



Examination Preparation Booklet

Interviewing/Investigative
Techniques

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Interviewing/Investigative Techniques

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INTERVIEWING I INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES

These sections usually consist of fifteen questions, and are found on a wide variety of exams. The section entitled "Investigative Techniques" usually contains a large number of questions that are actually testing for interviewing skills because this is a critical component of investigating. For those of you who do not face any questions on investigative techniques, we strongly recommend that you do these questions anyway, since doing them can give you more practice in getting a feel for how to approach exam questions. We suggest you do these questions three at a time, looking up the answers and explanations after completing each set of three.

Good Luck!

For the following questions, please select the letter that represents the best choice of the four given₁

1. Which of the following is the best way to get an accurate account of an incident?
 - a. interview those involved immediately
 - b. interview those involved as soon as possible
 - c. wait until you review the official reports, and then interview those involved as soon as possible
 - d. carefully observe a videotaped simulation
2. While conducting investigations, it is necessary to pay close attention to nonverbal communication. This would include all of the following, EXCEPT:
 - a. analyzing each individual behavior as it arises
 - b. paying attention to the person's tone of voice
 - c. viewing the nonverbal messages as indicators
 - d. noting discrepancies between verbal and nonverbal messages
3. While conducting an interview, it is most important to:
 - a. ignore your own values and past experiences
 - b. utilize your own values and past experiences in recording information
 - c. explain your own values to those you are interviewing
 - d. be aware of your own values and experiences, and of how they might influence the interview
4. Of the following, which is the best way to question a witness?
 - a. ask pointed questions
 - b. talk in a clipped manner
 - c. talk aimlessly
 - d. ask random questions

5. You are interviewing an uncooperative person. Of the following, the first thing you should do in this situation is:

- try various appeals to win the person over to a cooperative attitude
- try to ascertain the reason for noncooperation
- promise the person that all data will be kept confidential
- alter the interviewing technique

6. Which of the following is the best way to make a witness feel at ease?

- reassure him or her of the importance of the situation
- tell the witness that any comments he or she makes will be of no use if the witness is too nervous
- allow the witness a little extra time to collect his or her thoughts
- maintain a friendly attitude

7. Which of the following behaviors would be the worst to display during an investigative interview?

- being unfocused
- displaying uncertainty about some departmental regulations
- acting biased
- acting like you are overloaded with work

8. Investigations should be conducted with all of the following, EXCEPT:

- objectivity
- speed
- subjectivity
- thoroughness

9. When trying to help someone focus during an interview, it is best to:

- use an open-ended question
- offer to reschedule at a time when the person is better prepared
- ask the person being interviewed to summarize the situation
- use a close-ended question

10. There are usually four stages during an interview: preparation, opening, conducting and closing. All but one of the following are steps included in the closing stage of an interview:

- a. verifying information
- b. stating the continuing responsibilities, if any, of the person being interviewed
- c. summarizing
- d. describing any additional steps that may need to be taken

11. During an employment interview in New York State, which of the following questions can legally be asked?

- a. "What is your nationality?"
- b. "Are you at least 18 years of age?"
- c. "Do you wish to be addressed as Miss, Mrs., or Ms.?"
- d. "Do you have a disability?"

12. As you continue talking with a man you are interviewing, you have the feeling that some of his answers to earlier questions were not totally correct. You think that he might have been afraid or confused earlier, but that the interview has now put him in a more comfortable frame of mind. In order to test the reliability of information received from the earlier questions, the best thing for you to do now is to ask new questions that:

- a. allow him to explain why he deliberately gave you false information
- b. would yield the same information but are worded differently
- c. put pressure on him so that he personally wants to clear up the facts in his earlier answers
- d. indicate to him that you are aware of his deceptiveness

13. When investigating a situation, which of the following is most important?

- a. that those whom you've questioned feel that you're unbiased
- b. that those whom you've questioned feel comfortable around you
- c. that those whom you've questioned feel confident in your abilities
- d. that those whom you've questioned admire your investigative skills

14. All of the following are examples of flight defenses, EXCEPT:

- a. rationalization
- b. talking about problems excessively
- c. using threatening language
- d. withdrawing

15. Assume that you have been assigned to conduct a follow-up interview with a primary witness whom you would like to have testify at an important hearing. Under these circumstances, which of the following is most important?

