

Office Practices Keyboarding Practices

Book #23

***Examination
Preparation Book***



Workers • Opportunities • Resources • Knowledge



Booklet #23

Office Practices

Keyboarding Practices

The CSEA Examination Preparation Booklet Series is designed to help members prepare for New York State and local government civil service examinations. This booklet is designed for practice purposes only and its content may not conform to that of any particular civil service examination.

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Office Practices

This section is intended to help you prepare for civil service test questions related to office practices. Questions like the ones in this booklet are likely to appear on a variety of promotional exams.

In these questions you are usually presented with a situation that might come up in the workplace and then asked to choose the best way to handle the situation. The topics covered include such issues as:

- Representing your agency, yourself and your supervisor well.
- Setting priorities
- Responding appropriately to telephone calls and visitors
- Handling work appropriately when your supervisor is absent
- Making sound decisions and recommendations that contribute to the efficient operation of your unit

These questions often require good interpersonal skills and common sense. Answers and explanations are included in the back of the book.

Good luck!

1. Your unit is planning to purchase new database software. Which of the following would be most important in choosing a new database program?
 - a. price
 - b. ease of use
 - c. availability of customer support services
 - d. ability of the program to meet the needs of the unit

2. Your supervisor is out of town for several days and has asked you to act as supervisor in her absence. An employee in the unit comes to you and complains that the supervisor has been dividing the work load unfairly. Of the following, the most appropriate action for you to take is:
 - a. defend the actions of your supervisor
 - b. encourage the employee to file a grievance
 - c. listen to the employee attentively
 - d. explain to the employee that, even though you agree with him, you have no authority to handle the situation

3. In reviewing a request for reimbursement of travel expenses, you discover a math error that makes the total amount of the request much higher than it should be. Of the following, the most appropriate action for you to take is:
 - a. report the error to your supervisor
 - b. make a note of the error and pass the request on to the finance office
 - c. ask the finance office to investigate other requests for reimbursement submitted by the employee
 - d. return the request to the employee and ask him to correct it

4. Your supervisor is out of town on business for several days. She asks you to inform an employee that the project he has been working on for the last two months is going to be cancelled. Of the following, the most appropriate action for you to take is:
 - a. send the employee an e-mail message telling him the project has been cancelled
 - b. tell the employee in person that the project has been cancelled
 - c. send a memo to all staff in your unit telling them the project has been cancelled
 - d. wait until your supervisor returns to tell the employee the project has been cancelled

5. Another employee in your unit often sends e-mail messages that contain many errors in spelling and grammar. Of the following, the most appropriate action for you to take is:
 - a. do nothing because such errors are not important in e-mail
 - b. suggest that the employee take a course in business writing
 - c. point out to the employee that such errors reflect badly on your unit
 - d. bring the situation to the attention of your supervisor
6. Which of the following would most likely be the most important in providing support to a supervisor?
 - a. screening annoying phone calls
 - b. reviewing and forwarding articles and publications that may be of interest to the supervisor
 - c. correctly transmitting instructions from the supervisor to appropriate staff members
 - d. reviewing outgoing correspondence for clarity and grammar
7. Your office is moving to a new location. Of the following, which is the most important?
 - a. to ensure that others will know your office's new address and phone number
 - b. to ensure that the new office space is comfortable
 - c. to ensure that your supervisor is happy with her new office space
 - d. to ensure that the move itself goes smoothly
8. You send a memo to everyone in your unit explaining a new procedure for completing case logs. Several employees have questions about the new procedure. Of the following, what would be the best way to handle this situation?
 - a. send an e-mail to everyone in your unit telling them to contact you if they have questions about the new procedure
 - b. send the original memo again with relevant sections highlighted
 - c. schedule a meeting to explain the procedure and answer questions about it
 - d. wait for employees to submit their case logs and then correct any errors they make

9. While you are on the phone answering a question about your agency, a visitor comes to your desk and starts to ask you a question. There is no emergency or urgency in either situation, that of the phone call or that of answering the visitor's question. In this case, you should:
- excuse yourself to the person on the phone and tell the visitor that you will be with her as soon as you have finished on the phone
 - explain to the person on the phone that you have a visitor and must shorten the conversation
 - continue to talk to the person on the phone while looking up occasionally at the visitor to let her know that you know she is there
 - continue to talk with the person on the phone until you are finished and then let the visitor know that you're sorry to have kept her waiting
10. Your supervisor is out of town on vacation for one week, and she asks you to act as supervisor in her absence. The second day she is gone, a very important, complex budgetary form, which must be completed in ten days, arrives in your unit. Of the following, it would be best if you:
- filled out the form and submitted it as soon as possible
 - read the form over, did any time-consuming research that might be needed, and then gave the uncompleted form to your supervisor as soon as she returned
 - asked for help from your supervisor's supervisor in completing the form
 - tried to contact your supervisor for advice
11. Of the following, which would most likely be of the highest priority?
- the typing of a grant proposal due next week
 - the typing of new addresses onto a mailing list for a future mailing
 - the typing of a payroll form for a new employee that needs to be submitted immediately
 - the typing of a memo from the Commissioner to all employees regarding new procedures

12. You are at work at your desk on a special project when a visitor approaches you. You cannot interrupt your work to take care of this person. Of the following, the best and most courteous way of handling the situation is to:
- a. avoid looking up from your work until you are finished with what you are doing
 - b. tell the visitor that you will not be able to assist him or her for quite some time
 - c. refer the individual to another employee who can take care of him or her right away
 - d. chat with the individual while you continue to work
13. You are composing a letter informing a job applicant that he has not been selected for a job. Which of the following would be least appropriate for you to do?
- a. thank the person for applying for the job
 - b. say something positive about the person's qualifications, if appropriate
 - c. inform the person near the beginning of the letter that he has not been chosen for the job
 - d. use a standard form letter without a salutation or signature
14. You are composing a letter to a vendor acknowledging that your unit has made an error in processing the vendor's paperwork. Which of the following would be least appropriate for you to do?
- a. provide a brief explanation of what went wrong
 - b. admit the error near the beginning of the letter and then explain how you plan to correct it
 - c. apologize, if appropriate, for any inconvenience the error might have caused
 - d. suggest that the vendor may have been partly responsible for the error

