COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Captain, Lieutenant, and Sergeant Police Promotion Examination

Candidate Preparation Guide

Prepared By:

TALOGY

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INTRODUCTION

This Guide is intended to provide specific information to candidates regarding the 2023 examination for Police Captain, Police Lieutenant, and Police Sergeant. Because a similar examination process will be used for each rank, the phrase "Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant" will be used to indicate that the concept applies to candidates for all ranks.

The Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant written examinations will consist of two components including:

- Technical Knowledge Test [TK]
- Situational Judgment Test [SJT]

The examination components are designed based on job analysis information obtained from Police Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant incumbents from civil service departments across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. For each position, the job analysis identified the duties performed and the knowledge and competencies (abilities and personal characteristics) required to perform these duties effectively. The examination process is intended to assess the required knowledge and competencies in the context of important duties and tasks.

Although this Guide will provide general information about both test components, the focus of this Guide is assisting candidates in preparing for the Situational Judgment Test, as this is a new test component for these positions.

Accordingly, this Guide provides information about the Situational Judgment Test in terms of the:

- content,
- administrative logistics,
- evaluation methods,
- preparation strategies, and
- sample questions.

From the information presented in this Guide, candidates should be able to gain an understanding of the Situational Judgment Test, including the test procedures, the types of questions they will encounter, and suggested preparation strategies.

We encourage candidates to review this Guide carefully and to take advantage of all opportunities to prepare for the Situational Judgment Test.

GOOD LUCK!

NOTE: In this Guide, an effort has been made to provide information about the intended format, content, logistics, and evaluation of the Situational Judgment Test. However, it is possible that minor alterations may be made in the testing procedures between the time this Guide is distributed and the administration of the test. We will work with the Human Resources Division to provide you with any updates that may be required.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATION
with emphasis on the SITUATIONAL JUDGMENT TEST

I. **Date, Time, and Location:** The computerized online written exam which contains two examination components will be administered to Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant candidates on Saturday, September 23, 2023. Testing will take place at multiple testing locations and different groups of candidates will be assigned to either a morning or an afternoon testing session. Two weeks prior to the exam date, you will receive a Notice to Appear that indicates the site where you will test and the arrival and testing times for your session. Please make note of your testing time to ensure you show up on time. Morning session candidates will be required to stay in their seats, even if they finish the exam early, and all test takers will be released at the conclusion of the test time session. Late arriving candidates or who leave before they are officially released may be disqualified from testing.

II. **Technical Knowledge (TK) Content:** The Technical Knowledge Test will consist of approximately 70 multiple-choice questions drawn from the sources listed on the Reading List. The TK Test consists only of closed-book questions. You will not be permitted to bring any reference sources (from the reading list) or any other documents or materials with you to the test facility. If any such materials are found in your possession once you are seated at a computer at the testing site, you may be disqualified from testing.

III. **Situational Judgment Test (SJT) Content:** Candidates will be asked to consider the role of Police Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant and will be presented with a series of approximately 15 job relevant scenarios. Each scenario will describe a job situation which a Police Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant might face. Following each scenario, candidates will be presented with 4 to 6 potential actions that the Police Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant in that scenario might take in response to the situation presented. Candidates will be asked to read, consider, and rate the effectiveness of each potential action using the following rating scale:

1 Highly Ineffective	2 Ineffective	3 Effective	4 Highly Effective
Very likely to worsen the situation OR Very unlikely to resolve the issue	Likely to worsen the situation OR Unlikely to resolve the issue	Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue	Very likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve most or all of the issue

When rating the effectiveness of each potential action, candidates should consider only the information presented in the scenario. If knowledge of any department-specific policy or procedure is needed to determine appropriate responses to a scenario, that information will be explicitly provided in the scenario description.

IV. **Situational Judgment Test Competencies:** The Situational Judgment Test was designed to assess a series of competencies found to be important to effective job performance in the context of situations encountered by Police Captains/Lieutenants/Sergeants in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Based on the job analysis results, the six (6) competencies to be assessed during the Situational Judgment Test are identified below. In other words, the Situational Judgment Test scenarios reflect or align with the competencies listed below:

1. **Accountability:** This competency involves adhering to and applying performance standards in an appropriate, consistent, and fair manner. This includes holding oneself and others accountable by addressing and correcting problem performance or discipline violations in a timely, consistent, and fair manner.