- a. doing your best to ensure that the witness remains cooperative
- b. conducting the matter in secret
- c. allowing the witness to determine where and when the interview takes place
- d. conducting the interview as soon as possible to insure a strong case

16. You are interviewing someone who is under a great deal of stress. He is talking continuously and rambling, making it difficult for you to obtain the information you need. In order to make the interview more successful, it would be best for you to:

- a. interrupt him and ask him specific questions in order to get the information you need
- b. tell him that his rambling is causing you a lot of problems
- c. let him continue talking for as long as he wishes
- d. ask him to get to the point because you need to interview others

17. When an investigator first arrives at the scene of an incident, it is most important for him or her to be sure of which of the following?

- a. that all of the witnesses are telling the truth
- b. that no additional physical evidence is destroyed
- c. that all of the witnesses agree with each other about what they observed
- d. that the witnesses do not become angry

18. Each of the following is true about nonverbal communication, EXCEPT:

- a. nonverbal communication is easily controlled
- b. much of the meaning of a message is transmitted through nonverbal behavior
- c. nonverbal behaviors can reveal hidden agendas
- d. nonverbal signals can help the interviewer determine if the person being interviewed is confused but unwilling to admit it

19. For state agencies, a properly conducted investigation might do any of the following, EXCEPT:

- a. discover the cause of a workplace accident
- b. uncover tax fraud or unfair labor practices by an employer
- c. provide a supervisor with effective supervisory methods
- d. uncover information critical to determining the outcome of an employee grievance

20. In interviewing, the practice of verbally anticipating the other person's answers to your questions is generally:

- a. desirable because it is effective and economical when interviewing large numbers of people
- b. desirable because many people have language difficulties
- c. undesirable because it is the right of every person to answer however he or she wishes
- d. undesirable because the person being interviewed may be led to agree with the answer proposed by the interviewer even when the answer is not entirely correct

21. All of the following are good examples of the volatile and vulnerable nature of evidence, EXCEPT:

- a. those involved may be intimidated to forget or to make up key elements of testimony
- b. physical evidence can disappear
- c. two extra copies are made of a valuable floppy disk
- d. water that caused an industrial accident can dry up

22. You find that many of the people you interview are verbally abusive and unusually hostile to you. Of the following, the most appropriate action for you to take first is:

- review your interviewing techniques and consider whether you may be somehow provoking those you interview
- act in a more authoritative manner when interviewing troublesome interviewees
- tell those people that you will not be able to help them unless their troublesome behavior ceases
- disregard the troublesome behavior and proceed as you would normally

23. Of the following statements, which is the most accurate?

- good investigative techniques are easily learned
- witnesses should be given a lot of time to collect their thoughts before being interviewed
- the more standardized and thought out the investigative procedures, the better the chance that the investigation will be successful
- statements taken from witnesses are not usually as critical to an investigation and subsequent action as some experts claim

24. The information sought in an interview is sometimes fixed in advance by a printed form or specific instructions from an interviewer's supervisor. Because of this, it is important to:

- use your own judgement as to whether or not these questions should be used in the interview
- have the form in front of you so you can read from it and not miss any important points when interviewing
- make a copy of the form and give it to the client to complete
- be thoroughly acquainted with the purpose behind each question and understand its significance

25. As a Labor Standards Investigator, you perform field work in order to enforce New York State labor laws. If no set agency policy is in effect, which of the following would most likely be the highest priority to investigate?

- a. a report of a minimum wage violation
- b. a report of nonpayment of overtime wages to an employee
- c. a report of nonpayment to a worker in an industrial homework setting
- d. a report of systematic nonpayment to farm workers

26. In order to get the maximum amount of information from someone during an interview, it is most important for the interviewer to communicate to the person being interviewed the feeling that the interviewer is which of the following?

- a. interested in what the person has to say
- b. a figure of authority
- c. efficient in his or her work habits
- d. sympathetic to the lifestyle of the person being interviewed

27. When an initial interview is being conducted, one way of starting is to explain the purpose of the interview to the person being interviewed. The practice of starting the interview with such an explanation is generally:

- a. desirable because the person can then understand why the interview is necessary and what it should accomplish
- b. desirable because it creates the rapport which is necessary to successful interviewing
- c. undesirable because time will be saved by starting off directly with the questions which must be asked
- d. undesirable because the interviewer should have the choice of starting an interview in the manner that he or she prefers

28. Which of the following behaviors sometimes exhibited by witnesses is the greatest problem for investigators?

- a. witnesses are so eager to cooperate that they frequently interrupt the investigator
- b. witnesses become a little bored telling and retelling what they've observed
- c. witnesses are not very willing to cooperate
- d. witnesses are eager to get back to work

29. Two important skills sometimes used during an interview are giving behavioral feedback and confronting. What is the key difference between the two?

