of the issue that should be considered.
- B. Generate and consider alternative courses of action or solutions. When evaluating potential solutions to problems, candidates should consider the impact of each solution on all individuals who could be affected by the solution. This would include those individuals who decide on the solution, as well as those individuals who must implement, abide by, and enforce the solution.
- C. Consider the short and long-range implications of decisions that are made, since some solutions may be beneficial only for the short term, while others may be more beneficial for the long term.
- D. Take steps to minimize any potentially troublesome "side-effects" of the chosen solution.

Examples of Good Performance:

- Thoroughly considers all relevant information
- Develops alternative approaches to deal with a problem
- Critically evaluates alternative solutions
- Presents logical support for decisions

Examples of Poor Performance:

- Considers only a portion of the available information
- Jumps to conclusions without supporting evidence
- Fails to consider alternatives
- Uses little or no logic to reach conclusions
- Is unable to support conclusions with facts or logic