

**STATE POLICE SERGEANT
PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATION
TEST TAKING GUIDE**

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This study guide includes the following:

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- basic tips on how to answer written multiple-choice questions
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GENERAL EXAMINATION INFORMATION

The promotional examination for State Police Sergeant will be composed of three parts. Part 1 is a Professional Profile that will be scored on the basis of a structured crediting plan. Part 2 is a Written Test consisting of multiple-choice questions and essay questions. Part 3 is an Oral Test consisting of 1 oral question. All questions and rating scales are developed and approved by a test development committee of State Police Sergeants, Lieutenants and Majors.

Candidates must participate in all three parts of the State Police Sergeant examination in order to receive a final score on the examination.

Note: In accordance with state policy, official final examinations scores will be reported to candidates and to the agency in the form of whole numbers. All scores that include fractions or partial points are rounded to the nearest whole number. When an examination is comprised of multiple components, rounding does not occur until the final score is calculated.

The examination is designed to test the following knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs), identified, through job analysis, as important for successful job performance as a State Police Sergeant: Knowledge of patrol procedures and motor vehicle enforcement; knowledge of emergency scene management; knowledge of accident investigations; knowledge of criminal investigations; knowledge of search and seizure; knowledge of use of force; knowledge of criminal laws and procedures; knowledge of professional standards; knowledge of discipline procedures; knowledge of investigating complaints against subordinates; knowledge of preparation, review and correction of reports; knowledge of administrative and supervisory procedures; written communication skills; interpersonal skills; oral communication skills; judgement and problem solving ability; leadership ability; reading ability; mathematical and computational skills; motivation and commitment to police work; knowledge of the NP-1 contract; training and experience.

Most of the multiple-choice questions will be designed to test applicants' knowledge of important policies and procedures covered in the Administrative & Operations Manual, the Connecticut General Statutes, and/or the State Police Union Contract. Other exam questions will be designed to test applicants' ability to use or apply their knowledge of important policies and procedures in handling job related problems or situations. In addition, some of the multiple choice, essay and oral questions may test more general abilities, such as judgment and problem solving ability, leadership ability, supervisory ability, oral and written communication skills.

THE BASIC STUDY MATERIALS for this examination are: (1) the Administrative & Operations Manual (5th edition with updates to General Order 13-16); (2) Training Bulletins for 2012 and 2013; (3) Connecticut General Statutes relating to Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Motor Vehicles and Public Safety; and (4) the State Police Union Contract.

Please note that this study guide is intended to provide you with some general guidance in preparing for and taking the State Police Sergeant's examination. It is not meant to provide you with absolute procedures that will apply to all situations and all applicants. It is suggested that you read the information in this study guide carefully and incorporate it with test taking strategies that you have found to be successful in the past.

PART 1. PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

The Professional Profile for State Police Sergeant will be worth 15% of the examination. This will consist of a structured summary of the applicant's formal education, law enforcement & related training and experience, as well as supervisory & leadership experience that will be used to assess candidates' preparation to be a State Police Sergeant. The Professional Profile must be submitted using only the special Professional Profile form, which will be made available in a printable format on the DAS internet web site (<http://das.state.ct.gov/employment>) on March 17, 2014. Instructions for completing the form along with instructions for submitting the completed form with all supporting documentation will also be posted on the DAS website. The Professional Profile must be accompanied by photocopies of transcripts or diplomas from accredited institutions to document college degrees. If you do not have these documents available, you may want to request them from the respective institutions as soon as possible.

PART 2. WRITTEN TEST

The Written Test will be worth 70% of the examination. This test will consist of multiple-choice questions and several essay questions/written exercises.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

A multiple-choice question is usually designed in one of three forms: (1) it states a question for you to answer, (2) it asks you to choose the correct answer from a list of statements, or (3) it asks you to complete an incomplete statement. For each question, several possible answer choices will be listed. You are to select the one choice that best answers the question, is most nearly correct or best completes the statement. Your score on the multiple-choice section of the examination will be based on the total number of questions that you answer correctly. Therefore, it is to your advantage to record an answer for every question, even if you are not sure which is the correct answer. However, be sure that you mark only one answer for each question; if you mark more than one answer, that question will be counted as incorrect.