15. An employee in your unit submitted an application for acceptance into a career development workshop two months ago, but has heard nothing. The individual tells you that when one of her co-workers submitted an application he received a reply a week later. Which is the best response for you to make?
- "This is obviously a case of discrimination. I'll bring it to the Affirmative Action office immediately."
 - "Next time you submit a request for something of this nature, let me know and I will write a cover letter that will carry more weight."
 - "Perhaps it was an oversight. Why don't you call the organization and ask why you've heard nothing?"
 - "It looks like you won't be accepted this year. Be sure to try again next year."
16. You have found it necessary to return an assignment completed by one of the employees in your unit so that several changes can be made. The employee objects to making these changes. The most appropriate action for you to take first is to:
- inform the employee that he is free to object to your supervisor.
 - ask if the employee has carefully read your proposed changes.
 - calmly state that your decision is final, and further discussion will most likely be useless.
 - allow the employee to present his objections against making the changes.
17. Of the following, it is *least* essential for a supervisor to issue written instructions in assigning work to an employee when:
- the instructions will be passed on to others.
 - the supervisor will be present to check the quality of the work.
 - the assignment involves much detail.
 - the employee has often misinterpreted instructions.
18. You are responsible for preparing the monthly report for your unit. Jason always gives you his input shortly before the report is due. Of the following, what would be the best way to handle this situation?
- do not include Jason's input in the report
 - send an e-mail to everyone in the unit reminding them of the importance of giving you their input on time
 - remind Jason of the schedule for preparing the monthly report and ask him to be more prompt in providing his input
 - bring up the issue at a staff meeting

19. Your supervisor assigns you a project that must be completed by the end of the week. Because of your other responsibilities, you do not think that you will be able to meet this deadline. Of the following, what would be the best way to handle this situation?
- a. set your other work aside so that you can meet the deadline
 - b. tell your supervisor that you cannot meet the deadline
 - c. tell your supervisor about your other responsibilities and ask him to help you establish priorities
 - d. try to complete the assignment while still keeping up with your other work
20. You send an e-mail to Maria, a coworker, asking her to provide some information that you need in order to prepare a presentation for your supervisor. Maria sends you an angry e-mail saying that she does not report to you. Of the following, what would be the best way to handle this situation?
- a. speak to Maria in person about the situation
 - b. send Maria another e-mail requesting the information
 - c. tell your supervisor about Maria's response
 - d. try to prepare the presentation without Maria's information
21. You have reserved the only available conference room for your weekly staff meeting. Joan, a secretary in another unit, asks you to give up your reservation so that she can use the room for a meeting on an urgent issue that has just come up. Of the following, what would be the best way to handle this situation?
- a. tell Joan that you cannot reschedule your staff meeting
 - b. speak to Joan's supervisor about the scheduling conflict
 - c. cancel this week's staff meeting and allow Joan to use the room
 - d. allow Joan to use the room and try to reschedule your staff meeting
22. You overhear two employees in the cafeteria having a tense discussion about their carpooling arrangement. What should you do?
- a. Do not speak to the employees about the issue because it does not directly affect their job performance
 - b. Offer to mediate the disagreement
 - c. Hold a staff meeting to discuss the importance of teamwork
 - d. Try to determine which employee is in the right in this disagreement

23. Which of the following would be the most appropriate way to tell an employee about a new work assignment?
- a. An e-mail message, with copies to all other staff
 - b. A one-on-one discussion
 - c. An announcement at a staff meeting
 - d. A phone call or voice mail message
24. You are responsible for screening your supervisor's calls. Your supervisor has told you not to put through calls unless the callers are willing to identify themselves. You receive a call from a man who insists on speaking to your supervisor but refuses to give you his name. Of the following, which would be the most appropriate way to handle this situation?
- a. Inform the caller that you cannot put his call through unless he gives you his name
 - b. Ask your supervisor if she is willing to accept a call from someone who refuses to give you his name
 - c. Put the call through even though the caller refuses to identify himself
 - d. Tell the caller your supervisor is out of the office (even though she is not) and ask if the caller would like to leave a message
25. Which of the following would be the most appropriate way to solicit employees' opinions about renovating the offices on your floor?
- a. Send a memo to all employees explaining plans for the renovation
 - b. Send an e-mail message to all employees asking them to call you if they have suggestions about the renovation
 - c. Hold a staff meeting to allow employees to make suggestions about the renovation
 - d. Tell employees to speak to your supervisor if they have suggestions about the renovation

Keyboarding Practices

This section is intended to help you prepare for civil service test questions related to keyboarding practices. Questions like the ones in this booklet are likely to appear on a variety of promotional exams.

These questions are meant to test your ability to apply commonly accepted rules and practices in preparing a variety of documents. These rules and practices include such topics as letter format, capitalization, hyphenation, plurals, possessives, word division, word and figure style for numbers, punctuation, and proofreading. The next five pages provide some basic information about these topics. Sample questions begin on page 7. Answers and explanations are included in the back of the book.

Good luck!

Formatting Letters

Business letters should follow this standard format:

Date. Use this format: August 20, 2005

Inside Address.

- Do not use abbreviations, except for titles (Mr., Ms., Dr.) and state names (NY, NJ, PA).
- Place suite, apartment, or room numbers on the same line as the street address (67 High Street, Room 457).

Salutation. Use a colon after the salutation (Dear Dr. Rios: *or* Dr. Rios:).

Closing. Capitalize only the first word of the closing (Yours truly,).

Signature with name of author typed below it.

Reference Initials. If someone other than the author has typed the letter, that person's initials should appear two lines below the typed name of the author.

Enclosures. If you are enclosing something, type the word “Enclosure” on the line below the reference initials. If you have more than one enclosure, indicate how many items you are enclosing (Enclosures 2).

