

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About the Situational Judgment Test Component

### What are Situational Judgment Questions?

Situational Judgment Questions assess how a Boston District Fire Chief (candidate) respond or act to resolve various situations on the job. The candidate will be given a short factual scenario and possible actions of a Boston District Fire Chief could take in response to that scenario. The candidate will have to think about each action and decide whether it would be a highly effective, effective, ineffective or highly ineffective response to the scenario.

### What is the Format of the Situational Judgment Section?

The Situational Judgment Test (SJT) section will consist of approximately twenty (20) job-related scenarios that provide brief descriptions of various situations the candidate may encounter on the job. There will be 4 to 6 potential actions listed below each scenario that the candidate will need to review and decide which potential action is the best option to resolve the situation. The candidate will use the rating scale below to rate the best option presented in the potential actions.

1 Highly Ineffective	2 Ineffective	3 Effective	4 Highly Effective
Very likely to worsen the situation	Likely to worsen the situation	Likely to improve the situation	Very likely to improve the situation

### Are candidates expected to rank the potential responses against each other?

**NO!** Candidates should **NOT** rank the potential action responses in order of effectiveness. Rather, candidates should select the best option to resolve the potential action by designating a rating of *highly effective*, *effective*, *ineffective* or *highly ineffective* for a specific response. It is possible for a candidate to select the same rating for more than one potential action listed under a given scenario. For example, a candidate could select a ranking of highly effective for two, potential actions listed in the same scenario.

**What is a SJT testing?** The SJT is designed to assess a series of competencies found to be important to effective job performance in the context of situations encounter on the job. There are six competencies that SJT questions assess and will likely incorporate these competencies within the given scenarios.

- Accountability
- Adaptability
- Analyzing and Deciding
- Interpersonal Actions
- Professional Development
- Leadership

❖ **For more detail about the competencies, please review the Boston District Fire Chief Promotional Examination Candidate Preparation Guide (Prep Guide).**

## How to Respond to SJT Questions?

The candidate **must** read both the scenario and all potential actions before attempting to rate them. Once the candidate has finished reading the scenario and each potential action, the candidate can select a rating of *highly effective*, *effective*, *ineffective* or *highly ineffective* for a potential action. The proposed steps below should assist candidates in how to approach these questions.

- a) Read all directions carefully.
- b) Read each scenario AND all potential actions **before** attempting to rate them. You may want to re-read the scenario to ensure that you did not misunderstand the scenario or any of the potential actions.
- c) Review the rating scale before designating a rating of *highly effective*, *effective*, *ineffective* or *highly ineffective* for a potential action.
- d) Ask if your response to the potential action would **improve** the situation or **make it worse**.
- e) If the potential action would **improve** the situation, you would consider the response as *effective*. If the potential action is very likely to **improve** the situation and demonstrates really great judgement, candidates should select *highly effective* designation.

If the potential action would make the situation **worse**, you would designate the response as *ineffective*. If the potential action was likely to make matters worse and would demonstrate really poor judgment, candidates should select *highly ineffective* designation.

## How is the SJT Scored?

The candidate should rate all potential actions listed under each scenario. Since each rating for a potential action is considered a “response” on the SJT, leaving a potential action blank, will result in 0 points. The maximum points a candidate can receive on a response for a potential action is 2 points.

The breakdown of the scoring key is as follows:

0 points = Response is incorrect

1 point = Response is partially correct in that it is on the correct side of the scoring key but is not the **best** answer to resolve the given situation.

2 points = Response is the best answer.

❖ Please review the Prep Guide for more detailed information regarding the scoring key.