Listed below are three sample multiple-choice questions. The correct answer for each question is indicated by an asterisk (*) and a reference is listed below the question. (Note: The reference citations for the example questions below are from an earlier edition of the A. & O. Manual.)

1. Requests for radio, television or print interviews or other queries regarding department policy, department employees, disciplinary matters or internal affairs investigations shall be referred to:
 - A. legal affairs.
 - *B. PIO.
 - C. the duty supervisor.
 - D. professional standards.

[A&O: 8.1.2 c (4)]

2. In which of the following is obtaining written statements **required**?
 - A. In all accident cases and some criminal cases.
 - B. In all accident and all criminal cases.
 - *C. In all criminal cases.
 - D. None of the above.

[A&O: 17.1.9.b; 18.1.4 a]

3. A rookie Trooper comes to you as his supervisor and tells you that earlier in the shift he initiated a motor vehicle stop. While he was completing an infraction for the violation, the trooper radioed that the operator's license is under suspension. He issued a misdemeanor summons with the two (both) charges. He asks you what to do with the incomplete infraction. You should instruct him to:
 - A. leave the incomplete infraction with the Troop Clerk and she will take care of it.
 - B. destroy all copies of the incomplete infraction.
 - C. do nothing; leave the incomplete infraction in the book.
 - *D. attach the incomplete infraction to a memo to the Troop C.O. giving the reason the infraction should be voided.

[A&O: 16.2.2 g]

ESSAY QUESTIONS

There are two distinct types of essay questions that may be used in a written test: the Content Essay Question and the Writing Task Exercise.

Content Essay Question

In a content essay question you are given a brief description of a situation or issue that a newly promoted State Police Sergeant might be expected to encounter or handle when starting in his/her new job. You may also be given some simulated work documents and asked to answer one or more questions concerning the problem situation or issue that is presented. The specific essay question may ask you to respond to one or more of the following types of questions: (1) describe the steps you would take to properly handle the situation or issue, (2) list the problems or mistakes you find in the simulated work documents and/or the actions you would take in response to the documents, (3) indicate whether the action taken by the trooper in the situation was proper or improper and explain why, and (4) list the important problems or issues that you would need to consider or investigate concerning the situation described. Content essay questions are often graded solely on the content of the response (the amount of correct and complete information provided in the response). The instructions for these questions will tell you that answers should be in list, bullet or outline form, rather than in narrative form.

Candidates' responses to content essay questions are evaluated by separate panels of subject matter experts for each question (with the same panel grading all candidates' response to a given question). After all panel members have read a candidate's written response to a question, they individually award credit for every correct answer by checking off the matching statements on the scoring sheet that includes all of the credited answers for the question. For this type of question, the reviewers do not make an overall rating of an applicant's written response. Instead, after carefully reading the response, their task is to determine whether or not specific credited answers are present. Therefore, an applicant's score on this type of question is based directly on the content (the amount of correct information provided) in the response to the question. Including incorrect information will result in a lower score. Depending on the question, there may be cases where the order of the information included in the response will be considered in the scoring of the question. The final score on a content essay question is obtained using a conversion table or equation.

The following is an example of a content essay question:

Assume that you are a newly appointed State Police Sergeant. While you are supervising the evening shift at Troop X, at approximately 2000 hours, the desk officer informs you that a two vehicle accident has just occurred on a limited access highway. Due to unreasonable speed, an interstate tractor-trailer traveling eastbound lost control on the snow covered roadway, jack-knifed and collided with a passenger vehicle traveling in the same direction. The tractor-trailer then struck the center guard-rail and rolled over, and is blocking all eastbound travel lanes. The fuel tank of the tractor-trailer was ruptured in the accident. In addition to the fuel leak, the desk officer informs you that the tractor-trailer was carrying eggs and has spilled most of its load over a large area of the limited access highway. The Trooper at the scene has received confirmation that the operator of the tractor-trailer, a local resident, has died. His body is pinned behind the wheel in the cab of the tractor-trailer. The operator of the passenger vehicle, also a local resident, is uninjured and is still on the scene.

There are two parts (labeled A and B) of this question. Read the question parts carefully before writing your responses. Write your responses in the appropriate spaces provided for each part for this question in the ESSAY ANSWER BOOKLET. (Your answers should be in list, bullet or outline form, rather than narrative form.)