Copy Notation. The copy notation lists the other recipients of the letter. On the line below the Enclosure line, type cc: and the names of the other recipients, in alphabetical order.

Continuation Pages.

- Use plain paper, the same color and weight as the first page.
- At least three lines should be carried over onto continuation pages.
- The heading for each page after the first page should include the page number, the name of the recipient, and the date of the letter
- Use one of the following heading formats for each page after the first page:

Mr. John Jones

2

August 20, 2005

or

Page 2

Mr. John Jones

August 20, 2005

Capitalization

Capitalize all proper nouns: Albany, Houdini, Bob Marley.

Capitalize all academic degrees: Janice Todd, Ph.D.

Capitalize academic and religious titles: Professor Allen, Reverend Mayberry.

Capitalize an official's title when used with a person's name: Senator Clinton, Governor Brown, Chairman Jones.

Capitalize the names of legislative bodies: Congress, the Senate, the New York State Assembly.

Capitalize State when referring to a specific state: New York State.

Capitalize the first word and the important words in the title of a publication, movie, or recording: The Call of the Wild, Pirates of the Caribbean.

Do not capitalize the names of the seasons: fall, spring.

Do not capitalize directions unless they are used to refer to a specific region: Albany is northeast of Binghamton. A blizzard hit the Northeast.

Word Division

Divide words between syllables.

Words with double consonants are usually divided between the consonants.

Do not divide one syllable words.

Do not divide proper nouns (NOT: Bloom- berg).

Do not divide contractions (hasn't, aren't) or abbreviations (approx., NASDAQ)

Do not set off a one-letter syllable (NOT: medi- a).

Divide a compound word between the elements of the compound (eye- witness).

Divide a hyphenated compound at the point of the hyphen (self- confidence).

Do not add a hyphen to an already hyphenated word (NOT: self-confi- dence).

When two separately sounded vowels come together in a word, divide between them (medi- ation).

Try not to end more than two consecutive lines with hyphens.

Do not divide the last word in a paragraph or the last word on a page.

Numbers

Spell out numbers from one to ten. Use numerals for numbers 11 and above (nine senators, 13 colonies).

Do not begin a sentence with a numeral (NOT: 574 names were included on the petition).

Do not place two numerals next to each other in a sentence. (NOT: In 2003, 323 new residential properties were added to the tax rolls.)

Use numerals with abbreviations (2 cm, 4 BTU).

Use numerals when numbers refer to dates, measurements, percentages, money and mathematical expressions (May 9, 3 feet, 7 percent, \$4 million, divided by 3).

Use the same format for all numbers in a sentence that refer to the same type of thing, even if some are ten or less and others are more than ten. (Three of the eighteen samples were ruined.)

But if the numbers in a sentence refer to different types of things, follow the standard conventions. (Three senators proposed a total of 37 new regulations.)

A Guide to Standard Punctuation

The Comma

Use commas to separate items in a series.

The leading candidates are Peekskill, Hornell, and Westbury.

Many publications, especially newspapers, omit the comma before “and” in a sentence like this. The safer thing to do (for the purpose of Civil Service exams) is to use a comma before “and.”

Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives, if you pause between the adjectives.

It was a long, intense meeting.

The award went to the young Greek scientist.

In the first sentence, you use a comma between the adjectives *long* and *intense* because you pause between them. In the second sentence you do not use a comma between the adjectives *young* and *Greek* because you do not pause between them.

Here is another way to approach this decision. If you could insert the word *and* between two adjectives, put a comma between them. If you could not insert the word *and* between two adjectives, do not put a comma between them.

Use a comma to separate independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction. Independent clauses are clauses that could stand alone as sentences. The coordinating conjunctions are *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, *yet*, and *so*.

The residents of Lake George are concerned about pollution, but the developers insist that pollution will not be a problem.

Use a comma to set off a long introductory clause from the rest of the sentence.

Before you leave on your vacation, be sure to inform your neighbors.

Use a comma or a pair of commas to set off transitional words.

Ultimately, the decision is up to you.

In some cases, however, it may be necessary to conduct a formal investigation.

Use commas to set off parenthetical words or phrases in a sentence.

Please tell Ms. McCarthy, our receptionist, that you will be staying late.

Use a comma to separate the name of a city from the name of a state or country.

Albany, New York

London, England

Use a comma to separate a date from a year.

July 4, 1776

The Semicolon

Use a semicolon to separate independent clauses that are not joined by a conjunction.

To the unthinking person war may be a romantic adventure; to the wise person it is a foolish and dirty business.

Use semicolons to separate items in a series if the items contain commas.

I plan to travel to San Jose, California; Fort Worth, Texas; and Albany, New York.

The Colon

Use a colon to introduce a list or an explanation.

We have narrowed our list to three applicants: Ms. Gomez, Mr. Lee, and Ms. Blake.

We have only one alternative: we must oppose the initiative with all our might.

The Dash

Use a dash to introduce a list or an explanation.

We have narrowed our list to three applicants—Ms. Gomez, Mr. Rafferty, and Ms. Blake.

We have only one alternative—we must oppose the initiative with all our might.

Use dashes for rhetorical effect to set off a phrase that interrupts a sentence:

The best solution—and perhaps the only solution—is to raise taxes.

The Apostrophe

Add an apostrophe and an “s” to form the possessive of a singular noun.

the boy’s bike, Albany’s airport, the warden’s message

Add an apostrophe after the “s” to form the possessive of a plural noun.

the employees’ committee, the airlines’ justification

Do not use an apostrophe to form the plural of a noun.