2. **Adaptability:** This competency involves the ability to evaluate and modify one's behavior to meet the needs of changing circumstances or priorities. This includes maintaining a calm and professional demeanor in both routine and stressful situations or crises. This competency also involves the ability to demonstrate resilience by persevering through adverse or difficult circumstances and by bouncing back from setbacks, disappointments, criticism, or emotionally challenging situations.

3. **Analyzing and Deciding:** This competency involves the ability to select an appropriate and timely course of action by seeking out and analyzing information from various sources, evaluating the importance and relevance of information, and considering alternative approaches and their implications.

4. **Guiding and Developing Others:** This competency involves the ability to provide guidance and development opportunities to others to facilitate performance improvement and professional growth, and working with others to develop clear and focused development goals and action plans for achieving them. This competency also includes sharing open, clear, and honest praise and constructive feedback regarding others' work behaviors.

5. **Interpersonal Interactions:** This competency involves the ability to establish constructive working relationships with others. This includes demonstrating consideration and respect for others' feelings, needs, views, and contributions while maintaining the necessary balance to ensure that objectives continue to be met. This also includes the ability to foster a cooperative team environment and negotiate/reconcile conflict, among others.

6. **Leadership:** This competency involves demonstrating "drive" and the tendency to take action without being prompted to achieve objectives. It also involves the ability to work with limited or no oversight while still recognizing when it is necessary to seek others' input before taking action. This competency also involves the ability to establish goals, plan activities, and identify and direct resources in an efficient and effective manner in order to achieve objectives. This includes developing strategies for accomplishing goals that include contingencies for anticipated obstacles, allocating authority and responsibility based on personnel capabilities and priorities, clearly explaining assigned tasks and performance expectations, and monitoring/measuring progress toward goals.

V. **Administrative Logistics:** During a single testing session, candidates will complete both examination components. The tests will be administered on a computer in a controlled testing environment. At the start of the testing session, after a set of instructions, candidates will complete the Technical Knowledge Test. Once the Technical Knowledge Test is completed, candidates will proceed to review additional instructions regarding the Situational Judgment Test and then complete the Situational Judgment Test. The test period will be timed as a single testing session. Although this Guide provides guidance as to how much time a candidate should expect to spend on each portion of this examination, it is up to the candidate to keep track of time and ensure that he/she has sufficient time to complete each test component.

The timed session for this promotional examination will be 3 hours and 5 minutes. The recommended allocation of time is:
- 10 minutes to read the initial instructions for the examination
- 105 minutes (one hour and 45 minutes) to complete the Technical Knowledge Test
- 10 minutes to read the additional instructions for the Situational Judgment Test
- 60 minutes (one hour) to complete the Situational Judgment Test

Please keep in mind that the examination timer will run continuously once the examination is initiated and it is up to each candidate to ensure he/she spends the time appropriately to be able to complete both test components before the timer expires.

Situational Judgment Test Scoring: All responses on the Situational Judgment Test will be scored against an established scoring key. Each response will be worth a minimum of zero points and a maximum of two points. Note that candidates rate the effectiveness of each potential action the Police Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant in that scenario might take using a scale that ranges from Highly Ineffective to Highly Effective. Each potential action that is rated by a candidate is considered a "response" on the Situational Judgment Test.

The scoring key for each potential action (i.e., the "correct" or most appropriate effectiveness rating for that scenario response) was determined by a group of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) representative of civil service Police departments across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These SMEs determined the most appropriate effectiveness rating (i.e., the scoring key) for each potential action.

Candidates will receive one point for each response if the effectiveness rating identified by the candidate is on the same "side" of the effectiveness scale as the scoring key, plus one additional point per response if the effectiveness rating identified by the candidate matches the scoring key exactly. Zero points will be awarded for a response if the effectiveness rating identified by the candidate is on the opposite "side" of the effectiveness scale from the scoring key. Illustrative examples of the scoring process are provided below.