- (A) List in bullet form the actions that you would take or delegate (actions that you would ensure are accomplished), as the patrol supervisor, to manage this accident scene.
- (B) List in bullet form any additional actions that you would take or delegate after the scene is cleared (actions that you would ensure are accomplished), as the patrol supervisor, to ensure a complete investigation of the accident.

A good response to a content essay question lists all relevant answers in a logical order and does not duplicate answers. You should not include answers that are not relevant to the question or are incorrect. Points will be deducted for listing inappropriate actions or incorrect information in your response.

The list(s) of answers printed on the following page is an example of a very good response to this question. Note that this response includes answers to each of the parts of the question.

Part A:

- Respond to the scene.
- Ensure that the accident scene is secure.
- Notify the Message Center.
- Direct additional on-duty Troopers to respond to the scene, if needed.
- Notify State DOT to assist with traffic control, detours, sign patterns, etc.
- Notify PIO.
- Notify the local Fire Department.
- Notify the local Police Department regarding detours, etc.
- Notify the Medical Examiner's Office regarding the fatality.
- Notify Consumer Protection regarding the spilled eggs.
- Notify the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and/or the Fire Marshal's Office to oversee the clean up of the fuel leak.
- Establish a contact car (command post).
- Establish liaison with Fire Chief (senior fire department officer) and with personnel from other outside agencies at the scene.
- Request an accident re-constructionist be sent to the scene.
- Assign the accident investigation to a Trooper who will complete the required reports.
- Take statement from operator of passenger vehicle.
- Request voluntary chemical test from (surviving) operator of passenger vehicle.
- Take statements from witnesses.
- Take nighttime photographs of scene (before vehicles are moved).
- Collect/seize evidence.
- Take measurements for detailed sketch map.
- Use appropriate wreckers.
- Determine if deceased operator is an organ donor.
- Inform Troop C.O. of assessment of scene (keep C.O. informed of status of scene).
- Call in off-duty Troopers to ensure adequate patrol coverage during the incident.

Part B:

- Notify deceased operator's next of kin (family) of the death.
- Ensure news release is prepared (review and approve news release).
- Notify the US DOT.
- Prepare/submit SPRAMIS message for the Morning Report.
- Perform vehicle inspection of passenger vehicle and tractor trailer.
- Request the assistance of the Truck squad to inspect tractor-trailer, including vehicle's weight and manifest.
- Take daytime photographs (after vehicles are moved).
- Do a 24 hour background check on both operators.
- Request results of Medical Examiner's findings (autopsy report), e.g., BAC, drug content.

Writing Task Exercise

The other type of essay question that may be used in written tests is a writing task exercise. In this type of essay exercise, you are given a brief description of some situation or issue and may also be given some simulated documentation to which a recently promoted State Police Sergeant would be expected to prepare a written response. You may be asked to write a response letter or memorandum, or to prepare a brief summary or narrative. For this type of essay exercise, candidates are often graded only on their written communication skills and not directly on the content of the letter or summary. Written communication skills are evaluated by a panel of subject matter experts who individually read and rate the response on one or more written communication skill dimensions, such as: (a) Mechanics, which includes the use of proper English sentence structure, paragraph formation, grammar and punctuation; and (b) Organization, which includes clarity of expression and use of logical organization.

Although candidates' responses on writing task exercises are often evaluated only on one or more writing skill dimensions, they can also be evaluated on content in addition to writing skills. In those cases where candidates' responses on the exercise are also evaluated on content, this may be accomplished using a content rating scale or content checklist. The instructions for a writing task exercise will clearly describe what form your response should be in and what dimensions your response will be graded on.

The following is an example of a writing task exercise:

Assume that you are a newly appointed State Police Sergeant. A new Lieutenant has been appointed to your Troop and she is concerned about poor morale among the Troopers, especially those on Evenings. The Lieutenant has asked all supervisors for suggestions on: (a) causes of poor morale among the Troopers and (b) some things that could be done to improve the morale of the Troopers.

Your task: Write a memorandum to your Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Mary Williams, in a To/From format. Your memo should list and explain your suggestions on (a) the possible causes of poor morale among the Troopers and (b) some things that could be done to improve the morale of the Troopers.

