ORAL INTERVIEW
PREP SEMINAR

FIREFIGHTER RECRUITMENT SECTION
TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

• The Interview Style
  ° Behavior Based Interview
• Characteristics to be Evaluated
• Knowledge and Preparation
• Interview Format
• Strategies for Success
THE INTERVIEW STYLE

• What you “have done” not “what you would do.”
• Use **real stories** to prove that you possess the qualifications to be a Firefighter for the LAFD
BEHAVIOR BASED INTERVIEWING

• Focuses on experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the eight main criteria.
• You may use work experience, activities, hobbies, volunteerism, school projects, and family life skills you feel relevant…to provide examples of your past behavior.
IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS

You will be evaluated based on 8 main criteria:

1. Initiative in Learning
2. Practical Orientation
3. Role Adaptability
4. Service Orientation
5. Oral Communication
6. Job Motivation
7. Teamwork
8. Respect for Diversity
EVALUATING YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

• Know yourself and what you have to offer
• Realistically appraise your strengths and weaknesses
• Inventory your assets, talents, interests, experiences and accomplishments
• Emphasize your strong points!
CONTENT SKILLS

Content skills, also known as technical, job-specific, or vocational skills, include those related specifically to your line of work.

Express these skills as nouns. For example:

- “I have a current National EMT Certification.”
- “I am a certified Human Resources Trainer.”
- “I am a Licensed Vocational Nurse.”
- “I am a certified Forklift Operator.”
FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Skills such as organizing, managing, developing, communicating, etc.

These are expressed as verbs. For example:

• “On my current job, I manage three other employees. I am responsible for opening and closing the store, as well as responding to customer complaints.”

• “In my current position, I prioritize and coordinate the patient schedule for five different doctors in our surgery center. I am also responsible for communicating this schedule for all employees at the beginning of each week.”
ADAPTIVE SKILLS

Personal characteristics such as honest, dependable, trustworthy, loyal, hard-working, punctual, patient, etc.

They are expressed as adjectives. For example:

- “Because my boss considers me to be responsible and trustworthy, I am the only employee allowed to approve the use of the petty cash fund.”
GET TO KNOW THE LAFD

• Demonstrate your knowledge of the LAFD

• Core Values “SPIRIT”
  ◦ Service
  ◦ Professionalism
  ◦ Integrity
  ◦ Respect
  ◦ Innovation
  ◦ Trust

• How many LAFD Fire Stations are there?

• FF duties, apparatus, tools and equipment, specialized resources
GET TO KNOW THE LAFD

• What is a typical day like for an LAFD Firefighter or a Probationary Firefighter?

• Learn as much as you can about the LAFD

• You can find a local LAFD Fire Station by visiting www.LAFD.org (“Find Your Station” tab)

• Call the business phone and ask to speak with a firefighter on duty

• Ask questions, take notes
GET TO KNOW THE LAFD

LAFD DRILL TOWER 81
Panorama City

LAFD DRILL TOWER 40
San Pedro
GET TO KNOW THE CITY OF LA

• How big is the City? How many square miles?
• What is the population? Demographics?
• You should know what sets this City and the LAFD apart and why you want to work for this Department.
ORAL INTERVIEW FORMAT

Interview Panel will be comprised of 2 representatives:
• One from City Personnel Department
• One LAFD Captain
There are 3 basic components of the interview:

1. Opening Statement
2. Body (Questions)
3. Closing Statement
OPENING STATEMENT

• You will be given an introductory question in your interview (usually the 1st question)

• This question will lead to your Opening

• Introduce yourself and highlight 4 or 5 of your strongest qualities that relate to the job of FF.

• Be concise and to the point, you will be able to elaborate more as you answer questions in the interview body.
BODY OF THE INTERVIEW

You will be evaluated based on 8 main criteria:

1. Initiative in Learning
2. Practical Orientation
3. Role Adaptability
4. Service Orientation
5. Oral Communication
6. Job Motivation
7. Teamwork
8. Respect for Diversity
INITIATIVE IN LEARNING

Initiative defined:

• The power or ability to begin or follow through energetically with a plan or task. Enterprise and determination.
• A beginning or first step; an opening move: took the initiative to solve the problem.

Considerations:

• What learning opportunities have you been involved with, or participated in? What examples can provide for how these experiences have helped you or benefitted others?
PRACTICAL ORIENTATION

Considerations:

• We may describe people as practical when they make sensible decisions and deal effectively with problems.