Candidate Effectiveness Rating	Scoring Key	Points Awarded to Candidate	Explanation
Highly Effective OR Effective	Ineffective	0	The candidate's response is on the "effective side" of the rating scale, and the scoring key is on the "ineffective side" of the rating scale. The candidate's response is therefore on the opposite side of the scale from the scoring key, and 0 points are awarded.
Highly Ineffective	Ineffective	1	The candidate's response is on the "ineffective side" of the rating scale, and the scoring key is on the "ineffective side" of the rating scale. The candidate's response is therefore on the same side of the scale as the scoring key, and 1 point is awarded.
Ineffective	Ineffective	2	The candidate's response is on the same side of the scale ("ineffective") as the scoring key, so 1 initial point is awarded. In addition, the candidate's rating of "Ineffective" matches the scoring key exactly, so an additional 1 point is awarded. The candidate therefore receives 2 points for this response.

All scoring computations will be performed by Talogy using the scoring key established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts SMEs.

PREPARATION STRATEGIES FOR THE SITUATIONAL JUDGMENT TEST

VI. **Preparation Strategies:** The Situational Judgment Test is designed to assess the underlying competencies as they contribute to the performance of Police Lieutenants/Captains/Sergeants. Technical knowledge of policies, procedures, rules, and regulations is not the focus since knowledge is assessed as part of the Technical Knowledge Test. However, keep in mind that the competencies involve such things as analyzing information, considering alternative approaches and their implications, identifying and coordinating resources, and monitoring progress toward goals. When these competencies are applied to resolve a situation or problem, it is with a foundation and understanding of acceptable behaviors and procedures whether on scene or in an administrative setting.

You can improve your performance on a Situational Judgment Test in a couple of different ways. First, know and understand the test situation so that you can avoid making mistakes caused by a failure to understand the meaning of test questions, test format, or test procedures. Second, you can try to gain an understanding of your own test-taking behavior. If you become aware of the kinds of errors that are common on Situational Judgment Tests, you can try to avoid them. This section of the Guide provides suggestions for improving your performance in each of these areas:

- **Situational Judgment Test-Taking Strategies - Understanding the Test Situation:** This section provides some strategies that you can apply when taking the Situational Judgment Test. These strategies include such suggestions as systematically breaking down the rating scale and answering easier questions first.

- **Common Pitfalls - Understanding Your Own Test-Taking Behavior:** This section provides information about common pitfalls in test-taking in general, in situational judgment tests in particular, and reasons why you might face such pitfalls. You are encouraged to identify the kinds of behaviors you might tend to engage in by reading through this list. In this way, you will be more aware of the tendency toward these pitfalls when you take the test and can determine what steps you can take to avoid them.

A. *Situational Judgment Test-Taking Strategies*

The purpose of the Situational Judgment Test is to evaluate the competencies required to perform certain work-related situations, particularly as they relate to making decisions or judgments regarding effective versus ineffective behaviors in those situations. Because we want to directly evaluate these competencies, we are offering the following suggestions.

1. **Make sure you understand the test format and requirements**

   a) Read all directions carefully.

   b) Read each scenario and all potential actions carefully before attempting to rate them. Scenarios and potential actions are brief, so re-reading may be a good use of your time to ensure you have not misunderstood anything in the scenario or potential actions.

   c) Make sure you know how to use the rating scale to rate the effectiveness of each potential action.

d) Make sure you know how much time you have remaining to complete the test. As you take the test, check the timer on the computer periodically so that you can keep track of the amount of time remaining in the testing period.

2. **Proceed through the scenarios strategically**

a) <u>Break down the rating scale.</u> First, think about whether each potential action for the given scenario is generally "effective" or generally "ineffective." Imagine the person in the situation responding in the way that is described in the given item. Then think about whether that action would generally make the situation better or worse, or think about whether that action would be generally likely or unlikely to help resolve the issue. When thinking about the ramifications of the given action, you may want to consider the impact that action would have on others described in the scenario. Consider things such as whether the action promotes or inhibits safety, whether the action is consistent with any expressly stated rules or policies, and whether the action demonstrates strong levels of responsibility, adaptability, leadership, professionalism, etc. If you believe the given action would make the situation better, or would help to resolve the issue (at least in part), you should respond by selecting a rating on the "effective" side of the scale. If you believe the given action would make the situation worse, or would be unlikely to help resolve the issue, you should respond by selecting a rating on the "ineffective" side of the scale.