- there is none; they are actually two different names for the same process
- confronting is threatening, but giving behavioral feedback is not
- behavioral feedback merely describes action, while confronting evaluates the consequences of behavior
- behavioral feedback requires equipment in order to test the response of the client

30. If applied properly, "being a good listener" is a desirable interviewing technique primarily because it:

- more easily catches the person being interviewed in misrepresentations and lies
- conserves the energies of the interviewer
- encourages the person being interviewed to talk about his or her personal affairs without restraint
- is more likely to secure information which is generally reliable and complete

31. A full-scale police criminal investigation:

- should be avoided at all costs
- may be warranted in some cases
- most likely means the agency investigator did not do his or her job properly
- is not necessary in state agencies

32. Which of the following are usually the most effective techniques for handling difficult behaviors during an interview?

1. Focusing on nondefensive behaviors.
2. Respecting silence; letting yourself and the person you're interviewing get emotions under control.
3. Giving advice.
4. Avoiding upsetting issues.

- only 1, 2, and 3
- only choices I and 2
- only choice 3
- all of the choices

33. As a Safety and Health Inspector, you conduct safety and health inspections in a wide variety of settings. The supervisor at one of the sites you must periodically inspect seems very anxious during your visits, and always wants you to pinpoint exactly when you will be returning for your next inspection. It would be best:

- a. to assume the supervisor has something to hide, so you will double the number of inspections at the site
- b. to assume nothing
- c. to assume the supervisor is just slightly neurotic
- d. to check to see if the supervisor has a criminal record

34. Of the following, the most important characteristic for an interviewer to have is:

- a. personal attractiveness
- b. sincerity
- c. appealing personality
- d. a sense of humor

35. It is most likely that the longer the time before statements are taken from witnesses:

- a. the more time the witnesses will have to accurately reflect on what has occurred
- b. the more likely it is that the witnesses will be totally unwilling to cooperate
- c. the more likely it is that some distortion will occur
- d. the more likely it is that the witnesses will be willing to cooperate

36. The person you are interviewing is making what you feel are distasteful remarks. Of the following, the best approach would be to:

- a. selectively ignore the remarks
- b. question the person about the remarks
- c. confront the person
- d. ask the person to stop or ask him or her to leave the interview

37. Which of the following behaviors by eyewitnesses should probably concern investigators the most?

- the tendency of eyewitnesses to "homogenize" what they've seen when exchanging information or chatting about the incident
- eyewitnesses who are not clear about minor details
- eyewitnesses who are a little nervous
- eyewitnesses who dislike their supervisors intensely

38. Part of your job requires the investigation of possible state sales tax fraud by organizations. Which of the following would be most likely to trigger a full-scale investigation?

- an anonymous phone call involving possible large-scale sales tax fraud by an organization
- a salesclerk forgets to add the sales tax to your order
- a new business does not have their sales tax "Certificate of Authority" prominently displayed so customers can see it
- the books and receipts of a large organization show that sales tax was not collected on \$75 worth of merchandise

39. All of the following are inquiries that cannot be legally asked in New York State during an employment interview, EXCEPT:

- "Where were you born?"
- "Are you planning on having children?"
- "Are you able to carry out all necessary job assignments and perform them in a safe manner?"
- "In case of an emergency or accident, what is the name and address of the person to be notified?"

40. When investigating a situation, you are careful when asking questions to never indicate how you think the question should be answered. This practice is a good idea, primarily because:

- it shows those you interview that you have confidence in their intelligence
- you will be more likely to get truthful answers
- you will not be significantly influencing the answers of those you've interviewed
- you will impress them with your interviewing skills

ANSWER KEY

1. a	21. c
2. a	22. a
3. d	23. c
4. a	24. d
5. b	25. d
6. d	26. a
7. c	27. a
8. c	28. c
9. d	29. c
10. a	30. d
11. b	31. b
12. b	32. b
13. a	33. b
14. c	34. b
15. a	35. c
16. a	36. a
17. b	37. a
18. a	38. a
19. c	39. c
20. d	40. c

