

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

SPECIAL AGENT – SAMPLE PHASE I TESTS



BIODATA INVENTORY DIRECTIONS

This inventory contains 40 questions about yourself. You are to read each question and select the answer that best describes you from the choices provided. Answer the questions honestly; doing otherwise will negatively affect your score.

Look at the example questions below.

How did you typically prepare for final exams in college?

- A. Studied a few hours every day across several weeks
- B. Studied many hours over a few days
- C. Studied the entire night before each exam
- D. Did not study

How often are your library books overdue?

- A. Always
- B. Often
- C. Rarely
- D. Never
- E. I never take books out of the library

To what extent have you enjoyed being given a surprise party?

- A. Not at all
- B. To a slight extent
- C. To a moderate extent
- D. To a great extent
- E. I have never been given a surprise party

In the past year, how many times have you thrown something when you were angry?

- A. 0 times
- B. 1 - 2 times
- C. 3 - 4 times
- D. 5 - 6 times
- E. 7 or more

Which of the following strategies do you typically use to complete a large project at work or school?

- A. Develop a systematic plan for completing each portion of the project
- B. Create a general strategy for completing the project that doesn't focus on the specific details
- C. Address project issues as they occur without creating a strategy
- D. Seek input from others on the best way to approach the project

In each of these examples, you would select the answer that best describes what you honestly take pride in with regard to your work. You would completely blacken the oval corresponding to your answer selection (A, B, C, D, or E).

You will record your answer to each question on the separate machine readable answer sheet in the section marked Biodata Inventory. Be sure to fill in the circles you select completely with dark marks. As you are completing this inventory, please do not write in the test booklet.

You will have 30 minutes to complete this inventory.

LOGICAL REASONING TEST DIRECTIONS

To answer each question on the logic-based reasoning test, select the answer representing the only valid statement that can be made from the information contained in the paragraph. To identify the correct conclusion, it is essential that you use **ONLY** the information provided in the content paragraph.

Record your answer to each question on the machine-readable answer sheet. Make sure to completely fill in the circle that corresponds with your answer. You should provide only one answer for each question. Please **do not** write in the test booklet.

You have 90 minutes to read the questions and provide your responses. Do not start until I have instructed you to do so. I will give you a warning when you have one hour, 30 minutes, and 5 minutes remaining to complete the logical based reasoning test questions.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Question 1

Eventually, most citizens are summoned to serve on jury duty. If a government employee is asked to serve on a jury, official court leave is authorized with no charge to leave or loss of pay. Also, official court leave is always granted if the employee is summoned to appear as a witness in a judicial proceeding in which the government is a party. No fees rendered for service can be retained by the employee. Rather, they must be turned in to the agency in which he or she is employed. However, some payments designated as expenses by the courts, such as travel reimbursements, may be kept.

From the information given above, it can be validly concluded that official court leave

- A) is not granted to individuals other than government employees who are summoned to serve as jurors or to appear as witnesses in judicial proceedings in which the government is a party
- B) sometimes entails retention by government employees of fees received from the court for services rendered as jurors
- C) is never accompanied by reimbursement for expenses incurred by government employees while serving as witnesses in judicial proceedings in which the government is a party
- D) never entails loss of pay by government employees who are summoned to serve as jurors or to appear as witnesses in judicial proceedings in which the government is a party
- E) is not always granted to government employees who are summoned to appear as witnesses in judicial proceedings in which the government is a party

The correct response is D. The information in the passage establishes two conditions under which court leave is authorized for government employees without charge to leave or loss of pay: (1) if the employee is asked to serve on a jury and (2) if the employee is summoned to appear as a witness in a judicial proceeding in which the government is a party. Response D reiterates this statement in negative form: *Official court leave never entails loss of pay by government employees who are summoned to serve as jurors or to appear as witnesses in judicial proceedings in which the government is a party.*

Response A is incorrect because the passage gives no information about court leave policies for non-government employees.

Response B is incorrect because it contradicts the information in the passage, which states that no fees rendered for service as a juror can be retained by a government employee.

Response C is incorrect because it contradicts the information in the passage, which states that some payments designated as expenses by the courts, such as travel reimbursements, may be kept by a government employee.