Once you have determined whether the potential action is effective or ineffective, then think about the degree to which that response is either effective or ineffective. If a given response is extremely or very likely to improve the situation, if the response would make the situation much better, or if the response would be likely to help resolve most or all of the issue, then you should select the "Highly Effective" rating. If you believe a given response is somewhat likely to improve the situation, if the response would make the situation a little bit better, or if the response would be likely to help resolve some or part of the issue, then you should select the "Effective" rating. Similarly, on the ineffective side of the scale, if you believe an action would be extremely or very likely to worsen the situation, would worsen the situation to a large degree, or would be very unlikely to help resolve the issue, you should select the "Highly Ineffective" rating. If you believe an action would be somewhat likely to worsen the situation, would make the situation somewhat worse, or would be unlikely to help resolve the issue, you should select the "Ineffective" rating.

b) <u>Rate the "easier" potential actions first</u>. As you read the potential actions for a given scenario, you may find that some of those actions are easy to rate (e.g., they are clearly "Highly Effective" or clearly "Ineffective"). Rate those potential actions first to get them out of the way, and then spend time thinking about the actions that may be a little more difficult to judge. Don't forget to use the strategy describe above in step (a) to evaluate the effectiveness of the potential actions.

c) <u>Take a mental break when needed</u>. If you feel that your ability to concentrate is decreasing at points during the test, take a brief mental break. Close your eyes and take a minute to clear your mind and relax. Of course, you must keep in mind the time limit for the test, but a brief mental break may well be worth the few seconds or minutes it takes.

d) <u>Answer every question</u>. You will <u>not</u> lose any more credit for an incorrect response than you will for no response, so even if you must guess, rate every potential action. If the test period is about to end, and you believe there will be several scenarios that you will not be able to get to, reserve some time (e.g., 60 seconds) at the end of the test period to rate the scenario's potential actions, even if you must guess. While your guesses may not be correct, the alternative is to leave these actions blank and be assured of getting them wrong.

3. **Use extra time wisely**

   Once you complete the test, go back and review your responses to make sure they still make sense to you as you read through them again. Pay particular attention to scenarios and potential actions where you may have initially questioned your responses. Re-read them, think through them again in a systematic way, and make sure you are comfortable with your responses. You will not get extra points for completing the test before the time limit expires, so if time remains, review as many of your responses as time allows.

   Remember, test administrators will be available to help every candidate, but only to clarify procedures. If you have any procedural questions, ask for assistance before the test begins.

B. *Common Pitfalls*

There are several common reasons candidates might choose an incorrect rating for a potential action. Eight of these reasons are presented below along with suggestions for avoiding these errors.

1. **Misreading the rating scale:** Candidates may mistakenly indicate a rating for a potential action other than the one they intended to indicate, simply due to misreading the scale. Be sure to make note of the scale anchors (1 = Highly Ineffective, 2 = Ineffective, 3 = Effective, 4 = Highly Effective) and the directionality of the rating scale - lower ratings indicate ineffective responses and higher ratings indicate effective responses.

2. **Misunderstanding the instructions or making false assumptions:** Candidates may fail to fully read the instructions, or may assume they already know how to proceed without reading the instructions, especially when there is pressure to finish before the test time limit. The instructions for rating the potential actions will be presented with each new scenario. It is important that you understand the instructions before rating the potential actions. The instructions will be as follows:

   "Read the brief scenario description below, followed by a number of possible actions the Police Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant might take in response to the situation described. Rate the effectiveness of each potential action using the rating scale provided. Be sure to rate the effectiveness of <u>all</u> of the potential actions, realizing there may be several approaches for addressing a given situation. In other words, you may rate more than one response as Highly Effective, as Ineffective, etc. Further, within any given scenario you are <u>not</u> required to use every effectiveness rating across the listed actions; there may be no listed actions to which you give a rating of Ineffective, for example, or no actions to which you give a rating of Highly Effective."