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. The answer is choice a. You may have chosen choice b because it seemed more realistic. You may have thought that it isn't often possible to interview those involved immediately and that "as soon as possible" is good enough. The question isn't asking you to be realistic, however. It's asking you "the best way to get an accurate account." Research has found that the longer one waits to interview someone, the more likely distortions of some sort will occur. Choice d is incorrect because, while a good videotape is better than an eyewitness account, a videotape simulation is not. A simulation is a recreation of an event, not the event itself.
2. The answer is choice a. When paying attention to nonverbal communication, we are aware of a lot of factors like tone of voice (choice b), gestures, inflection, and facial expressions. These behaviors often occur simultaneously or in rapid succession, and are too numerous for us to analyze each one individually. Also, each behavior is merely a clue, and so no one behavior should be analyzed without placing it in the context of the rest of the interaction. Since nonverbal behaviors are subtle and open to misinterpretation, it is best that we view them as indicators (choice c) rather than assuming we know what they mean and acting on our assumptions. Differences between a person's words and his or her nonverbal messages (choice d) will often give an investigator clues as to the person's feelings or state of mind, and might help the investigator decide if he or she is telling the truth.
3. The answer is choice d. Choice a is incorrect because it is usually impossible to ignore your own values and past experiences -- their influence is too strong. Choice b is incorrect because using your values and past experiences when recording information would make it too easy for your judgments to influence what you are recording. The key here is the word values. Values are subjective and biased, and so should play as small a part in the recording of information as possible. Choice c is incorrect because explaining your values to those you are interviewing is inappropriate and an inefficient use of interviewing time. Choice d, being aware of your values and experiences and how they might influence the interview, is the best of the four choices given.
4. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because sounding like Jack Webb may convey a certain type of image, but it's not guaranteed to get good results. Choice b doesn't say enough about the quality of your approach. You could be talking in a clipped manner but be rambling around, disorganized or confused. Also, talking in this way could be interpreted as rude and could put a witness off, making him or her uncomfortable or unwilling to give you the information you need. Choice c is obviously incorrect because talking aimlessly will probably only confuse the witness and complicate the interview. Choice d is incorrect because asking random questions might seem more spontaneous, but it will most likely lead to disorganization and confusion. And, with this style of interviewing, it's very likely that needed information will be overlooked. Choice a, asking pointed questions, may not seem like a great choice either. But at least it gives direction and clarity to the questioning. It's important when taking exams to become comfortable selecting the best of the four choices you've been given, even if you don't

like that choice very much. We say this again and again in this series of booklets, but it's a very important point to keep in mind. Remembering it can stop you from spending a lot of time feeling frustrated.

5. The answer is choice b. When given a situation like this on an exam -- whether it's a question about interviewing or supervisory practices -- it is important to keep in mind that your first action is usually to try to ascertain the reason for the uncooperative behavior, if that is one of the choices. Once you have an idea of why someone is acting a certain way, it is usually easier to plan a more effective strategy. If you haven't tried this, then altering the interviewing technique (choice d) can be largely a hit-or-miss proposition. (But if choice b didn't exist, choice d would be the most likely choice.) Choice a is incorrect because appeals can put you at a disadvantage. Some types of appeals may be appropriate, but the choice doesn't give us enough information to make it a desirable answer. Choice c is incorrect because you often cannot promise that the data will be kept confidential.

6. The answer is choice d. Another tricky one. Choice a is incorrect because it will probably only make the person feel more nervous. This is even more true of choice b. That leaves choices c and d. While it could be that allowing a little extra time to collect his or her thoughts would help the witness, it is less likely to help than maintaining a friendly attitude -- choice d. And the extra time might only serve to make the person more nervous -- he or she would have more time to think about what was making him or her nervous. One way to deal with this kind of question is to "stand the choices on their heads." What would happen if the opposite occurred? If the opposite of choice c were to occur, and the witness were not given extra time to collect his or her thoughts, would this be as bad as if the interviewer did not maintain a friendly attitude? Would it be as likely to make a witness nervous, uncomfortable, or reluctant to talk? The answer is most likely no -- a witness would feel more uncomfortable if he or she had to talk to someone who had an unfriendly attitude than if he or she were not given some extra time to think.