Response E is incorrect because it is contrary to the information in the passage, which establishes that official court leave is always granted to government employees if they are asked to serve on a jury or if they are summoned as a witness in a judicial proceeding in which the government is a party.

Question # 1 is an example of an easy question in which three of the incorrect response choices contradict the information in the passage, while one incorrect response (response A) is based on unwarranted assumptions about a set of individuals that is not discussed in the passage. More difficult errors of reasoning are illustrated in the next two sample questions.

Question 2

Whenever an investigator is involved in an intelligence operation, he or she is required to examine multiple hypotheses, thus avoiding the quick pursuit of only one path, which could turn out to be incorrect. In a recent terrorism case, which thus far has proved to be exceptionally complex and remains unresolved, several hypotheses were initially generated about the suspects, conspirators, motives, and implementation of the terrorist act. Most of these hypotheses have been disproved.

From the information given above, it can be validly concluded that

- A) in any intelligence operation, an investigator who generates more than one hypothesis is more likely than not to succeed
- B) at least one of the hypotheses generated for the terrorism case mentioned above is not likely to be disproved
- C) if an investigator is not required to examine multiple hypotheses about a case, then he or she is not involved in an intelligence operation
- D) whenever an investigator fails to solve a case, it can be assumed that, most probably, he/she failed to generate more than one hypothesis about the case
- E) there are at least some investigative operations, other than those concerned with intelligence, that do not require the investigator to form more than one hypothesis

This question presents two aspects. One is the mandate to generate multiple hypotheses whenever an investigator conducts an intelligence operation. The second aspect is the interplay of possibilities and probabilities relative to the forming of hypotheses. The correct response, C, deals with the first aspect, while three of the four incorrect response choices deal with the second aspect. In the correct response, C, the inference (formally called a *contra positive inference*) represents a negative equivalent of the mandate found in the first sentence of the passage. The first sentence states an antecedent condition ("whenever an investigator is involved in an intelligence operation") from which follows a consequent condition ("he or she is required to examine multiple hypotheses"). If we transpose and negate these two conditions, as is done in C, we obtain an equivalent statement, in which the truth value of the original statement is retained.

Responses A, B, and D are based on unwarranted probabilistic inferences about (1) the likelihood that an investigator who generates more than one hypothesis will succeed (response A), the likelihood that at least one hypothesis will not be disproved in the terrorism case (response B), and the likelihood that an investigator who fails to solve a case will have failed to generate more than one hypothesis about it (response D). The passage provides no quantifying information from which such probabilistic inferences can be made. It only alludes to the *possibility* that a single hypothesis may be incorrect, which cannot be extrapolated into probabilities. In the context of probabilities, you should note that this test will not contain quantitative problems. You need to be alert only to verbal quantifying expressions such as "more likely than not," "unlikely," "most probably," etc.

Finally, in the case of response E, it is incorrect because the passage provides no information at all about investigative operations that may fall outside the set of intelligence operations.

Question 3

All forensic soil examiners compare the color, texture, and composition of two or more soils to determine if they share a common origin. Suppose, for example, that the suspect in a murder claims that soil recovered from her shovel-which actually came from a grave that she dug-was from her garden. The garden will be eliminated as the source of the soil on the shovel if and only if this soil is found to be dissimilar to soil samples taken from the garden.

From the information given above, it CANNOT be validly concluded that

- A) upon analysis and comparison, the soil samples taken from the shovel and the garden of the above-mentioned suspect will be dissimilar if the grave was

- not dug in the garden
- B) analysts who are not involved in the comparison of soil samples are not forensic soil examiners
 - C) if, as a result of analysis and comparison, the suspect's garden is confirmed as the source of the soil on the shovel, then the soil samples taken from the garden and the shovel were found to be similar
 - D) if an analyst is involved in the comparison of soil samples, then he or she will be classified as a forensic soil examiner
 - E) if the soil samples taken from the shovel and the garden of the above-mentioned suspect are similar, then it can be assumed that the grave was dug in the garden

This question is an example of a difficult question. In the first place, it asks you to identify the only response choice that *does not* follow from the given information, which in and of itself makes the question slightly more difficult to analyze. Nonetheless, the difficulty of the question stems primarily from the logical complexity of its response choices. (If you are asking yourself why such complex reasoning must be included in the test, please bear in mind that the reason is, exclusively, relevance to the job. The information you will have to analyze on the job, including that found in legal manuals, will be generally as complex as this question, and frequently more so.)