   Important Note: You do NOT have to select a different rating for every potential action to the same scenario. You may rate more than one action as Effective, more than one as Highly Ineffective, etc. Similarly, you do NOT have to select every point on the scale when evaluating the potential actions within each scenario. In other words, it is NOT necessary to assume that every scenario will include at least one potential action at each of the four levels of effectiveness. Within any given scenario, you may find that there are no potential actions to which you give a rating of "Highly Effective," or no actions to which you give a rating of "Ineffective," etc.

   An example is provided below of a scenario with four potential actions. The darkened numbered circles indicate the effectiveness rating selected by the candidate for each potential action. Notice that, in this example, a rating of "Effective" is given to two of the potential actions, and the rating of "Highly Ineffective" is not used at all. As previously mentioned, there

is no requirement to select a rating from each point on the scale for the potential actions for the same scenario.

Scenario Example

A brief description of the scenario involving a Police Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant will be presented here.

Potential Actions		1 Highly Ineffective	2 Ineffective	3 Effective	4 Highly Effective
		Very likely to worsen the situation OR Very unlikely to resolve the issue	Likely to worsen the situation OR Unlikely to resolve the issue	Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue	Very likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve most or all of the issue
A)	Captain Example takes action A in response to the scenario above.	①	②	❸	④
B)	Captain Example takes action B in response to the scenario above.	①	❷	③	④
C)	Captain Example takes action C in response to the scenario above.	①	②	❸	④
D)	Captain Example takes action D in response to the scenario above.	①	②	③	❹

3. **Viewing the potential scenario actions as interdependent:** Within any given scenario, the listed actions that the Police Captain/Lieutenant/Sergeant might take in response to that scenario are NOT to be viewed as chronological or as interdependent in any way. The responses do NOT build on one another. Instead, each potential action listed for a scenario is meant to be viewed and rated independently from the other actions. Be sure to rate each potential action separately.

4. **Misreading part of the scenario or potential action by overlooking a keyword or phrase:** The solution to this problem is taking the time to read carefully and thoroughly, re-reading if there is time. Make note of key words or phrases that may indicate the most effective ways in which to respond to a situation. Be sure not to overlook critical words such as "not" – for example, "this individual has not been trained to operate this particular piece of equipment." Overlooking the word "not" in this phrase could lead to faulty assumptions about the most effective actions to take in a scenario that involves assigning the best resources to operate equipment.

5. **Not knowing the meaning of one or more key terms:** Situational Judgment Test scenarios and potential actions will not include a great deal of technical terminology. Nevertheless, when taking the test, if you have difficulty with a term, re-read the sentence to determine its general meaning without worrying about the exact meaning of the 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.

6. **Not sticking to the scenario as presented:** When evaluating Situational Judgment Test potential actions, it is tempting to make assumptions or jump to conclusions based on preconceived notions or past experiences related to the scenario being described. Be careful NOT to make assumptions or jump to conclusions. Focus on the information provided in the scenario. Do not assume or add information or think about "what ifs" such as, "If the immediate supervisor has this type of personality, I might respond differently," or "If this has been an ongoing issue, then this might be an appropriate response," etc. Focus solely on the information provided when reading and thinking about the scenario and potential actions. If there is added information that is needed (e.g., information about personality conflicts, background stating that an issue is ongoing or has occurred repeatedly), that information will be clearly stated in the scenario. If some challenge, problem, or conflict is not stated in the scenario itself, do NOT assume it exists and do NOT let such an assumption impact your responses.

   Similarly, focus on the potential actions that are provided. It may be that the course of action that YOU would take is not listed as an option, or that you can think of other, more or less effective, alternative actions that are not listed as potential actions. Do not allow yourself to be too distracted by thinking about alternative actions that are not provided. Focus on the potential actions that are listed, and the context provided around those actions in the scenario.