Common Proofreading Marks

delete space	to ^o gether
spell out	②years ago
insert a word or letter	How much ^{is} it ? Mr. ^m S ith
change a letter	super ^s eede
delete a word	a very ^y long day
Stet (don't delete)	a very ^y long day
lower case	F ederal G overnment
capitalize	John doe [≡]
insert a period	Mr. o Jones
insert a comma	On the other hand, [,]
start a new paragraph	That is what has happened. [¶] In the future, we expect more.
move to the right	37,432 □
move to the left	□ 67,324

Spelling

This is a list of words commonly found on promotional exams.

abundance	bureau	description	hindrance
accessible	bureaucracy	detail	hygienic
accommodate		deterrent	
accumulation	capitol	disappearance	illegible
achievement	category	dismissal	imminent
acquaint	character	displayed	impartiality
acquired	circumstantial	dissatisfied	impeccable
actually	citation	distinguished	impromptu
addressee	classification		incongruity
adjunct	column	effects	indictment
adoption	commemorate	elaborate	indispensable
advise	commensurate	eliminate	individual
affirmative	commitment	embarrass	innocuous
aggravate	committee	eminently	innumerable
allege	committal	emphasis	integrity
amendment	community	emphatically	intelligence
amplify	compel	enhancing	intercede
ancient	complacency	entirely	interruption
angle	complication	equilibrium	irreparably
anticipate	conceive	equipped	
apologetic	condemn	essential	jeopardy
apparatus	conscious	exaggerate	journal
appellate	consensus	exceed	judgment, judgement
appropriate	controlling	exercise	judiciary
arraignment	conversant	exhibition	
arrangement	correlation	existence	laboratory
ascertain	correspondence	experience	labyrinth
assessment	credentials	extraordinary	liaison
attendance	criticism		liquidate
auxiliary	crucial	facilitation	loose
aversion	council	financier	lucrative
	counsel	foreign	
balancing	courtesy	forfeit	maintenance
bankruptcy	crystallized	function	management
beleaguered	currency		maneuver
believable		government	mechanical
beneficial	deceive	guarantee	mediocrity
biased	decentralize		misspell
bookkeeping	deferred	harass	mischievous
briefly	definitely	heightened	monetary
brochure	deliberate	heritage	myriad

necessary	policy	referring	stretch
negligible	possession	regrettable	subordinate
nevertheless	preceding	relevant	subversive
nickel	precious	repetitious	succeed
ninth	predatory	resonance	summarize
noticeable	predilection	responsibility	surfeit
	preferably	rhetorical	surgeon
occasion	preparation	rhythm	symmetrical
occurring	presumptuous	routine	
official	previous		temperament
ordinance	primarily	salable	thorough
	principal	salient	transaction
pamphlet	probably	scissors	transient
parallel	proceed	secretary	truly
parliament	promissory	senior	
patient	psychology	similar	vacillate
patronize	publicity	sincerely	vacuum
peculiar		sophomore	
percentage	realize	source	warrant
permanent	reasonable	sovereign	weight
permissible	receipt	specialized	whether
personnel	recognizable	specifically	wholly
plagiarism	recommendation	staunch	wield

Sample Questions

1. Which of the following is an acceptable format for typing the date line in a letter?
 - a. 8/20/2005
 - b. August 20, 2005
 - c. August 20th, 2005
 - d. Aug. 20 2005

2. Which of the following statements is inaccurate?
 - a. In the inside address of a letter, room numbers or suite numbers should be typed on a separate line.
 - b. In the inside address of a letter, it is acceptable to abbreviate state names.
 - c. The salutation should be followed by a colon.
 - d. If more than one item is enclosed with a letter, it is appropriate to indicate the number of enclosures.

3. Which of the following statements is inaccurate?
 - a. Titles (such as “commissioner”) should be capitalized when they are used with a person’s name.
 - b. All words in the title of a book should be capitalized.
 - c. The names of the seasons are not capitalized.
 - d. The first word in the complimentary closing of a letter is capitalized.

4. Which of the following statements is inaccurate?
 - a. Words with double consonants are usually divided between those consonants.
 - b. It is permissible to divide contractions.
 - c. Words of one syllable should not be divided.
 - d. It’s best to try to avoid divisions that add a hyphen to an already hyphenated word.

5. In which of the following sentences are numbers used correctly?
- 1700 voters filed incorrect ballots.
 - Move the sample 3 cm to the left.
 - Seven of the 13 delegates voted yes.
 - The legislature budgeted three hundred twenty-eight million dollars for the program.
6. Which of the following words is divided correctly?
- commit-ment
 - bookkeep-er
 - thro-ugh
 - are-n't
7. All of the following are true about capitalization EXCEPT:
- words indicating direction and region are capitalized
 - the names of rivers, lakes, seas, mountains, and oceans are capitalized
 - the names of nationalities, tribes, and languages are capitalized
 - civil, military, corporate, honorary, and religious titles are capitalized when they precede a name
8. Which of the following statements is true?
- the last word on a page should not be hyphenated
 - two-syllable words should not be hyphenated
 - compound words should not be hyphenated
 - the last word in two consecutive lines should not be hyphenated
9. In which of the following sentences are numbers used correctly?
- The report proposed twenty-seven changes to the current regulations.
 - 597 residents signed the petition.
 - In 2006, 543 new voters were registered in the town.
 - During the past month, five employees accumulated a total of 96 hours of overtime.

10. In which of the following sentences are capital letters used correctly?
- a. Our offices are approximately seven miles northeast of the airport.
 - b. The case was investigated by lieutenant James Burrows.
 - c. The gulf coast of Mississippi was hit hard by the hurricane.
 - d. A new chinese restaurant has opened on Monroe Avneue.
11. Which of the following words is divided incorrectly?
- a. spa-ghetti
 - b. retro-spective
 - c. proof-reader
 - d. fix-ed
12. Which of the following words is divided incorrectly?
- a. pro-mise
 - b. han-dling
 - c. have-n't
 - d. proj-ect
13. I. It would be acceptable to divide the word organization after the first "a" in the word.
- II. It would be acceptable to divide the word recommend after the first "m."
- III. It would be acceptable to divide the word interface between the "r" and the "f."
- IV. It would be acceptable to divide the word development between the "e" and the "l."
- Which of the following statements printed above are correct?
- a. only statement I is correct
 - b. only statements II and III are correct
 - c. only statement II is correct
 - d. only statements I, II, and III are correct