The correct response is D. It represents the only fallacy found among the response choices. The fallacy is formally called a converse fallacy. The passage states that *all forensic soil examiners compare the color, texture, and composition of two or more soils*. From this information nothing can be concluded about whether or not there are analysts other than forensic soil examiners who carry out such comparisons. The information in the passage tells us only that the set of *forensic soil examiners* is entirely included in the set of *analysts who carry out soil comparisons* but tells us nothing about the composition or extension of the second set.

Response A is not a fallacy. The passage states (1) that the suspect's garden will be eliminated as the source of soil on the shovel if and only if this soil is found to be dissimilar to soil samples taken from the garden and (2) that the soil on the shovel came from a grave that the suspect dug. It follows that the soil samples will be dissimilar if the grave was not dug in the garden.

In the context of this question and this response, it is pertinent to note the use of the biconditional *if and only if*. A biconditional statement is defined as one in which the conditions included in the statement are interchangeable without affecting the truth value of the statement. Thus, to say that *the suspect's garden will be eliminated as the source of soil on the shovel if and only if this soil is found to be dissimilar to soil samples taken from the garden* is the same as saying that *the soil on the shovel will be found to be dissimilar to soil samples taken from the garden if and only if the garden is eliminated as the source of soil on the shovel*. This interchangeability of conditions permits the inference in response C: The statement in the passage establishes that *the suspect's garden will be eliminated as the source of soil on the shovel if and only if this soil is found to be dissimilar to soil samples taken from the garden*. It follows that *if the garden is confirmed as the source of the soil on the shovel, then this soil must be similar to soil samples taken from the garden*. In symbols, when we say *p if and only if q*, we are saying both that *if p then q and if q then p*. Hence, if we negate *p*, the negation of *q* must follow.

Both response B and response E illustrate the same type of inference that was illustrated before in question # 2 (Response C) except that, in question # 3, response B illustrates the inference (formally called a contra positive) in the context of sets, while response E illustrates it in the context of a conditional statement. These are discussed immediately below.

Relative to response B, the passage states that all forensic soil examiners analyze and compare soil samples. The transposed negative equivalent of this statement follows necessarily: analysts who are not involved in the comparison of soil samples are not forensic soil examiners.

Relative to response E, it represents the transposed negative equivalent of the statement in response A and hence retains the same truth value. Response A states that *if the grave was not dug in the garden then the soil samples taken from the shovel and the garden will be dissimilar*. Response E transposes and negates these conditions: *if the soil samples taken from the shovel and the garden are similar, then it can be assumed that the grave was dug in the garden*.

SITUATIONAL JUDGMENT TEST DIRECTIONS

Directions for the Situational Judgment Test are as follows:

This test is called the Situational Judgment Test. Each question consists of a description of a problem situation and a list of actions that a person might take in that situation.

Your task is to rate the effectiveness of each of these actions using a 1-7 rating scale, where 7 is highly effective and 1 is completely ineffective. Imagine that you are in the situation and use the scale to indicate how effective or ineffective you believe each action to be.

Look at the example question below. Notice that the question consists of the description of a problem situation followed by a list of four potential actions.

Example:

Your direct subordinate, who is returning to school full-time in three weeks, has a very negative attitude toward the company. She was counseled about it before, but her negative attitude continues. She is now beginning to be late for work and is showing disrespect to you and other staff. How effective is each of the following actions you could take?

- a. Tell her that she is still an employee for three more weeks and can still be fired.
- b. Dock some of her pay.
- c. Try to get to the bottom of her bad attitude; find out if there are any problems that can be dealt with.
- d. Counsel her one last time but ensure her that next time serious actions will be taken.

Indicate each action's level of effectiveness according to the scale below:

Effectiveness of the Action		
Ineffective action	Moderately effective action	Very effective action
The action is likely to lead to a bad outcome.	The action is likely to lead to a passable or mixed outcome.	The action is likely to lead to a good outcome.
-- Low -- 1 2	-- Moderate -- 3 4 5	-- High -- 6 7

Indicate your effectiveness rating on the scannable answer sheet provided. See the instructions below for filling in the circles on the answer form. As you are taking the test, please **do not** write in the test booklet. Be sure to fill in the circles you select completely with dark black marks.

