

Remember that the oral examination is competitive and structured; your score is based only on your qualifications and on how your qualifications compare with the qualifications required of the classification. You will be rated based only on the answers you provide during the oral examination. Make sure you include enough detail in your response for the panel to evaluate your experience. If you have passed or failed previous examinations, it will have no effect on this examination.

Competitive Rating Factors May Include (but are not limited to):

1. Presentation: Communication skills appropriate to the classification - ability to understand implications of questions & to respond with clarity & directness; resourcefulness, judgment, & perceptiveness in discussing practical problems of the job; appropriateness of language, terminology, & expressions.
2. Readiness: Background & abilities for the classification.

A. Background: Competitive quality of education & experience (length, breadth, recency, etc.); work record (progress, changes, etc.); self improvement efforts, in-service training programs, & job assignments.

**Competitive Rating Factors
(continued)**

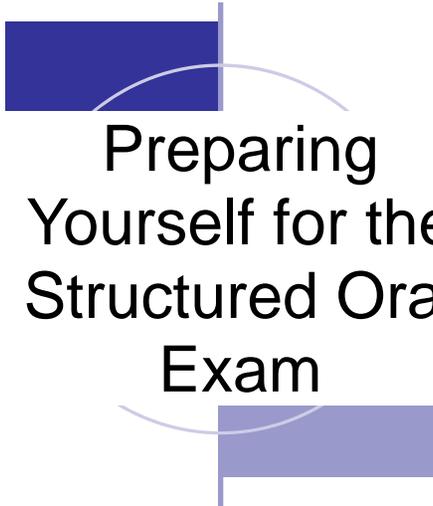
- B. Abilities: To deal with the practical problems of the job; to accept increased responsibility; to work effectively with people.
3. Supervision: Ability to perform in a supervisory or administrative assignment required by the classification and ability to plan & organize; ability to make effective decisions; ability to train, direct & monitor the work of others; understanding and possession of the qualities necessary for effective supervision.

Remember, it is not to your advantage to share information regarding the oral examination questions with other candidates.

Under the Government Code 19680, the interview process is confidential and it is unlawful for a candidate to discuss the examination with any other candidate. Failure to observe these regulations can result in a candidates' disqualification from the examination and possible punitive action.

If you have any questions, please contact :

Merit System Services
241 Lathrop Way
Sacramento, CA 95815
Phone: 916.263.3614
Fax: 916.648.1211
Website: www.mss.ca.gov



Preparing Yourself for the Structured Oral Exam

Merit System Services



Interagency Merit System employers offer Equal Employment Opportunity to all

Information About the Merit System Services Structured Oral Examination

This pamphlet is designed to help you understand and prepare for the MSS Structured Interview portion of the selection process.

All appointments through Merit System Services are made through a competitive examination process. The competitive examination may include an application screening using supplemental questions, a written test, a structured oral exam and/or job simulation exercise.

The oral examination panel will measure your experience, education, and abilities against the job requirements and compare your overall qualifications to the qualifications required of the job classification.

The panel for your structured interview will usually consist of three members. The chairperson will represent Merit System Services and will have training in directing structured oral examinations. The second member is usually a person from the hiring department who is closely familiar with the requirements of the job. The third member may also be a member of the hiring department or someone from outside of the department who is familiar with the requirements of the job. All panel members will have received information and a briefing on the job duties and requirements of the classification being examined. The names and titles of panel members will be provided to you on the day of the structured oral exam.

Preparing for the Structured Oral Exam

Questions from the panel will be focused on education and experience related to the job. It will be helpful before your structured oral exam for you to decide which parts of your background and experience are most important and relevant to this position.

Job requirements and duties are listed on the job bulletin. It would be beneficial for you to read the job bulletin carefully and get a clear picture of the job requirements and duties.

What Happens in the Structured Oral Exam

Prior to the structured oral exam, at the time of the check-in, the receptionist will provide you with information about the structured oral exam for you to read and sign. The chairperson will then introduce you to the panel and give you a chance to get settled. The panel realizes that appearing for a structured oral exam is not an everyday experience and that it is natural for you to feel a bit uncomfortable. Be yourself; people make the best impression when they act naturally. If you do not feel comfortable that one of the panel members can fairly rate your responses, you may tell the chair that you would like the panel member to be excused; however please note that you may only excuse one panel member.

The exam is competitive and structured. All candidates will be asked the same questions in the same order. The rating of your qualifications will not be the result of a specific answer to a certain question. Ratings are based on the overall responses you provide regarding your training, experience, and personal readiness for the position. Be ready to tell the exam panel why you feel you are qualified.

Any panel member may give you a chance to clarify what you have said and to give additional information as needed to clarify your answer.

Please be advised that you may not bring notes or similar materials into the oral exam.

After the panel has finished its questioning, the chairperson will ask you if you have anything to add. This is your opportunity to provide information you feel is important that was not covered by the panel during the structured oral exam.

Ratings and Results

You may expect your results in approximately two weeks following the exam. Results of some oral exams may take a longer or shorter period of time, depending on the number of candidates and the length of time it takes to process all candidates.