7. The answer is choice c. While none of these behaviors are particularly desirable, the most undesirable is appearing biased because it's the least forgivable. People being interviewed in an investigation are more likely to understand or accept the other behaviors. Acting biased, however, is likely to be seen either as an attack on them -- the investigator seems to be judging them harshly or critically -- or as an attack on the process. An investigator is (ideally) supposed to be fair and impartial, but a biased investigator, especially one that is so biased that it shows, is neither of these.

8. The answer is choice c. It is very important that investigations be conducted with objectivity, speed and thoroughness. They should not be conducted with subjectivity. Subjectivity means allowing one's biases -- one's own values, predetermined beliefs or judgements -- to influence the investigation.

9. The answer is choice d. Choice a is incorrect because open-ended questions allow a person's focus to become more diffused. His or her thoughts can spread out in all directions, and he or she is more likely to be wordy or rambling. Choice b is incorrect for a number of reasons. First, it is an inefficient use of the interviewer's time. Second, there is nothing to indicate that the problem is a lack of preparedness on the part of the interviewee, or that this is the kind of interview which would be improved by a person's being "better prepared." Finally, the question stem says, "during an interview." Rescheduling is beyond the time-frame of the question. Choice c is incorrect because summarizing requires the ability to mentally sort and arrange thoughts. It requires concentration. If a person is having trouble focusing, he or she is not likely to be able to concentrate well enough to summarize. It is best to use close-ended questions, choice d.

10. The answer is choice a. Stating the continuing responsibilities, summarizing, and describing any additional steps that may need to be taken are all part of the closing stages of an interview. (Stating continuing responsibilities means discussing with the interviewee what he or she must do after the interview is over.) Verifying information, choice a, should not be part of the closing of the interview. It should be part of the conducting stage of the interview.

11. The answer is choice b. You can ask someone this question, but you cannot ask them specifically how old they are, or what their date of birth is. Choice c is illegal because it could be a way of finding out if a woman is single or married, and then discriminating against her on that basis. As it's worded, the question asked in choice d is also illegal in New York State. The only way to legally ask about someone's health status is to ask if any physical, mental, or medical impairments would interfere with the person's ability to perform the job he or she is applying for. The question is considered nondiscriminatory, and therefore legal, if it is only seeking to determine whether a disability would affect a specific job task or tasks.

12. The answer is choice b. All of the other choices are incorrect because they are too negative. The question states that the man may have been afraid or confused earlier; it indicates that he did not withhold information for malicious reasons. Also, you are not even sure that the original material was incorrect. The passage says, you have a feeling that some of his answers . were not totally correct." Approaches a, c and d assume that he is guilty of intentionally giving false information, and would probably make it more difficult to obtain the accurate information that is needed. Choice a contains the expression "deliberately gave you false information." Choice c advocates putting pressure on him, and choice d recommends letting him know that "you are aware of his deceptiveness." Each of these employs harsh words or techniques, and any one of them would probably only serve to make him return to his previous condition -- afraid or confused. And he might also become angry, resentful or defensive. It's very likely that the man would stick to the original information, and you would never be able to learn if it were true or false.

13. The answer is choice a. Again, when conducting investigations, it's most important that those you've questioned feel that you are unbiased and fair. Their feeling comfortable around you, choice b, is not as important as their feeling that you are unbiased. Having them think that your abilities rival those of Columbo (choices c and d) is also not as important.

14. The answer is choice c. Rationalizing is making up excuses for one's behavior. The excuses are incorrect, but they are self-satisfying; they ease one's conscience or preserve one's self-esteem. Rationalizing, talking about problems excessively, or withdrawing would all be considered "flight" responses when compared with the use of threatening language. They are all forms of retreat or trying to minimize the danger in a situation. Using threatening language is aggressive; it's more the "fight" variety response.

15. The answer is choice a. If the witness is not cooperative, all of the other measures are irrelevant. If one loses the cooperation of the witness, it won't matter if the interview is conducted in secret, or where or when it takes place. Choice d is incorrect because it is not as critical as choice a. The person has already been interviewed at least once, so the primary facts have been collected. And conducting a follow-up interview as soon as possible will not insure a strong case. There are many other factors that are involved in insuring a strong case. This is another question designed to show the importance of reading each choice carefully.