Write your memorandum on the two pages provided for this exercise in the ESSAY ANSWER BOOKLET. (Your response to this exercise should be written in the form of a standard business memorandum.) DO NOT SIGN THE MEMO USING YOUR REAL NAME

Please Note: Your memo will be evaluated on the basis of your ability to communicate effectively in writing; your memo will not be evaluated on the basis of your ability to resolve the situation. Your memo will be evaluated only on the basis of: (a) your use of proper English sentence/paragraph formation, grammar and punctuation; and (b) your clarity of expression and use of logical organization.

A good response for a writing task exercise would: (a) be clear and well organized, (b) use good paragraph and sentence structure as well as proper English grammar, and (c) respond to the situation as described in an appropriate fashion, and address (discuss or comment on) all parts of the problem/task given to you.

PART 3. ORAL TEST

The Oral Test will be worth 15% of the examination. This test will consist of 1 oral presentation question. Additional information on the oral question will be mailed to candidates at a later date.

Oral Presentation Exercise

In an oral presentation exercise you are given a brief description of some situation or issue, which may also include some simulated correspondence or other material, to review prior to the oral test session and are instructed to prepare to make a brief presentation concerning the situation or issue, or a summary of the facts of the situation, before a panel of subject matter experts (the oral board members) who listen to the candidate's oral presentation and then individually evaluate the quality of the presentation.

Oral presentation exercises are usually graded on both the oral communication skills demonstrated in the response and on the content of the response. Oral communication skills are evaluated by rating the candidates' presentation on one or more oral communication skill dimensions, such as: (a) Style, which includes clarity of expression, self-confidence and persuasiveness; and (b) Organization, which includes use of logical organization, appropriate elaboration (completeness) and cohesiveness. Candidates' are graded on each oral communication skill dimension, using defined rating scales. In those cases where candidates' oral responses to oral presentation exercises are also evaluated on content, this will be accomplished using a defined content rating scale and with reference to a list of suggested correct answers for the exercise.

The instructions for oral presentation exercises will describe what dimensions the presentation will be graded on.

The following is an example of an oral presentation exercise:

Assume that you are a newly appointed State Police Sergeant. Your Commanding Officer has received word that a town in the troop area is seriously considering the elimination of the Resident Trooper Program. The Lieutenant asks you to attend a town meeting and speak about the benefits of retaining the program.

Assume that the oral panel actually consists of the town manager (first selectman) and several members of the town council of the town in question. Make a four (4) minute presentation to the panel summarizing the benefits of the Resident Trooper Program.

A good oral response for an oral presentation exercise would: (a) be clear, confident and engaging (persuasive); (b) be logical and well organized, and cover the appropriate details (information) in an understandable fashion; and (c) present a professional (positive) image. In addition, the information presented should be complete and accurate. The inclusion of incorrect information in your response may result in a lower score.

BASIC TIPS ON ANSWERING MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

- 1) Read the entire question carefully and try to answer it without referring to the answer choices. This way, you may be less confused than if you read the possible answer choices first. If the question does not seem to provide sufficient information about what is being asked, or if the question requires that you choose the answer that best completes a statement, read over the alternatives first to see what answers are offered and which can be eliminated.
- 2) Look for key words in the question that may help you select the correct answer from among the choices. Some common key words are: some, none, many, most, all, least, less, more, worst, poor, good, best, advantage, disadvantage, smallest, smaller, larger, largest, first, last, never, always, any, only, usually, seldom, frequently, generally, often, not, except, false and true.
- 3) Always read all of the possible answer alternatives carefully before jumping to the conclusion that a particular one must be the best.
- 4) Use the process of elimination if the correct answer does not immediately occur to you. Eliminate obviously wrong answers and narrow your choice to the ones that directly answer the question. Then select the answer that most exactly answers the question.
- 5) The following clues may help you select the correct answer:
 - a) Use key words in the question to eliminate obviously wrong answer choices.
 - b) Be alert to the presence of negative words in the question stem. Negative words (such as not, except, never, least place limitations on an answer and may make an answer choice incorrect.
 - c) Try not to read too much into the question. Avoid imagining detailed scenarios in which the answer could be true. In most cases, questions that appear to be "trick questions" are usually only tricky because they're not taken at face value. Determine the best answer using only the information supplied in the question, without making unwarranted assumptions. The correct answer is the one that works best for the situation described.
 - d) If more than one choice seems to answer the question correctly, see if one of the answer choices is "all of the above". Since there can only be one right answer, if two answers seem to be equally correct then the right answer may be "all of the above".
 - e) Be sure to choose an answer that is directly related to the question being asked. Do not select an answer choice even if it is a true or correct statement by itself, unless it specifically answers the question being asked.
 - f) Some multiple-choice questions ask how you would handle a situation that may happen on the job. Answer the question as if you were the employee responsible for handling the situation. Use your judgment when choosing the answer that you feel would work best on the job.
 - g) The correct answer is the choice that contains the most exact or most complete information in response to the question. Some answer choices may be correct or true in part, but less exact or less complete than the "best" choice. An answer choice that is only partially correct, partially true or true only under certain conditions should be considered an incorrect choice.
- 6) Don't be influenced by the length of the answer choices. The longest answer is not necessarily the correct one.