Make your ratings carefully. But don't take too long on any question. Make sure that you fill in each rating for the correct question **number** and action **letter**.

You will have 45 minutes to complete this test.

How to Fill in the Circles on the Answer Form

In the example below, exactly one circle has been filled in for each action:

- a. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Action a has been rated as extremely effective.
- b. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Action b has been rated as completely ineffective.
- c. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Action c has been rated as being low-to-moderate in effectiveness.
- d. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ Action d has been rated as completely ineffective.

You may use the same rating value for more than one action. In the example above, actions **b** and **d** have the same rating value.

Sample Questions

5. You are a first-line supervisor at a manufacturing firm. Your department has suffered significant employee theft. A subordinate becomes emotional, to the point of crying, while you are interviewing her regarding the thefts. How effective is each of the following actions you could take?
- a. Inform the employee that I am her friend and will help her through this situation.
 - b. Ask the employee if she would like to take a break before continuing with the interview.
 - c. Ask the employee if she has any information regarding the thefts.
 - d. Tell the employee that it's in her best interests to confess now.
6. You are assigned as the manager of a complex project coordinating the work of eight different teams. Four of the teams are on schedule to meet their deadlines. The other four have fallen behind and are in danger of missing their deadlines due to cutbacks in staffing levels. It is important that the work products from the eight teams stay on schedule. How effective is each of the following actions you could take?
- Reassign the team leaders to help the project get back on track.
 - a. Talk to the teams that have fallen behind and find out what I can do to help.
 - b. Request overtime for the four teams that have fallen behind.
 - c. Inform upper management that the staffing cutbacks are causing setbacks in my project.
7. A new employee joined your advertising agency as a highly qualified research analyst. During a very important meeting with a group of clients, your supervisor asked this person to take meeting notes. After the meeting, the employee approaches you visibly upset and angry because he feels he has better things to do than take meeting notes. He then makes inappropriate comments about the supervisor. How effective is each of the following actions you could take?
- Reassure the analyst that the supervisor and company value him as an employee.
 - a. Apologize to the new employee on behalf of my supervisor.
 - b. Advise the employee to do as directed by the supervisor.
 - c. Explain to the employee that his comments are inappropriate and unprofessional.
8. You have been assigned to a major company project. Part of your responsibility includes identifying two workers who have specific skills important to the project. John has an aggressive and combative personality but comes highly recommended. Jill is also highly competent, but will not work with John. You believe that convincing both John and Jill to work on the project is essential for its success. How effective is each of the following actions you could take?
- Entice John and Jill with an incentive upon successful completion of the project.
 - a. Meet separately with each individual and explain why they are needed for the successful completion of the project.
 - b. Have both individuals work on their specific tasks without getting involved with each other.
 - c. Assign one person to the job and find a replacement for the other.

9. You are asked to manage a task force for a special project. The plan lists all tasks that must be completed in 3 months. Although you have a large budget and are extremely experienced in this type of work, the 10 people assigned to the task force do not have much experience. How effective is each of the following actions you could take?

- . Handle all of the critical tasks myself and minimize the participation of the 10 members.
 - a. Quickly arrange for training in the skills necessary for them to be successful in this project.
 - b. Meet with the task force and determine the strengths and weaknesses of each member. Assign each member a task. Schedule periodic reviews to determine if the project is on schedule.
 - c. Because of the time constraints, immediately break the task force into groups and tell everyone to get to work, evaluating progress as I go.

10. You just promoted your boss's niece, because she was most qualified, to a position that many people wanted. Three of these people complain to you that you showed favoritism. They threaten to report you to the corporate office unless you change your mind. You are scheduled for a promotion, but it will be postponed for at least four months if there is an official inquiry. How effective is each of the following actions you could take?

- . Stick by my decision. Explain to the group that the best person was selected for the promotion.
 - a. Talk to my supervisor about the situation and seek his guidance on how to handle the complainants given my upcoming promotion. Do not change my selection.
 - b. Have individual meetings with the complainants to discuss my different perceptions of the promotion and explain the reasons for my selection.
 - c. File a complaint against the complainants for threatening to interfere with the promotion.

In each of these examples, you would rate the how effective or ineffective you believe each action to be if you are that person in that situation.