7. **Committing common rating errors or biases:** When using any kind of rating scale, such as the effectiveness rating scale that will be used to rate the potential actions, candidates often tend to have natural biases that lead them to only use portions of the scale. One common bias is to use only the extremities of the scale – in this case, only "Highly Effective" or "Highly Ineffective." Another common bias is to avoid those extreme ratings and only use the middle points of the scale – in this case, only "Effective" or "Ineffective." Other common biases involve being overly "lenient" by rating every potential action somewhere on the "effective" side of the scale, or instead being overly "critical" by rating every potential action somewhere on the "ineffective" side of the scale.

   The key to overcoming these errors or biases is to re-read the meaning of each anchor, and systematically think through how effective each potential action is. Look back at strategy A2a (*Proceed through the scenarios strategically – Break down the rating scale*) as a reminder.

8. **Rushing or not taking enough time to think through your ratings:** When there is an overall time limit to the test, it is tempting to rush through the reading of the scenarios and the rating of the potential actions. Note, you should have sufficient time to read carefully through all the scenarios and potential actions. Do not agonize for several minutes over one potential action but do take the time needed to carefully read and consider the action. Some additional tips for systematically thinking through your ratings of the potential actions include:

   - Have an answer in mind before you look over the potential actions. Thinking about the most effective action to a scenario may help you anticipate what effective versus ineffective actions might look like, which can aid you in rating the potential actions that are listed. Be careful, however, not to dismiss all listed potential actions as ineffective simply because they do not match exactly what YOU might do in that situation. Keep in mind there may be several effective (and by extension several ineffective) actions to addressing any given challenge.

   - Consider the rationale behind your rating of each potential action. If someone were to ask you why you rated a particular action as Ineffective, as Highly Effective, etc., would you be able to provide a reason? If not, you may wish to re-think your rating.

SAMPLE TEST ITEMS

Some samples are provided below to give you an idea of what to expect on the Situational Judgment Test. These scenarios and potential actions represent generic prototypes that are similar in format, length, and content to the types of scenarios and actions that will appear on the upcoming Situational Judgment Test.

VII. **Sample Situational Judgment Test Items:**

These sample scenarios and potential actions are meant to illustrate the nature of the test you will complete. The format (i.e., instructions, scenario description, listing of potential actions with associated effectiveness rating scale) mirrors the format you will see during the actual Situational Judgment Test.

For each example scenario, the scoring key (i.e., effectiveness rating that is considered most accurate) is provided on the page following the scenario. You may use the scenarios as practice items and then look to the page following the scenario for the answer key.

The final Situational Judgment Test items that appear on the actual exam have been developed and approved by Commonwealth of Massachusetts subject matter experts, who have also determined the official scoring key for each potential scenario response. The examples below are illustrative of situational judgment exercises that can be expected to be seen on the exam. These examples were not created by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Subject Matter Experts; however, the scoring key provided for the sample items follows the same logic and judgment process as that used by the experts to develop the answer key and scoring for the actual SJT.

Read the brief scenario description below, followed by a number of potential actions the Sergeant might take in response to the situation described. Read each scenario and all potential actions carefully before attempting to rate them. Rate the effectiveness of each action using the rating scale provided. Be sure to rate the effectiveness of all the potential actions, realizing there may be several approaches for addressing a given situation. In other words, you may rate more than one potential action as Highly Effective, as Ineffective, etc. Further, within any given scenario, you are not required to use every effectiveness rating across the listed actions; there may be no listed actions to which you give a rating of Ineffective, for example, or no actions to which you give a rating of Highly Effective.

Scenario

Sergeant Garcia is reviewing an incident report from one of her Officers. She discovers that the Officer inserted the wrong location into the incident report, which may become an issue if the incident were ever to be reviewed or referenced in the future.