14. Which of the words in the following sentence should be capitalized?
- he assigned the project to larry brown, the youngest architect in the firm of smith and jones.*
- he, larry, brown, architect, smith, jones
 - larry, brown, architect, smith, jones
 - he, larry, brown, firm, smith, and, jones
 - he, larry, brown, smith, jones
15. In which of the following sentences are capital letters used correctly?
- Boston is the Capital of Massachusetts.
 - The book was entitled *The End of the Road*.
 - The new Mayor held a news conference.
 - Did you know that governor Jim Carrey was once a mechanic?
16. In which of the following sentences are numbers used correctly?
- On May 9, seven customers called to complain.
 - Seven of the 15 candidates spoke at the meeting.
 - In 2005, 357 property owners challenged their assessments.
 - Approximately two hundred runners started the race.
17. Which of the following statements is incorrect?
- when responding to a letter, it is appropriate to mention the date of the letter
 - if a letter includes an enclosure, there should be a notation indicating this
 - the salutation of a letter should be followed by a colon
 - an enclosure notation should be typed flush with the right margin
18. Which of the following statements is correct?
- instant messaging expressions (such as “CUL8R” for “see you later”) are acceptable in business e-mail
 - it is appropriate to use all capital letters in an e-mail message if the message is important
 - it is not acceptable to begin an e-mail message with a salutation
 - the subject line of an e-mail message gives the main idea of the message as succinctly as possible

19. Which of the following statements is correct?
- a. the same font should be used for the salutation and the body of a letter
 - b. the salutation of a letter should be in a smaller type size than the body of the letter
 - c. if a letter is continued on a second page, the second page should have a heading that includes the page number, the date, and the name of the person who wrote the letter
 - d. the salutation of a letter should be typed in all capital letters
20. What is “right justified” text?
- a. text that contains an explanation or rationale for a particular action
 - b. text that is evenly aligned on the right margin
 - c. text that carries over from one page to another
 - d. text that is linked to an Internet site
21. Which of the following statements is correct?
- a. a semicolon is used to introduce a list
 - b. if a sentence ends with an abbreviation (such as lb.), there should be two periods after the abbreviation
 - c. a comma is used to set off a long introductory clause
 - d. an apostrophe is used to form the plural of most nouns
22. All of the following are true EXCEPT:
- a. a comma may be used to set off short quotations or sayings
 - b. an apostrophe is often used to represent the word “per”
 - c. a dash may be used to indicate a sudden change or break in continuity
 - d. a dash may be used to set apart an emphatic or defining phrase
23. All of the following are true EXCEPT:
- a. an apostrophe indicates the omission of letters in a contraction
 - b. an apostrophe indicates the possessive form of singular and plural nouns
 - c. an apostrophe should not be used to indicate the omission of figures in dates
 - d. an ellipsis (three spaced periods) is used to indicate the omission of words within quoted material

24. In keyboarding, which of the following is the best definition of the word “cell”?
- a. a column of data on a table
 - b. a box within a table where a column and a row intersect
 - c. a table that displays financial data
 - d. a row of data on a table
25. Which of the following would be the best use for a spreadsheet application?
- a. a budget
 - b. a brochure
 - c. a flyer
 - d. a newsletter
26. Which of the following is the best definition of the word “footer”?
- a. the last row in a table
 - b. the total of all items in a column
 - c. information that appears at the bottom of every page in a document
 - d. the lower half of an alphanumeric character
27. Which of the following would be the best definition of the word “kern”?
- a. to delete a file
 - b. to adjust the space between characters
 - c. a sentence that runs over from one page to the next
 - d. to place an item in the trash
28. Which of the following would be the best definition of the word “icon”?
- a. a warning symbol
 - b. a highlighted word
 - c. an obsolete software program
 - d. a symbol that represents a certain function

29. What is landscape orientation?
- a. a system used by global positioning satellites
 - b. the positioning of a page so that information is presented across the long dimension of the paper
 - c. an arrangement of data in columns on a spreadsheet
 - d. an alphabetical listing of geographical locations
30. What is a mail merge?
- a. a piece of equipment that automatically seals letters
 - b. the process of taking information from a database and inserting it in a form letter
 - c. a system for sorting incoming mail
 - d. placing several sheets of paper in the same envelope
31. What is a hard return?
- a. a command used to end a line of text
 - b. a command used to hyphenate text automatically
 - c. a command that closes a file without saving changes to the file
 - d. a command that places an item in the trash
32. Many word processing programs contain a feature called a thesaurus. What is the purpose of this feature?
- a. it checks spelling
 - b. it finds synonyms
 - c. it hyphenates words automatically
 - d. it counts the number of words in a document

Directions for questions 33 through 40. In the sentences below, four portions are underlined and lettered. Select the underlined portion that contains a grammatical construction, a word use, or an instance of punctuation that would be **inappropriate** in carefully written English. Each sentence does not have more than one error.

33. The new teacher has done well since excepting her new position, but her assistant has helped her a great deal.
(a) (b) (c)
(d)

34. There will be a special meeting for we committee members sometime next week.
(a) (b) (c) (d)

35. Each of the managers are responsible for a particular function, but no one is responsible for the entire operation.
(a) (b) (c) (d)

36. One of the boys left their helmet on the bus, but it was too late for anyone to get it.
(a) (b) (c) (d)

37. The rusted, decrepit car made it's way slowly up the hill and then sputtered to a stop.
(a) (b) (c) (d)

38. Martha and she left the room even though the class is still in session.
(a) (b) (c) (d)

39. Alvin and me received our awards at the ceremony; Jane received hers later.
(a) (b) (c) (d)

40. Their were many reasons why Mark and he were named co-captains of the team.
(a) (b) (c) (d)

Directions for questions 41 through 44. Each of the sentences below contains a proofreading notation. Select the letter that corresponds to the correct meaning of the notation.

