FireFighterPrep
Comprehensive Guide to Canadian Fire Service Exams
Judgment Section

Framework for Analysis
It is important to have a framework for how you will approach judgment questions during an examination process. You must know how to establish hierarchies in order to prioritize activities and handle conflicting job requirements. Below is a possible value hierarchy that can be used to resolve difficult decisions.

1) Protection of Life and Limb.
   This is a firefighter's first priority and supersedes all other decisions. This includes the lives of fellow firefighters as well.

2) Obeying Orders in Emergency Situations
   Firefighters have to be able to follow instructions even though they may not fully understand the justification for them.

3) Protection of Property
   This is a primary duty of firefighters.

4) Performing Other Required Duties
   Some of the many other duties of lesser priority which firefighters have to perform include training, maintenance and public events.

Emergency Response Priorities

Fire departments will train you to effectively manage emergency scenes by working through a list of priorities. Here is a general framework of operations you should be considering while responding to emergency calls.

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<tr>
<th>1) Create a Safe Work Area</th>
<th>There is no point tending to any of the following steps if you are going to be killed or seriously injured. If you are in serious danger, either get to a safe area or do something to address that danger. Creating this safe area includes getting victims who are in immediate danger to safety as well.</th>
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<td>2) Call for any needed assistance</td>
<td>This sometimes has to occur as Step 1. If you act before calling for help, or if something happens to you, help may not arrive. Calling for proper assistance is extremely important. Possible providers of assistance could include fire personnel, police, ambulance, or other parties such as tow truck operators.</td>
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3) Treat life threatening injuries
You should always prioritize medical assistance to those that need it the most. While you are treating individuals you should prioritize ailments as your CPR and First Aid training dictates. Treat the most serious threats first.

4) Treat other injuries
As the emergency situation is brought under control (Step 1) and serious injuries are tended to, the next step is to provide medical treatment and transport of the injured to hospitals as required.

5) Restore order, assist police
After the primary concerns of eliminating the danger and treating the injured have been accomplished, firefighters should then assist in restoring order to the scene by helping other agencies such as the police in whatever way they can.

First Aid and CPR Minor Review

Before applying to the fire department you should be up-to-date in your First Aid and CPR training. Things you should be aware of include treating collapses and non-responsive victims. The A, B, C’s of CPR are outlined below.

1) Airway
Ensure the airway is unobstructed.

2) Breathing
Check to see if the victim is breathing.

3) Circulation
Check to see that the blood is flowing (pulse)

After these priorities are taken care of you should then check for any other medical concerns the victim may have, including broken bones, injured spine, shock, etc.

Interpersonal Relations

As a firefighter you will be working in a team environment. You will have to count on your co-workers in life and death situations, and they will have to count on you. Respect is essential among firefighters. It must be maintained between firefighters of different ranks and between firefighters with different levels of knowledge and experience.
The types of questions outlined below are subjective and often difficult to answer. Make sure you review the answer explanations after you have completed the test.

**Fire Extinguishers Classes**

**Class A** – Primarily used on materials such as paper, wood, and cloth which are combustible. Typically water or dry chemical filled.

**Class B** – Primarily used on gases or petroleum products such as propane, or gasoline.

**Class C** – Used on the same materials as Class A and Class B, but can also be used on fires involving electric current as the extinguishing agent is nonconductive. You should shut off the power before confronting an electrical fire.

**Class D** – Used on materials such as combustible metals and extremely volatile solids including magnesium, potassium and sodium. Special extinguishing agents are required to put out fires in this class.

Fires and fire extinguishers tend to fall into two or more classes. It is important to have a versatile extinguisher that can handle multiple classes of fires. If an extinguisher is rated A, B, C you can use it on combustible materials, gases, liquids, and petroleum products even if there is the threat of an electric current. If the extinguisher was only labeled A, B and you attempted to use it with an electrical fire, you could be injured. Know the types of extinguishers that exist, and know the conditions that are present when you attempt to put out a fire.

**Performance Capability Questions**

You will be asked to rate how well you would be able to carry on your professional duties based on some of the traumatic events you will be exposed to as a firefighter. As with the Distraught Response Questions, no one answer will cause you to fail the exam. However, problems may arise with your pattern of answer choices.

As a firefighter you will have to continue performing your duties no matter how distraught the situation makes you. If you continually answer questions of this nature by stating you would be unable to continue performing your duties, you will not pass this examination. Answers should be weighted towards being able to perform your duties. There is little use in hiring someone to be a firefighter if they are incapable of performing the necessary tasks. If you found yourself answering these types of questions with low rankings, or towards the middle, firefighting may not be the career for you. If you answered the questions with certainty and confidence (7 – 9) then you are in good shape to proceed.
Confidence Analysis

You will be asked to evaluate your confidence in decisions you might have to make during emergency situations. In this type of exam, answer patterns are far more important than individual answers.

Think about these questions logically. You will be asked to make a decision and then be asked how you feel about your decision. If you answer that you aren’t confident about the decision, then you are admitting that you guessed at the answer. That means that if you got the above answer correct, it was by luck, not by knowledge.

Another assumption that can be inferred if you answer these questions with little confidence is that you are indecisive and incapable of standing behind your choice of direction.

All of your answer choices should demonstrate a high degree of confidence in your decision. If you come across one or two questions for which you really did not know the answer, and so guessed at it, then answering without confidence is acceptable. This will demonstrate your honesty. However, the vast majority of the answers however should demonstrate confidence.

Distraught Response Questions

During your testing you will be questioned on how you would feel while dealing with various emergency situations. You will be asked to rate your response, and you will be judged on the consistency of your answers. All of the questions relate to a similar experience, and should have been scored by you with similar answers.

- Dealing with death
- Dealing with minor injuries
- Dealing with major injuries
- Dealing with drowning
- Dealing with being unable to rescue a victim

Your specific answers aren’t important, but your pattern of response is. For example, if you answered the questions below the following way there may be a problem with your truthfulness.

1) Seeing a dead elderly man.  3 7
2) Seeing a dead teenage girl.  5 8
3) Seeing a dead 40-year-old husband.  8 8
4) Seeing a dead baby.  9 9

The answers are not consistent. If you found your answers vary by three or more numbers, then you may not pass the actual test. The numbers in bold to the right would
be a more appropriate response. All of these answers are very closely rated. Once again, we stress that the particular answer is less important than your pattern of choices.

There will be too many of these types of questions to memorize in a testing environment. The best option is to think about whatever the situation is and ANSWER THE QUESTIONS HONESTLY.