- 7) Don't select an answer choice just because it includes technical language. Answer choices using technical terminology may be included in order to see whether you know the difference between what "looks right" and what "is right".
- 8) Don't skip around. You may lose your place on the answer sheet. Also, skipping around the exam wastes time since you will have to spend time searching for the skipped questions later. A better approach is to try your best to answer each question in order. If you cannot decide on an answer to a question in a minute or two, mark the answer you believe to be the most correct on your answer sheet, place a question mark next to the question in the test booklet, and go on to the next question. You can come back to these questions later if you have time.
- 9) Generally, first answer choices are more often correct than not. There is evidence to suggest that test-takers more frequently change right answers to wrong ones than wrong answers to right ones. Don't race through the questions. If you take time to think through each question, your initial answer will usually be the correct one.
- 10) Don't let more difficult questions affect your attitude and steal valuable time. Don't linger over questions you cannot answer. If you cannot decide on an answer choice, make your best guess and move on. However, if you must guess, try to eliminate as many clearly wrong choices as you can in order to make your guess from as few alternatives as possible. If there are four answer choices from which to choose, your chances of guessing the correct answer are one in four, or 25%. If you can eliminate even one answer choice, your chances of guessing correctly rise to one in three, or 33%. Elimination of additional answer choices further increases your chances of guessing the correct answer.
- 11) Rely on your knowledge and don't look for patterns in the sequence of answers to questions. Having chosen answer "C" for 3 questions in succession is not a good reason to avoid answer "C" for the next question. It is best to trust only your knowledge in answering the questions.

BASIC TIPS ON ANSWERING ESSAY QUESTIONS

- 1) Quickly read through all the essay questions to evaluate their difficulty. Make short notes of any pertinent ideas that occur to you as you read them but don't spend a lot of time writing at this point. It is more important for you to first determine the amount of time you will spend on each question based on its difficulty and value. This will help you avoid spending too much time on any one question, especially those that have a low point value.
- 2) Start with the easiest question. Beginning to work by choosing something you can handle is the best way to reduce test anxiety.
- 3) Answer the questions that are worth the most points first. If you begin to run out of time and have to rush through your answer, it would be best if the question is not worth too much.
- 4) Concentrate on answering one question at a time. Even though you may feel that you should tackle the most difficult questions first, you should avoid doing so. Often, a test-taker who answers the more difficult questions first will not leave enough time to completely answer questions that would easily have earned points. If you encounter a question that you think you cannot answer, leave it for last. By the time you get back to it you may have come up with some ideas.
- 5) Read each essay question and any instructions carefully and completely. Look for specific detailed directions on how to proceed. As you read the instructions for a question, underline or circle key words that identify exactly what information you are to provide in your answer and the format in which you are required to present your response. Also write down any thoughts, words or ideas that immediately come to mind that may help you address the subject of the essay and help you organize your answer.
- 6) Some key verbs that are commonly found in essay exam instructions and are used to identify the format in which you should respond are listed below:
 - a) Compare - emphasize similarities but also present differences.
 - b) Contrast - give differences only.
 - c) Evaluate or Critique - give your opinion of both the values and limitations of the situation supported by evidence.
 - d) Define – provide meaning or purpose but with no details.
 - e) Discuss – present detailed reasons, both pro and con.
 - f) Explain - give reasons for happenings or situations.
 - g) Identify - list and describe.
 - h) Summarize - give main points from beginning to end of event.
 - i) Solve - come up with a solution based on given facts or your knowledge.
- 7) Before you start writing, identify the pieces of information you want to include in your answer and the order in which you will present it. Review the key words and any notes you have made specifically addressing the information asked for in the question. Prepare a brief, logical outline of your response to insure that it is well organized and that you have not overlooked any important directives. This need not be a detailed outline but simply a list of words or phrases which will help to remind you of the important points you want to include in your answer. Space will be provided in the Test Booklet for you to use as scratch paper. Your final responses to the essay questions, however, must be recorded on the appropriate pages in the Essay Answer Booklet. The information you write in the Test Booklet will not be graded.