Potential Actions	1 Highly Ineffective Very likely to worsen the situation OR Very unlikely to resolve the issue	2 Ineffective Likely to worsen the situation OR Unlikely to resolve the issue	3 Effective Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue	4 Highly Effective Very likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve most or all of the issue
A) Sergeant Garcia makes the correction herself to ensure the report is accurate, without notifying the Officer of the mistake.	①	②	③	④
B) Sergeant Garcia leaves the report as is because it is unlikely to become an issue.	①	②	③	④
C) Sergeant Garcia points out the mistake to the Officer and asks him to correct the report.	①	②	③	④
D) Sergeant Garcia conducts a training with her entire group of Officers on incident report preparation, using this recent report as an example, without disclosing to the group who wrote it.	①	②	③	④

In the Sergeant Example listed on the previous page

- Option A is considered Ineffective (2; Likely to worsen the situation OR Unlikely to resolve the issue) because, although the action leads to the report ultimately being corrected, the Officer is not made aware of the mistake or held accountable for correcting it.
- Option B is considered Highly Ineffective (1; Very likely to worsen the situation OR Very unlikely to resolve the issue) because not only is the Officer not made aware of or held accountable for the mistake, but the mistake remains because the report is not corrected. As stated in the scenario, this could cause further issues in the future.
- Option C is considered Highly Effective (4; Very likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve most or all of the issue) because the Sergeant is making sure that the Officer is held accountable for correcting the report, and that the report is ultimately accurate.
- Option D is considered Effective (3; Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue) because the Sergeant making sure the entire group is clear on the importance of report accuracy, and in the process the Officer will become aware of his mistake via its use as an example in the training; however, by focusing on training at the group level, the Sergeant is not holding the Officer personally accountable for correcting the mistake.

Lieutenant Example

Read the brief scenario description below, followed by a number of potential actions the Lieutenant might take in response to the situation described. Read each scenario and all potential actions carefully before attempting to rate them. Rate the effectiveness of each action using the rating scale provided. Be sure to rate the effectiveness of all the potential actions, realizing there may be several approaches for addressing a given situation. In other words, you may rate more than one potential action as Highly Effective, as Ineffective, etc. Further, within any given scenario, you are not required to use every effectiveness rating across the listed actions; there may be no listed actions to which you give a rating of Ineffective, for example, or no actions to which you give a rating of Highly Effective.

Scenario

Luke is a local firefighter who is known for his sense of humor, and he often jokes with the Officers under Lieutenant Anderson's command when they encounter one another on a call. During a call, Lieutenant Anderson hears Luke make an inappropriate joke in front of a bystander. Lieutenant Anderson does not have a supervisory relationship with Luke.

Potential Actions	1 Highly Ineffective	2 Ineffective	3 Effective	4 Highly Effective
	Very likely to worsen the situation OR Very unlikely to resolve the issue	Likely to worsen the situation OR Unlikely to resolve the issue	Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue	Very likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve most or all of the issue
A) Lieutenant Anderson tells Luke the joke was inappropriate, and asks the bystander in front of others if the joke made them uncomfortable.	①	②	③	④
B) Lieutenant Anderson has a private, informal conversation with Luke after the call, explains why the joke was inappropriate in that situation, and advises Luke to remain professional at all times during a call.	①	②	③	④
C) Lieutenant Anderson informs Luke's supervisor of the situation and asks the supervisor to talk with Luke about behaving appropriately in front of others during a call.	①	②	③	④
D) Lieutenant Anderson immediately apologizes to the bystander and asks Luke to speak with him once they are finished with the call. .	①	②	③	④
E) Lieutenant Anderson says nothing and decides to ignore the situation as Luke is not in his chain of command.	①	②	③	④

In the Lieutenant Example listed on the previous page

- Option A is considered Ineffective (2; Likely to worsen the situation OR Unlikely to resolve the issue) because, although the Lieutenant made sure to tell Luke the joke was inappropriate, he also put the bystander on the spot by asking in front of others if the joke made them uncomfortable. Asking this in front of others, especially Luke, is likely to make the bystander even more uncomfortable.
- Option B is considered Highly Effective (4; Very likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve most or all of the issue) because by having a candid conversation with Luke, the Lieutenant is privately but directly addressing the situation, ensuring Luke understands why the joke was inappropriate in that situation, and ensuring that Luke focuses on the right things (i.e., professionalism) when on calls.
- Option C is considered Effective (3; Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue) because the Lieutenant is attempting to ensure the issue is addressed directly with Luke by Luke's supervisor, with a focus on ensuring appropriate behavior. This approach may not result in quick and immediate feedback for Luke, but it is an attempt to make sure the behavior is corrected.
- Option D is considered Effective (3; Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue) because the Lieutenant is ensuring that the bystander receives an apology and also ensuring that Luke is aware that his behavior in this situation is an issue. This approach may put Luke in an uncomfortable position because the Lieutenant has publicly indicated that Luke will need to be spoken with, but the ultimate focus is on addressing the problem behavior.
- Option E is considered Highly Ineffective (1; Very likely to worsen the situation OR Very unlikely to resolve the issue) because the Lieutenant is doing nothing to indicate to the bystander or to Luke that Luke's behavior is inappropriate. The bystander may be upset about the behavior not being addressed, and Luke may be likely to repeat the behavior if he is not given feedback that the behavior is wrong.