16. The answer is choice a. You may have been hesitant to pick choice a because it says to interrupt the person, but it is the best of the choices that you've been given. If he is talking continuously, you have to interrupt in order to change the course of the interview. Choice b is too blunt. It may not stop the person from rambling, and it could make him feel even more stressful. It would most likely interfere with the success of the interview in some way, perhaps by making the interviewee reluctant to talk, angry, or resentful. Choice c is unproductive and not practical. Choice d is rude and would probably have the same effect as choice b. It is likely to make the client more uncomfortable, and make it more difficult for you to get the information you need.

17. The answer is choice b. Even if you didn't particularly like the wording of choice b, it's the best of the choices you have been given. The key phrase is "when an investigator first arrives." Physical evidence can be destroyed unintentionally (or even intentionally) by those at the scene. Once it is gone, it's irreplaceable. Choice a is incorrect because there is no way you can do this when you first arrive. (In fact, there are times when you will never be able to do this to your satisfaction.) Choice c is incorrect because it's not good investigative practice to "be sure all of the witnesses agree with each other about what they observed." There may be discrepancies that are very important to record, and that help explain the situation. And there is already a tendency among witnesses to "homogenize" (or blend) what they've seen as they discuss the situation with each other. When this happens, important details may be blurred or left out. You certainly wouldn't want to do anything to further encourage this tendency. Choice d is incorrect because it is not as important as preserving physical evidence.

18. The answer is choice a. All of the other choices are true statements about nonverbal behavior. Choice a is incorrect because much of our nonverbal behavior is involuntary. A lot of it is reflex actions, and so we are often unaware of the behaviors we are exhibiting and unable to control them.

19. The answer is choice c. All of the other choices are ways that investigations affect state agencies, except choice c. Even if you weren't sure what the answer to this question was, you could have guessed that choice c was correct by studying all the answer choices. Choice c is very different from the other choices; the others deal with clear-cut cases of right or wrong. Also, the question asks about investigations. This is a rather strong word to be used in regard to "providing a supervisor with effective supervisory methods." Even if this were to involve a study to see what was wrong with supervisory methods in a department or unit as a whole, it would most likely be called a study, not an investigation. An investigation implies analysis to determine wrongdoing of a legal nature. Now it could be that the supervisor was doing things that were illegal, but the question doesn't state this, and it is too much to assume.

20. The answer is choice d. Choices a and b are incorrect because it is not considered good practice to verbally anticipate someone's answers, since this can influence his or her responses. It is for this reason that choice d is correct. Choice d is a better reason than choice c because it's more serious. Choice c sounds good in theory but, in relation to an interview, it could be rather absurd. It means that the interviewee could give any answer in response to your questions. You could ask what his or her qualifications were for a position, and he or she could answer, "I know that the sky is blue."

21. The answer is choice c. We've purposely included this question even though one could reasonably argue that all of the choices point to the volatile and vulnerable nature of evidence. We said earlier that sometimes on exams you won't like any of the choices given. In this case, you could argue in favor of all of the choices. You have to work with what is given, however. Sometimes, the best strategy is to try to "get into the test writer's brain" by examining the choices to see similarities or differences between them. Choice c is different from the other answers because the other choices all involve the loss of evidence, but choice c represents a preventive measure used to preserve evidence. This is obviously what the test writer was trying to get at, but the question is poorly worded and not totally defensible. If you get a question like this, try not to get frustrated, angry, or indignant. None of these will help your score on the exam. Just try to focus on choosing the best possible response.

22. The answer is choice a. The key here is that the paragraph states that many of the people you interview are unusually hostile. This implies that there is something wrong with what you're doing. The other choices are incorrect because they don't directly address examining your current interviewing techniques. Perhaps, you don't like this answer because you can think of types of interviews in which the interviewees would be more likely to be hostile than not. Again, you have to go with what's given, and to think in terms of the usual situation, not the exception.

23. The answer is choice c. You may have been able to pick this just by the wording -- it sounds like the correct choice. Sometimes this will happen on an exam. Choice a is incorrect because, while it may be true for some people, it is an overgeneralization and most likely not true for others. There is a good deal to be learned about investigative techniques, and the odds are good that many people will not learn them easily. Besides, choice C is a better answer. Choice b is incorrect because if too much time is given, valuable information may be forgotten or distorted. The key wording is "a lot of time." It could very likely mean "too much time." Better, more acceptable wording might have been "given adequate time." Choice d is incorrect because statements taken from witnesses are often very critical. Cases may be thrown out of court, hearings denied, or cases lost because of inadequate statements taken from witnesses. Choice c is the best choice because it is good practice to standardize and carefully plan investigative procedures as much as possible. This increases the likelihood that the investigation will proceed in an organized, efficient, and logical manner.