41. All commercial properties in the village of Denton have been reassessed.

- a. delete the word *village*
- b. italicize the word *village*
- c. capitalize the letter *v*
- d. capitalize the entire word *village*

42. In some cases, however[^] the best course of action is to do nothing.

- a. insert a comma after *however*
- b. insert a period after *however*
- c. remove the comma before *however*
- d. insert extra space after *however*

43. Some skilled trades require a ^o~~very~~ long apprenticeship.

- a. italicize the word *very*
- b. remove the word *very*
- c. underline the word *very*
- d. use a larger type size for the word *very*

44. The new ~~F~~ederal regulations will impose significant costs on municipalities.

- a. italicize the word *Federal*
- b. delete the word *Federal*
- c. underline the word *Federal*
- d. change the *F* in *Federal* to lower case

Questions 45 and 46 are based on the following paragraph.

The universe is 15 billion years old, and the geologic underpinnings of the earth were formed long before the first sea creatures slithered out of the slime. But it is only in the last 6,000 years or so that men have descended into minds to chop and scratch at the earth's crust. Human history is, as Carl Sagan put it, the equivalent of a few seconds in the 15 billion year life of the planet. What alarms those who keep track of the earth's crust is that since 1950 human beings have managed to consume more minerals than were mined in all previous history, a splurge of a millisecond in geologic time that cannot be long repeated without using up the finite riches of the earth.

45. How many lines in the paragraph contain typographical errors?
- a. 4
 - b. 5
 - c. 6
 - d. 7
46. How many typographical errors are there in the first two lines of the paragraph?
- a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
47. Which of the following words is spelled correctly?
- a. transient
 - b. rythm
 - c. procede
 - d. sissors
48. Which of the following words is spelled correctly?
- a. guarante
 - b. hygenic
 - c. harrass
 - d. committal

49. Which of the following words is spelled correctly?
- a. embarrass
 - b. eminently
 - c. assesment
 - d. receit
50. Which of the following words is spelled correctly?
- a. psychology
 - b. goverment
 - c. catagory
 - d. curency
51. Which of the following words is spelled incorrectly?
- a. truely
 - b. emphatically
 - c. conciliatory
 - d. detrimental
52. Which of the following words is spelled incorrectly?
- a. definition
 - b. deceive
 - c. possession
 - d. illegible
53. Which of the following words is spelled incorrectly?
- a. occassion
 - b. indictment
 - c. bureaucracy
 - d. peculiar

Answer Key

Office Practices

1. d	8. c	15. c	22. a
2. c	9. a	16. d	23. b
3. d	10. b	17. b	24. a
4. b	11. c	18. c	25. c
5. c	12. c	19. c	
6. c	13. d	20. a	
7. a	14. d	21. d	

Keyboarding Practices

1. b	15. b	29. b	43. b
2. a	16. a	30. b	44. d
3. b	17. d	31. a	45. c
4. b	18. d	32. b	46. b
5. b	19. a	33. b	47. a
6. a	20. b	34. c	48. d
7. a	21. c	35. a	49. b
8. a	22. b	36. a	50. a
9. d	23. c	37. b	51. a
10. a	24. b	38. d	52. d
11. d	25. a	39. a	53. a
12. c	26. c	40. a	
13. b	27. b	41. c	
14. d	28. d	42. a	

Answers and Explanations

Office Practices

1. The answer is choice d. While the other choices are all important considerations in choosing a database program, the ability of the program to meet the needs of the unit is more important. If a program cannot meet the needs of the unit, there is no point in purchasing it.
2. The answer is choice c. This is the safest choice. Choice a, defending the actions of your supervisor, might sound like a safe option, but you cannot really know why your supervisor decided to assign work in a certain way. It is difficult, and possibly risky, to defend something you do not fully understand. Choice b, encouraging the employee to file a grievance, is a bad idea because you do not want to make the situation more contentious than it already is. Choice d is incorrect because you should not tell the employee you agree with him if you have heard only his side of the story.
3. The answer is choice d. The question says that the employee has made a math error. Given this statement, there is no need to report the error to your supervisor (choice a) or to ask the finance office to launch an investigation (choice c). There is also no valid reason to make the employee look bad by passing the request on to the finance office with the mistake highlighted (choice b). In this situation, the appropriate course of action is to ask the employee to correct the error and resubmit the request.
4. The answer is choice b. Choice a is inappropriate because e-mail is a rather impersonal way to communicate such an important, and potentially upsetting message. Choice c is inappropriate because the employee whose job has been directly affected should receive this news before the rest of the staff. Choice d is wrong because your supervisor has asked you to communicate this message yourself.
5. The answer is choice c. Choice a is incorrect because business-related e-mail should not contain errors in grammar and spelling. Choice b is too general an approach to the problem. The employee in question may not need a course in business writing; he may just think that errors in e-mail are unimportant. Choice d is incorrect because there is no need to involve your supervisor in a problem that you could address yourself, with a little tact and diplomacy.