Captain Example

Read the brief scenario description below, followed by a number of potential actions the Captain might take in response to the situation described. Read each scenario and all potential actions carefully before attempting to rate them. Rate the effectiveness of each action using the rating scale provided. Be sure to rate the effectiveness of all the potential actions, realizing there may be several approaches for addressing a given situation. In other words, you may rate more than one action as Highly Effective, as Ineffective, etc. Further, within any given scenario, you are not required to use every effectiveness rating across the listed actions; there may be no listed actions to which you give a rating of Ineffective, for example, or no actions to which you give a rating of Highly Effective.

Scenario

Captain Johnson was transferred to a new unit two months ago. At that time, the team morale of the Officers was poor. Since then, it appears to have become worse.

Potential Actions	1 Highly Ineffective Very likely to worsen the situation OR Very unlikely to resolve the issue	2 Ineffective Likely to worsen the situation OR Unlikely to resolve the issue	3 Effective Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue	4 Highly Effective Very likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve most or all of the issue
A) Captain Johnson arranges one-on-one meetings with each Officer and supervisor to better understand everyone's concerns, strengths, and career aspirations.	①	②	③	④
B) Captain Johnson emails the Officers and supervisors, describing what he has observed, explaining that the low morale can lead to poor performance, and encouraging all of them to work to improve the situation.	①	②	③	④
C) Captain Johnson closely observes the team dynamics and interpersonal interactions among the Officers and supervisors for the next two weeks so he can try to pinpoint the reason for the low morale and figure out possible solutions.	①	②	③	④
D) Captain Johnson seeks general advice from trusted colleagues and supervisors regarding how they may have overcome low team morale in their own roles.	①	②	③	④
E) Captain Johnson identifies some of the most tenured Officers and supervisors and speaks with each one individually to try and learn more about the history of the unit, why morale may be low, and any suggestions they have for addressing the issue.	①	②	③	④

In the Captain Example listed on the previous page
- Option A is considered Effective (3; Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue) because the Captain is communicating directly with the Officers and supervisors to try and better understand them, but this response option does not include coming up with actual solutions to the morale issue.
- Option B is considered Ineffective (2; Likely to worsen the situation OR Unlikely to resolve the issue) because, although the Captain is encouraging the team to work to improve morale, he is offering no suggestions for how to do so. Further, by sending an email, the Captain is communicating indirectly with the team rather than directly, which may lead to even further declines in interpersonal relations and team morale.
- Option C is considered Effective (3; Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue) because the Captain is attempting to identify the reasons behind the low morale for the purpose of determining solutions; however, merely observing the team dynamics and interactions is likely insufficient compared to communicating with them directly.
- Option D is considered Effective (3; Likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve some or part of the issue) because the Captain is focused on identifying potential solutions to the morale issue, and is utilizing his resources to help him do so; however, discussing the issue with others is likely insufficient compared to communicating with his team directly.
- Option E is considered Highly Effective (4; Very likely to improve the situation OR Likely to resolve most or all of the issue) because the Captain is interacting and communicating with the team members to try and discover the root cause of the issue and involving them in the process of attempting to determine potential solutions.

CONCLUSION

We hope that this Guide gives you a better understanding of what to expect for the Situational Judgment Test (including the logistics and scoring procedures) and provides you with some suggestions for preparation. The suggestions provided here are not exhaustive; we encourage you to engage in additional preparation strategies that you believe will enhance your chances of performing effectively on the Situational Judgment Test.

BEST OF LUCK!