• Practical ideas and methods are likely to be useful or successful in a real situation.
ROLE ADAPTABILITY

Adaptability defined:

- The ability to change (or be changed) to fit a unique situation or circumstances.
- Synonyms: flexibility, versatility, adjustability

Considerations:

- Have you ever been in a position of responsibility, or in a role where you helped someone else in a position of responsibility?
- Have you ever had to adapt to a new or different role to accomplish an important task?
SERVICE ORIENTATION

Considerations:
• Are you interested in a career that involves helping people, or serving your community?
• Have you ever helped someone in need?
• LAFD Core Values “SPIRIT”
  ° Our success and failure as an Organization depend on the SERVICE we provide to the citizens of Los Angeles.
ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

• Are you able to communicate well and resolve conflict when necessary?
  ◦ This skill is demonstrated both in your communication skills throughout the course of the interview and in your examples, also.

• Firefighters communicate with the public in emergency and non-emergency settings every day and need to express themselves clearly and confidently.
JOB MOTIVATION

Considerations:

• Do you understand the role of the fire service in the community?
• Do you know what a career as a Firefighter with the LAFD entails?
• What things have you done to prepare for this position?
TEAMWORK

Considerations:

• Have you worked in a team environment?
• Has there ever been a time where you participated in a project or endeavor that required coordination with other people?
• You will need to demonstrate the ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

Considerations:

• How do you define “Diversity”?
• Do you know anybody with different opinions or beliefs than your own?
• Have you had any interaction with people from a diverse background than your own?
• Diversity in a service organization is what makes the service provided, excellent! We can better understand, communicate with, and connect with the community we serve.
BODY OF THE INTERVIEW

Consider using the “STAR” model to structure your answers.

- **Situation**: Identify the SITUATION or problem you solved or encountered.
- **Task**: What was the specific TASK or targets? (who, what, when, where, what’s required)
- **Action**: Detail your specific ACTION. What did you do? How did you do it?
- **Results**: Explain the RESULTS. Quantify. (savings, accomplishments, recognition, etc.)
ANSWERING QUESTIONS

• Let’s practice using the STAR model!
• Sample Question:

“Tell me about a time you worked together as a member of a team to accomplish a common goal.” (TEAMWORK)

S – Identity the Situation
T – Tasks you needed to accomplish
A – Actions you took to get the job done
R – Results
ANSWERING QUESTIONS

• **Bridge** your answers directly over to the Fire Service, specifically to the **Los Angeles City Fire Department**, as a **Firefighter** serving the people of the **City of Los Angeles**.

• “As a member of the Los Angeles Fire Department…”
CLOSING STATEMENT

• At the end of the interview, you will be asked if there is anything you would like to add.
• Mention any specific items in your background or personal qualifications you didn’t already share
• Clarify earlier points, if necessary
• Briefly sum up what you believe makes you the right candidate for the job of Firefighter for the LAFD
INTERVIEW BASICS

Before the Interview…

• Make sure your suit fits!

• Look the part!
  ◦ Present a neat, businesslike appearance

• Practice, Practice, Practice!
  ◦ Practice your answers out loud and in front of others
  ◦ Consider video recording yourself!
  ◦ Be aware of body language, voice inflection, nervous habits
  ◦ Force yourself out of your comfort zone to learn how to manage your anxiety
INTERVIEW BASICS

During the Interview…

• Think before responding
• Ask for clarification if you need it
• Be confident and enthusiastic
• Make good eye contact with both Board members
• Smile!
PRE-INTERVIEW CHECK-IN

• The City of Los Angeles Personnel Department will conduct a check-in with you on Monday the week before your interview.
  ◦ The check-in appointment will be assigned to you based on the interview date you select
  ◦ The check-in is 5 minutes long, so it is crucial that you are ready to go before your check-in time
  ◦ The specific date and time of your check-in appointment will be sent in a separate email after the deadline to self-select your interview appointment
PRE-INTERVIEW CHECK-IN

• The purpose of the check-in is to ensure that all hardware and software requirements are met, verify your identity, and ensure that there are no issues with your potential interview panel.

• Create a quiet, neutral environment for the check-in

• Business attire is not required for the check-in
PRE-INTERVIEW PLATFORM

• **READ THE ENTIRE EMAIL ANNOUNCING YOUR SELECTION!**

• There are links and online forms that will need to be filled out to secure your interview appointment.
  ° Candidates who complete all of these steps will be emailed again after the sign-up deadline to confirm both their Check-In and Interview appointment dates/times, and to provide the Google Meet links and further instructions for these appointments.
  ° You will not be emailed if you don't complete the steps outlined in the interview notice.

• If you are unable to make your scheduled interview, call the Personnel Department as soon as possible at (213) 473-9311.
QUESTIONS?

Please type your questions into the chatbox on the right, and we will address them one at a time.