- 8) Be detailed, but concise. Provide all of the information requested in the specific question. Don't assume that the graders will be familiar with any technical jargon you may use at work or how you perform the duties and responsibilities of your job. Explain your answer as you would to someone who does not know anything about the subject matter. Answer each question thoroughly, concentrating details on the specifics asked in the question, but without going off into irrelevant topics or providing an excess of unnecessary detail.
- 9) Don't ignore any part of a question. Pay careful attention to questions that have more than one part for you to address. Respond to each of the parts separately in your answer.
- 10) Don't skip over an important point or step because you assume that the graders must already know it. In order for the graders to give you credit for knowledge of the subject, you must thoroughly present and explain it in your answer. Many candidates lose points by giving short or incomplete answers. Most essay questions that present a problem for you to solve or a situation for you to handle will require that you address several steps in the solution. It is your task to provide enough sufficient and relevant information to convince the raters to determine that you are qualified to perform the job.
- 11) If the question poses a problem you must solve, analyze the problem thoroughly. Clearly explain how you would investigate the problem and how and why you came to the conclusions you reached. Describe the things you considered and how this led to your conclusions. Describe and explain what you would do, why you would do it, and what results you would expect.
- 12) List all relevant answers in a logical order and do not duplicate answers. You should not include irrelevant, incorrect or inaccurate information. Points will be deducted for listing inappropriate actions or incorrect information in your response.
- 13) Watch for special words or phrases that give you information about the situation and your role in it. For example: "You are a new supervisor..."; "Your supervisor is gone for today and you are in charge..."; "What would be most important for you to do first..."; etc. Use this information to identify the level of authority you would have in the situation and what you think you would be expected to do.
- 14) If you are responding to a Writing Task Exercise, make certain you write your response in the format required. Most applicants find it beneficial to draft their response first on scratch paper or to at least make a very detailed outline before writing their final response. Make certain your response is clear and well organized. Good paragraph and sentence structure as well as proper English grammar punctuation are critical in a Writing Task Exercise.
- 15) Make certain your final responses are written on the appropriate pages in the Essay Answer Booklet. If you use the scratch pages in the Test Booklet to make notes or to outline your responses, make certain you leave yourself enough time to write your complete responses in the Essay Answer Booklet.
- 16) Write your answers legibly. If you can do so, print your answers so that they can be read easily and clearly understood by the graders.

GENERAL TIPS FOR MAKING THE BEST USE OF EXAM TIME IN THE WRITTEN TEST

- 1) The test instructions will tell you how much time you will have to complete the written test, including the multiple-choice questions and the essay questions. The test outline, included in the Test Booklet, will state the point value of each question since some questions may be worth more than others. Although every effort is made to ensure that applicants have sufficient time to read, absorb and answer each question, it is still important for you to keep track of the time so that you will complete the entire exam within the allotted time.
- 2) As a guide, you should allow yourself about 1 to 1.5 minutes to read and answer each multiple-choice question and about 30 to 40 minutes to answer each essay question. Be sure to note the essay questions that are worth more toward your final score and plan to spend more time on those questions that have a higher point value.
- 3) Monitor your time in order to ensure that you will be able to answer all of the questions. (Remember that if you draft or outline your response to a question on the scratch paper in the Test Booklet, you will need to leave yourself time to write and finalize your response in the Exam Essay Answer Booklet.)
- 4) Leave yourself a few minutes at the end to go over your paperwork. Make sure you have answered all of the questions and that your responses are clearly marked.