6. The answer is choice c. All the possible answers have some merit. They all represent worthwhile ways to provide support to your supervisor. But of these four, choice c is the most important. One way to approach a question like this is to ask yourself, "What would happen if I did not do this?" In the case of choice a, your supervisor would be inconvenienced if you did not screen annoying calls. In the case of choice b, nothing serious would result from your not forwarding articles and publications to your supervisor. In the case of choice d, your unit would look bad if correspondence prepared by the staff had problems with clarity and grammar, but again the consequences would not be very serious. The consequences would be serious, however, if you did not accurately transmit instructions from your supervisor to appropriate staff members. So choice c is the best answer.
7. The answer is choice a. As in the previous question, the best approach here is to ask, "What would happen if I did not do this?" If you did not ensure that others know your new address and phone number, it would be impossible for some people to get in touch with you. That would be more serious than the consequences of failing to take the actions described in choices b, c, and d.
8. The answer is choice c. Calling a meeting would give everyone on the staff an opportunity to hear your answers to any questions that might come up. Choice a would not give everyone this opportunity. Choice b would not be effective because sending the same memo again would do nothing to clear up the confusion. Choice d would do nothing to help the staff understand the new procedure.
9. The answer is choice a. Choice a deals with the visitor in the most courteous manner. We are not told which question is more important, the visitor's or the caller's. We also don't know if the conversation can or should be shortened, or if shortening the conversation would mean calling the person back later and wasting time. It's better to finish up with the caller before handling the visitor.
10. The answer is choice b. The key here is that there are ten days to complete the form, your supervisor will be back several days before that, and the form is complex. Because of all these factors, it would be best to look the form over, do any necessary research, and then give the form to your supervisor to complete. Otherwise, you might be making a critical mistake. Choice c is incorrect because it would not be good practice to bother your supervisor's supervisor about the completion of a budgetary form due after your supervisor returns. Choice d is incorrect because it is not good practice to bother your supervisor on vacation about something of this nature.
11. The answer is choice c. The key is the word *immediately*. None of the other choices say they must be done immediately.
12. The answer is choice c. This is the common sense approach to this situation.
13. The answer is choice d. A letter of this type should be addressed to the job applicant and signed by the letter writer. Sending a form letter with no salutation or signature would be disrespectful.

14. The answer is choice d. The best way to handle this situation is to admit the mistake, tell the reader how you plan to correct it, and apologize, if appropriate, for any problems the mistake has caused. Suggesting that the vendor is partly responsible for the error sounds defensive, and it is likely to get a negative response from the recipient of the letter.
15. The answer is choice c. Choice a is jumping to an unwarranted conclusion, and would probably cause additional problems. Choice b may sound like you are trying to be helpful, but it is actually a rather tactless statement that implies you have more status, and that the employee would need your assistance in order to get accepted. Choice d is incorrect because it is too pessimistic an assumption. Choice c is correct because it is the most logical reply, and the best of the four choices.
16. The answer is choice d. Choice a is incorrect because it is too heavy-handed an approach. Choice b is a possibility, although it seems a little insulting. It shouldn't be ruled out completely, however, until you've read the others. Choice c is also very heavy-handed. Choice d is correct because it illustrates an important supervisory principle – that employees should always first be given a chance to explain their actions.
17. The answer is choice b. In this question you are looking for the *least* essential condition. Choice a is incorrect because it would seem to be important to have written instructions when they will be passed on to prevent distortions or misunderstandings. Choices c and d, where there is much detail or the employee has often misinterpreted instructions, would also be cases when written instructions would appear to be very helpful. Of the four, choice b seems to be the safest, as the supervisor would be present to check the quality of the work.
18. The answer is choice c. Choice a is incorrect because the report will be incomplete if you do not include Jason's input. Choice b is incorrect because sending such an e-mail to everyone in the unit implies that many employees are submitting their input late. Choice d makes the same implication.
19. The answer is choice c. This is the common sense approach to the situation. Choice a is incorrect because it may not be possible or appropriate to set your other work aside to meet this new deadline. Choice b is incorrect because it is a negative, uncooperative response to your supervisor's request. Choice d is incorrect because it is a risky course of action. You may miss the deadline and fail to fulfill your other responsibilities as well.
20. The answer is choice a. Apparently, Maria read your message as a command rather than a request. The best way to correct this misunderstanding is to speak to Maria in person.
21. The answer is choice d. The question says that Joan is trying to schedule a meeting to address an *urgent* issue. While your staff meeting is important, it is not urgent, and you may be able to reschedule it. So choice a is incorrect. Choice b is incorrect because it would be inappropriate to go over Joan's head and involve her supervisor in this problem. Choice c is incorrect because your staff meeting is important and you should at least try to reschedule it.

22. The answer is choice a. Since this issue is not work-related and does not involve you directly, it would be best to let the employees resolve the disagreement themselves.
23. The answer is choice b. The best way to inform an employee about such an important matter is to have a face-to-face meeting.
24. The answer is choice a. This is the approach that most closely follows the instructions you have received from your supervisor. Choice b is incorrect because there is no reason to bother your supervisor; she has already given you clear instructions about handling such a situation. Choice c is incorrect because it is doing just the opposite of what you have been told to do. Choice d is incorrect because it is based on a lie.
25. The answer is choice c. Holding a meeting will give everyone a chance to express an opinion and discuss various options for renovating your offices. This is the best way to show the staff that you and your supervisor are genuinely interested in hearing their thoughts on this subject.

Keyboarding Practices

1. The answer is choice b. This is the correct way to type the date at the top of a letter.
2. The answer is choice a. This statement is inaccurate. In the inside address of a letter, room numbers or suite numbers should be typed on the same line as the street address. The other statements are accurate.
3. The answer is choice b. This statement is inaccurate. Only the first word and the important words in the title of a book should be capitalized. The other statements are accurate.
4. The answer is choice b. This statement is inaccurate. It is not permissible to divide contractions. The other statements are accurate.
5. The answer is choice b. Use numerals with abbreviations, no matter what the number is. In choice a, it is incorrect to begin a sentence with a numeral. In choice c, the same format should be used for both numbers. In choice d, the number should be typed as \$328 million.
6. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because compound words should be divided at the point of the compound (book- keeper). Choice c is incorrect because words of one syllable should not be divided. Choice d is incorrect because contractions should not be divided.
7. The answer is choice a. Words indicating region are capitalized (a blizzard hit the Northeast), but words indicating direction are not capitalized (Albany is northeast of Binghamton).
8. The answer is choice a. The last word on a page should not be hyphenated.

