



Civil Service Fast Track Practice Questions

In this document you will find some practice questions that will help you to familiarise yourself with the format of the Civil Service Fast Track Apprentice exercises. This document contains four situational judgement questions. The four questions will be shown first, with the answers presented on the following pages. To make the most of these practice questions, work through the questions on your own before turning to the answers and checking your understanding.

Situational Judgement Questions

Instructions

In this exercise, you will be presented with scenarios to respond to that reflect those you might face in the role of a Fast Track Apprentice. Each question takes the form of a scenario. Each scenario is followed by a set of four response options.

For each scenario you are required to rate how effective each response is on a scale of 1-5. The scale is described below:

- 1 = counterproductive
- 2 = ineffective
- 3 = slightly effective
- 4 = effective
- 5 = highly effective

You are also required to select the option which is the 'Most' effective response and the option which is the 'Least' effective response.



Questions

- 1) You have been working in a department for a few weeks and require assistance on an urgent and important task. Of two less experienced colleagues, it is clear that one is not as organised as the other, since this person does not plan their work and therefore forgets to do things. The more organised colleague is already very busy and so are you. What do you do?

Response		Rate effectiveness from 1-5	Which is 'Most' effective and which is 'Least' effective?
1	Ask the more organised colleague to complete it as you know it will be done quickly and will not cost you any additional time.		
2	Create a high level checklist for the work and ask the less organised colleague to tick off tasks as they complete them.		
3	Ask the more organised colleague to pass some of their work to the less organised colleague so they can focus on your more urgent task.		
4	Take the time to talk to the less organised colleague to find the best method for them to ensure the tasks are completed.		

- 2) It is Friday afternoon and the report you have been working on is currently being reviewed by your line manager. You don't have any other tasks to work on until your next project meeting on Monday morning. What should you do?

Response		Rate effectiveness from 1-5	Which is 'Most' effective and which is 'Least' effective?
1	Use the time to work through some of the online learning and development programmes.		
2	Ask your colleagues if there is anything you can help with for the next few hours.		
3	Email your line manager to let her know you have run out of tasks.		
4	Do some background reading to prepare for your meeting on Monday.		



- 3) You are responsible for arranging regular senior level meetings for the programme you are working on. Before each meeting you must collate materials from each attendee and disseminate these to all other attendees. One individual has failed to supply their information for the third meeting in a row. What should you do?

Response		Rate effectiveness from 1-5	Which is 'Most' effective and which is 'Least' effective?
1	Escalate the matter to your line manager as they are more likely to obtain the information due to their seniority.		
2	Find out why this individual has failed to supply their information on time. Implement new processes to assist the individual for future meetings.		
3	Send out the materials as they are and explain that you are still waiting on a response from one individual.		
4	Attempt to find the information yourself and send it to be reviewed by the individual before disseminating the materials.		

- 4) You are proof reading a document for the Press Office with a deadline of 5pm. You are pretty confident that the document is ready, but as it is for public release, you know that it needs to be perfect. You realise that you will not finish the document before 5pm but there is no-one else available to support you and the Press Office is maintaining that the deadline is 5pm. What should you do?

Response		Rate effectiveness from 1-5	Which is 'Most' effective and which is 'Least' effective?
1	Make sure the document is perfect, only submitting it when you are happy that it is ready; even if this is after the deadline has passed.		
2	Work as hard as you can within the time available to get the document perfect, sending it to the press office just before the deadline.		
3	Contact the press office stressing the importance of pushing the deadline back and asking what the consequences of missing this would be.		
4	Contact the most senior colleague you can find, explain the situation and ask their opinion on the best course of action.		

Answers to the questions are on the next page



Answers

For each of the practice questions, effectiveness ratings from 1-5 and 'Most' and 'Least' effective responses have been chosen by subject matter experts. These are shown below. You may find it useful to compare these to your own choices. If there are differences, consider why one response might be more or less effective than another.

- 1) You have been working in a department for a few weeks and require assistance on an urgent and important task. Of two less experienced colleagues, it is clear that one is not as organised as the other, since this person does not plan their work and therefore forgets to do things. The more organised colleague is already very busy and so are you. What do you do?

Response		Rate effectiveness from 1-5	Which is 'Most' effective and which is 'Least' effective?
1	Ask the more organised colleague to complete it as you know it will be done quickly and will not cost you any additional time.	2	Least
2	Create a high level checklist for the work and ask the less organised colleague to tick off tasks as they complete them.	4	
3	Ask the more organised colleague to pass some of their work to the less organised colleague so they can focus on your more urgent task.	3	
4	Take the time to talk to the less organised colleague to find the best method for them to ensure the tasks are completed.	5	Most

- 2) It is Friday afternoon and the report you have been working on is currently being reviewed by your line manager. You don't have any other tasks to work on until your next project meeting on Monday morning. What should you do?

Response		Rate effectiveness from 1-5	Which is 'Most' effective and which is 'Least' effective?
1	Use the time to work through some of the online learning and development programmes.	4	
2	Ask your colleagues if there is anything you can help with for the next few hours.	4	
3	Email your line manager to let her know you have run out of tasks.	3	Least
4	Do some background reading to prepare for your meeting on Monday.	5	Most



- 3) You are responsible for arranging regular senior level meetings for the programme you are working on. Before each meeting you must collate materials from each attendee and disseminate these to all other attendees. One individual has failed to supply their information for the third meeting in a row. What should you do?

Response		Rate effectiveness from 1-5	Which is 'Most' effective and which is 'Least' effective?
1	Escalate the matter to your line manager as they are more likely to obtain the information due to their seniority.	4	
2	Find out why this individual has failed to supply their information on time. Implement new processes to assist the individual for future meetings.	5	Most
3	Send out the materials as they are and explain that you are still waiting on a response from one individual.	3	
4	Attempt to find the information yourself and send it to be reviewed by the individual before disseminating the materials.	2	Least

- 4) You are proof reading a document for the Press Office with a deadline of 5pm. You are pretty confident that the document is ready, but as it is for public release, you know that it needs to be perfect. You realise that you will not finish the document before 5pm but there is no-one else available to support you and the Press Office is maintaining that the deadline is 5pm. What should you do?

Response		Rate effectiveness from 1-5	Which is 'Most' effective and which is 'Least' effective?
1	Make sure the document is perfect, only submitting it when you are happy that it is ready; even if this is after the deadline has passed.	2	Least
2	Work as hard as you can within the time available to get the document perfect, sending it to the press office just before the deadline.	3	
3	Contact the press office stressing the importance of pushing the deadline back and asking what the consequences of missing this would be.	4	Most
4	Contact the most senior colleague you can find, explain the situation and ask their opinion on the best course of action.	3	