GENERAL TIPS FOR ORAL PRESENTATION QUESTIONS

- 1) Take a few seconds to compose your thoughts before you begin to make your presentation, and quickly review in your mind the parts of the question or the main areas of information that you need to cover, and review how you will go through this before you begin to answer the question.
- 2) Make your presentation in a logical and organized manner so your answer will be clear to the oral board and so that you do not forget to mention something. If the question includes more than one part, be sure to cover all of the parts in your answer.
- 3) Present the information to the oral board as if they were the audience for the presentation. Do your best to communicate the information clearly. Project a professional image.
- 4) Do **not** ramble or repeat yourself. As long as you cover the topic appropriately, you do not need to use all of the allotted time.
- 5) If you are given only a limited amount of time to complete your answer to the question, monitor how much time you have left as you answer the question and make sure that you cover all of the important points if you are in danger of running out of time.
- 6) The presentation questions will be given to you ahead of time. You should prepare each presentation and practice delivering it so that you are comfortable delivering the presentation and so that it can be delivered in the time allotted.
- 7) You may find it helpful to make notes to refer to when making your presentation. How detailed your notes are is your decision; however, please note that simply reading from your notes is not an effective presentation approach.
- 8) Dress for the Oral Test is Class A Uniform.

GENERAL TIPS ON TAKING THE WITTEN TEST

- 1) It is important to use common sense when facing a written test. Get plenty of sleep the night before. If you are not sure where the test site is, take a drive to the site before the exam date. Leave yourself plenty of time to get to the test just in case there is traffic or you have car problems.
- 2) Arrive at the testing location early enough so that you can (try to) get relaxed before the start of the test. But don't arrive so early that you have time to become anxious.
- 3) **You must take the Written Test at the test site indicated in your scheduling letter. If you arrive late, up to one hour after the starting time, you will be allowed to take the Written Test, but you will not be given additional time.**
- 4) **There will be no make-up written tests except in very rare situations, where an applicant has a legitimate reason for not attending the regularly scheduled written test such as active military duty, serious illness or injury, death in the immediate family, accident the day of the test, or an out-of-state vacation scheduled prior to the posting date of the examination. Documentation will be required (e.g., military orders, medical certification, police report, airline tickets) prior to the date of the written test, except in critical situations occurring the day of the test. For those critical situations occurring the day of the written test, documentation will be required by close of business the first business day following the test. DAS has final authority to approve or deny all make-up requests.**
- 5) Read or listen carefully to all directions. If you don't understand the directions, ask for clarification.
- 6) Pay close attention to any directions concerning how much time you will have to answer the questions.
- 7) Do not bring family or friends to the test site. Space is arranged only for applicants and the monitoring staff.
- 8) **Leave cell phones and other devices listed at home or in your car. You are not permitted to bring cellular phones, electronic paging devices, calculators, watches with memory capability, PDA's, recording or filming devices, radios, computers, or other mechanical and electronic devices into the test room. Books, manuals, notes, pads, envelopes, folders, briefcases, backpacks or other bags are not permitted in the test room.**
- 9) **Please leave weapons at home or locked in your vehicle. (You will not be permitted to bring your weapon into certain test sites that may be used for the written test.)**
- 10) Bring two sharpened No. 2 pencils (with erasers) and two blue pens to the Written Test. (Some candidates have found that it is helpful to bring a highlighter to the Written Test. This is permitted.)
- 11) **Bring your scheduling letter and current photo ID with signature to the Written Test.**
- 12) Smoking is not permitted in the examination room or in any other area of the building.
- 13) Dress comfortably but appropriately for the Written Test. There is no formal dress code, but causal or business casual is recommended. These tests are conducted in State buildings – please dress appropriately.

Conclusions

Keep in mind that the Department of Administrative Services wants you to succeed when taking state examinations. We do not utilize "trick" questions, tolerate biased grading or develop examinations that favor a particular racial, ethnic or gender group.

The intent of our examinations is to identify the best qualified candidates for state positions based on the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform the duties of the job. If you have diligently prepared for this examination by studying the recommended materials, you should easily be able to obtain a passing score.

Best of luck!