9. The answer is choice d. If two numbers in a sentence refer to the same type of thing, they should be formatted in the same way, even if one number is ten or less and the other number is more than ten. In choice d, however, the two numbers refer to different kinds of things, so it is appropriate to spell out “five” and use numerals for “96.” Choice a is incorrect because numerals should be used for the number 27. Choice b is incorrect because a sentence should not begin with a numeral. Choice c is incorrect because two numbers should not be placed next to each other in a sentence.
10. The answer is choice a. When a word such as “northeast” is used as a direction, it is not capitalized. In choice b, “lieutenant” should be capitalized because it is used with a person’s name. In choice c, “gulf coast” should be capitalized because it refers to a specific place. In choice d, “chinese” should be capitalized.
11. The answer is choice d. Words of one syllable should not be divided. The word “fixed” is pronounced as one syllable. Also, it is best to avoid dividing words of five letters or less.
12. The answer is choice c. Contractions should not be divided.
13. The answer is choice b. This question is slightly more complicated than the ones we have seen so far. The best way to answer a question like this is to write “correct” or “incorrect” next to each of the four statements (statements I through IV). Statement I is incorrect because it would not be acceptable to divide the word organization after the first “a.” The preferred way to divide this word would be after the first “i” or after the second “a.” Statement II is correct. Words are commonly divided between double consonants. Statement III is also correct. Compound words should be divided at the point of the compound. Statement IV is incorrect. It would not be acceptable to divide the word development between the “e” and the “l.” The preferred way to divide this word would be after the “l” or after the “p.”
14. The answer is choice d. There is no need to capitalize the words “architect,” “firm,” and “and.”
15. The answer is choice b. Capitalize the first word and the important words in the title of books and movies. In choice a, the word “Capital” should not be capitalized. In choice c, the word “Mayor” should not be capitalized because it is not used with a person’s name. In choice d, the word “governor” should be capitalized because it is used with a person’s name.
16. The answer is choice a. If two numbers in a sentence refer to the same sort of thing, they should be typed the same way (both should be spelled out or both should be typed as numerals). In choice a, however, the two numbers refer to different kinds of things (a date and a number of customers). It is appropriate to use a numeral for the date and to spell out the number of customers. In choice b, 15 should be spelled out. The two numbers in this sentence refer to the same thing, so they should be typed the same way. In choice c, the two numerals should not be placed next to each other in a sentence. In choice d, two hundred should be typed as a numeral (200).

17. The answer is choice d. The enclosure notation should be typed flush left, not flush right.
18. The answer is choice d. Choice a is incorrect because instant messaging abbreviations such as “CUL8R” are too informal for business e-mail. They also may not be understood by some recipients. Choice b is incorrect because all capital letters make a message harder to read. They also create the impression that you are shouting at the reader. Choice c is incorrect because it is acceptable to use a salutation in an e-mail message.
19. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because the same type size should be used throughout a letter. Choice c is incorrect because the heading on the second page of a letter should include the name of the recipient of the letter, not the author. Choice d is incorrect because the salutation should not be typed in all capital letters.
20. The answer is choice b. “Right justified” text is evenly aligned on the right margin.
21. The answer is choice c. A comma is used to set off a long introductory clause. Choice a is incorrect because a colon, not a semicolon, is used to introduce a list. Choice b is incorrect because a sentence that ends with an abbreviation needs only one period. Choice d is incorrect because an apostrophe is not used to form the plural of nouns.
22. The answer is choice b. A virgule or diagonal (/), not an apostrophe, is often used to represent the word “per.”
23. The answer is choice c. For example, I was in the class of '98.
24. The answer is choice b. A cell is a box or rectangle on a table or spreadsheet where a column and a row intersect.
25. The answer is choice a. A spreadsheet is appropriate for presenting numerical data.
26. The answer is choice c. A footer is used to display information that appears at the bottom of every page in a document. For example, a footer is often used for page numbers.
27. The answer is choice b. Kerning is adjusting the space between characters. Kerning usually involves reducing the amount of space between characters in large type, as in headings and signs.
28. The answer is choice d. An icon is a symbol or picture (such as a trash can or folder) that represents a certain function.
29. The answer is choice b. Landscape orientation is the positioning of a page so that information is presented across the long dimension of the paper.
30. The answer is choice b. A mail merge is the process of taking information from a database and inserting it into a form letter or other document in order to customize the document for an individual recipient.
31. The answer is choice a. A hard return is a command used to end a paragraph, to end a short line of text, or to insert a blank line in the text.

32. The answer is choice b. A thesaurus provides synonyms for selected words.
33. The answer is choice b. The word *excepting* should be *accepting*.
34. The answer is choice c. The word *we* should be *us* because it is being used as an object in this sentence. *We* is used as a subject. *Us* is used as an object.
35. The answer is choice a. The word *are* should be *is*. The subject of this sentence, *Each*, is singular, so the verb should be singular.
36. The answer is choice a. The word *their* should be *his* because it refers to just one of the boys.
37. The answer is choice b. The word *it's* should be *its*. The possessive form of *it* is *its*.
38. The answer is choice d. The word *is* should be *was* because the sentence describes something that happened in the past.
39. The answer is choice a. The word *me* should be *I* because it is being used as a subject in this sentence. *I* is used as a subject. *Me* is used as an object.
40. The answer is choice a. The word *Their* should be *There*. *Their* is the possessive form of *they*.
41. The answer is choice c. This proofreading notation means "capitalize."
42. The answer is choice a. This proofreading notation means "insert a comma."
43. The answer is choice b. This proofreading notation means "delete a word or letter."
44. The answer is choice d. This proofreading notation means "change to lower case."
45. The answer is choice c. There are typographical errors in the following lines:
line 1: geologicale and underpinnings
line 3: descended
line 4: earths
line 5: the the, alarm's
line 6: minerals
line 7: cannot
46. The answer is choice b. There are two errors in the first line (geologicale and underpinnings) and none in the second line.
47. The answer is choice a. The correct spellings of the other words are rhythm, proceed, and scissors.
48. The answer is choice d. The correct spellings of the other words are guarantee, hygienic, and harass.
49. The answer is choice b. The correct spellings of the other words are embarrass, assessment, and receipt.
50. The answer is choice a. The correct spellings of the other words are government, category, and currency.
51. The answer is choice a. The correct spelling of this word is truly.
52. The answer is choice d. The correct spelling of this word is illegible.
53. The answer is choice a. The correct spelling of this word is occasion.