24. The answer is choice d. Choice a is incorrect because it is most likely inappropriate for the interviewer to use his or her own judgement to decide which questions to use; he or she usually lacks the authority to do this. Choice b is incorrect because reading from the form could very likely result in superficial or inadequate answers. And there's no mention of whether the interviewer understands the purpose or significance of each question. Choice c is incorrect because the interviewer will not be able to obtain feedback from behavior or probe deeply into key areas. Choice d is the correct answer because it helps to ensure that the interviewer will have a good grasp of what each question is attempting to determine, and so the interview has a much better chance of being effective.

25. The answer is choice d. While they are all worthy of investigation, choice d would be the highest priority because of the use of the word systematic. This means it is a practice done repeatedly. The other choices all seem to involve just one individual. While it's true that others may be involved, there is no way of knowing this from the choices. Therefore, choice d is the safest answer.

26. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because emphasizing that the interviewer is a figure of authority could lead to resentment, fear, nervousness, or an unwillingness to share information. Choice c is incorrect because being thought of primarily as efficient does not necessarily have anything to do with obtaining the maximum information from someone. Some people may respect efficiency highly, and so be more likely to share information, but such a response is not likely to be the common one. Choice d is incorrect because being sympathetic to a person's lifestyle is also of limited effectiveness. It may cause some people to be more open, but probably only among those whose lifestyle is somewhat outside the norm. And even people whose lifestyle is different would not necessarily feel the need for sympathy or be flattered or put at ease by it. Communicating interest in what the person has to say has broad appeal, and has proven to be an effective technique.

27. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because it is not true that explaining the purpose of an interview would create rapport. Choice c is incorrect because the time saved is unimportant if the person being interviewed is confused about the purpose of the interview, and has no idea what is expected of him or her. Choice d is incorrect because it's not true that an interviewer should be able to start an interview in any manner he or she chooses. This is another one of those "rights" choices, like choice c of Question 20. It may sound good in theory, but can be absurd in practice. Choice a is correct because it is considered good practice to explain why the interview is necessary so that the person being interviewed can understand the purpose of the interview.

28. The answer is choice c. While all of the choices can be undesirable, choice C represents the most troublesome problem. If witnesses aren't very willing to cooperate, this could result in omission of key details, distortion, and perhaps even a refusal to testify at a later date. Choice a is incorrect because, while it may be annoying, it does not have the serious consequences choice c can have. Choice b is incorrect because becoming "a little bored" is not as serious as not being very willing to cooperate. Choice d is incorrect because it is so specific. It is likely to occur infrequently, and so would not present a major problem. Also, it does not necessarily affect the quality of the evidence or the cooperativeness of the witnesses.

29. The answer is choice c. Choice a is incorrect because they are not two names for the same process. Choice b is incorrect because confronting does not have to be threatening, although it is to some people. It's also incorrect because behavioral feedback can be threatening. A person who is very sensitive, has a fragile ego or poor self-esteem, or has a vested interest in being ignorant of a certain behavior could be quite threatened by behavioral feedback. Choice d confuses behavioral feedback with biofeedback. Even though choice c is not a great definition of either, it does distinguish between behavioral feedback and confronting better than any of the other choices.

30. The answer is choice d. Choice a is incorrect because it gives a reason that is unnecessarily negative. It assumes people being interviewed have evil intentions. Choice b is incorrect because being a good listener usually takes more energy, not less. Choice c is incorrect because being a good listener would not necessarily encourage someone to talk about his or her personal affairs without restraint. And the personal affairs of the interviewee may be way beyond the scope of the interview, and so a waste of time. In interviewing, being a good listener does not necessarily mean "having a sympathetic ear." It really means listening properly. It is more likely to secure information which is generally reliable and complete for a number of reasons. For example: A good listener would pay attention to nonverbal behavior, and so would notice important discrepancies between the words and how they were said. Another example: He or she would be more likely to notice key omissions and be able to ask more perceptive questions based on these observations.

31. The answer is choice b. Choice a is incorrect because a police investigation may be needed in some cases. Choice c is incorrect because an agency investigator is supposed to investigate possible wrongdoing or inadequate or illegal situations. Therefore, a police investigation may be the result of good work on the part of the agency investigator. Choice d is incorrect because state agencies are not beyond the law.

32. The answer is choice b. This type of question can become confusing. One of the best ways to handle it is to use scrap paper. Write down the number corresponding to each statement and put true or false next to each number as you read the statement. Then, when looking at the answer choices, you can refer directly to the ones you've marked true or false. Only the first two statements, focusing on nondefensive behaviors and respecting silence, are considered to be among the most effective methods used in this type of situation. Choice b is the answer which contains these two statements, so it is correct. Giving advice is not usually appropriate in a difficult situation. Avoiding upsetting issues may sound good, but it is not a useful practice if it means avoiding dealing with the underlying problem or not getting the necessary information.

33. The answer is choice b. This is a tricky question because it seems as if you should do something. Of the four choices you've been given, however, assuming nothing is the best answer. When answering a test question of this nature, it is usually unwise to pick any that indicate assumptions because assumptions can be very misleading -- even ones that don't require extra time and effort, like assuming that the supervisor is neurotic (choice b). Perhaps the supervisor does have something to hide -- then he or she wouldn't be neurotic and you would have been misled by a false assumption. Of course, there are much better answers than the ones given. You could, for example, make an unscheduled visit to check on things. Unfortunately, this is not one of the choices given. Choice a is incorrect because it's much too drastic and time-consuming. Choice d is incorrect because examining the criminal record will not necessarily give you any relevant information. You may have hated these choices -- and with good reason -- but assuming nothing is the best answer because it is the only one which is valid given the information provided. Don't be fooled into thinking that assuming nothing means doing nothing.

34. The answer is choice b. Sincerity is more important than personal attractiveness, a sense of humor, or an appealing personality. Again, it's sometimes helpful to approach questions like this by thinking about the consequences of not having a particular trait. If an interviewer doesn't have personal attractiveness, a sense of humor, or an appealing personality, the consequences are likely to be less serious than if the interviewer lacks sincerity. If an interviewer lacks sincerity, the person being interviewed may feel that he or she is not trustworthy, and not feel comfortable talking with him or her. The interviewee may even think that the interviewer is deceitful and be unwilling to tell him or her the truth in return.

35. The answer is choice c. Research has found that, the greater the amount of time that elapses before statements are taken, the more likely it is that distortions in the statements will occur. Choice a is contradicted by this research. Choices b and d are incorrect because they are generalizations that are untrue.

36. The answer is choice a. Again, it's important to keep in mind that the nature of an exam is such that it creates an artificial environment in which you must operate. Since you don't know too much about this situation, you just have to work with the information you've been given. Choice b, questioning the person about the remarks, would be giving attention to the remarks and would possibly prolong them. Choice c, confronting the client, would probably be more likely to lead to additional problems than to ending the behavior. The same is true of asking the person to stop or to leave the interview, choice d. Choice a, selectively ignoring the remarks, may not be a great answer, but it's the best of the four choices you've been given.

37. The answer is choice a. You may have remembered this point from the discussion of Question 17. The "homogenizing" of observations is the most serious behavior to be concerned with of the four things listed. Choice b is incorrect because it concerns minor details. Choice c is incorrect because being a little nervous should not have as negative an impact as choice a. Choice d is incorrect because it may or may not be relevant to the situation. If the incidents directly involved the witnesses' supervisors, they could have a major impact, but we have no way of knowing this. Choice a is the safest choice.

38. The answer is choice a. All of the other choices involve incidents that are not as important, or as large in scope, or they are most likely oversights. Choice a sounds the most serious, and even though it may turn out to be a crank call, it should be investigated first.

39. The answer is choice c. All of the other inquiries are illegal. Choice d is illegal because they haven't hired you yet, and so there is no need to ask this question. It could be a way of finding out whom you are living with, your parents' nationality, or other things that could result in your being discriminated against.

40. The answer is choice c. The question is asking why it is a good idea not to indicate how you think a question should be answered. Choice c is correct because the main concern is to avoid significantly influencing the answers of those you are interviewing. There is a tendency of some people, when interviewed, to tell the interviewer what they think he or she wants to hear. Choice b is incorrect because leading someone to answer a question the way you think it should be answered certainly won't mean that you will be more likely to get truthful answers. Just because an answer is close to what you think it should be doesn't mean that it is the truth.