



STATECIVILSERVICE

# Sample Questions for Series 8500 – Office Support Exam (OSE)

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**This booklet contains SAMPLE QUESTIONS ONLY.**

None of the questions in this booklet are actual test questions. They are samples and are not intended to cover all topics, which may appear on the test.

**Studying this booklet WILL NOT NECESSARILY IMPROVE YOUR TEST SCORE.**

July 2013

Preparing for the Office Support Exam

# Office Support Exam (OSE)

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## What kinds of questions are on the test?

This test measures basic abilities and skills common to clerical and administrative support jobs. The specific areas covered by the test questions are described below.

### 1. PROCESSING INFORMATION AND DATA: 35 QUESTIONS

This part of the test is designed to assess attention to detail. The questions used to do this are based on important tasks that are performed by office and administrative support positions. One of these is a coding task. These questions will be based on information in a table or chart. You must use this information to find the correct code for describing specific sets of circumstances contained in the test questions.

#### Sample Question 1

##### Physical Characteristics Codes

| Gender | Code | Height             | Code | Weight               | Code |
|--------|------|--------------------|------|----------------------|------|
| Male   | 20   | less than 5'0"     | A1   | less than 100 lbs.   | 100  |
| Female | 30   | 5'0" through 5'5"  | A2   | 100 through 150 lbs. | 200  |
|        |      | 5'6" through 5'11" | B1   | 151 through 175 lbs. | 300  |
|        |      | 6'0" through 6'3"  | B2   | 176 through 200 lbs. | 400  |
|        |      | greater than 6'3"  | C1   | more than 200 lbs.   | 500  |

1. What is the code for a man who is 6'1" tall and weighs 170 pounds?
  - A. 30 – B2 – 400
  - B. 20 – B2 – 400
  - C. 20 – B2 – 300
  - D. 20 – C1 – 300

From the table, in the column labeled **Gender** is the entry "Male" followed by the code "20". The height of 6'1" falls between 6'0" and 6'3" and in the column labeled **Height**, this entry is followed by the code "B2". Finally, the weight of "170 pounds" falls between 151 and 175 pounds. In the column labeled **Weight**, that entry is followed by the code "300". Therefore, the correct code for this question is "20 – B2 – 300", which is the answer choice indicated by the letter "C" for Sample Question #1.

## **Sample Question #2**

Other questions used to assess attention to detail are based on sorting and filing tasks.

2. Arrange the following items in alphabetical order for filing:
1. Brown, John
  2. Davis, Paul
  3. Abbott, Ray
  4. Ellis, Thomas
- A. 3, 1, 2, 4  
B. 3, 2, 1, 4  
C. 3, 4, 1, 2  
D. 3, 2, 4, 1

First, determine the order in which the names would be correctly filed. Then, by substituting the number designating each name, identify the corresponding sequence of numbers from the choices provided in the question. In the example:

Abbott, Ray (numbered 3) would be filed first.  
Brown, John (numbered 1) would be filed second.  
Davis, Paul (numbered 2) would be filed third.  
Ellis, Thomas (numbered 4) would be filed fourth.

Therefore, the correct answer to sample question #2 is "3, 1, 2, 4", which is the answer choice indicated by the letter "A" for Sample Question #2.

## **Sample Question #3**

3. Arrange the following numerical values in ascending numerical order for filing:
1. 7523
  2. 7601
  3. 7574
  4. 7392
- A. 4, 3, 1, 2  
B. 1, 3, 4, 2  
C. 4, 1, 3, 2  
D. 2, 4, 1, 3

First, determine the order in which the numerical values would be correctly ordered from lowest to highest value. Then, by substituting the number designating each of the numerical values, identify the corresponding sequence of numbers from the choices provided in the question. In the example:

- 7392 (numbered 4) would be filed first.
- 7523 (numbered 1) would be filed second.
- 7574 (numbered 3) would be filed third.
- 7601 (numbered 2) would be filed fourth.

Therefore, the correct answer to sample question #2 is "4, 1, 3, 2", which is the answer choice indicated by the letter "C" for Sample Question #3.

### **Sample Question #4**

4. When filing in alphabetical order, Jones, John would be correctly filed between:
- A. Jones, Julie and Keller, Sarah
  - B. Hunter, Stanley and Lawrence, David
  - C. Johnson, Sandy and Jones, James
  - D. Baker, Anthony and Jamison, Keith

For this sample question, the pair of names between which "Jones, John" can be correctly filed is choice "B", "Hunter, Stanley and Lawrence, David". In answer choice "A", the name "Jones, John" alphabetically comes before the first name of the pair. In answer choices "C" and "D", the name "Jones, John" alphabetically falls after the second name of each pair.

## **2. KNOWLEDGE OF BASIC WRITING CONCEPTS: 35 QUESTIONS**

This part of the test is designed to assess the knowledge and skills needed for effective written communication. The types of questions used to do this require you to recognize common writing errors and to determine the best choice for completing a sentence.

### **Sample Questions #5, #6 and #7**

Some questions in this part of the test require identification of errors in sentences. The errors you may find involve mistakes in grammar, such as subject/verb disagreements and incomplete sentences.

Use the key below to answer the three questions that follow.

#### **KEY**

- A = The sentence is grammatically correct.**
- B = The sentence is grammatically incorrect.**

- 5. The supervisor who reported the incident to Human Resources.
- 6. Several of the computations in the budget proposal was based on inaccurate assumptions.
- 7. Prepare a written response to the letter for the director's review.

Sample Question #5 is grammatically incorrect, because it is not a complete sentence. It does not contain both a subject and a verb. Therefore, the correct answer to this question is answer choice "B".

The correct answer to Sample Question #6 is also "B". This is because it contains a subject/verb disagreement. The plural subject, "several" requires the plural verb "were", not the singular "was".

Sample Question #7 is grammatically correct, so the correct answer choice for this question is answer choice "A".

### **Sample Questions #8 and #9**

Some questions in this part of the test require that you select the correct word to complete a sentence, which has a missing word.

8. That street is always flooded when it rains \_\_\_\_\_ much.
- A. to
  - B. too
  - C. two
9. It is important to find out \_\_\_\_\_ the office will be open on Saturday.
- A. whether
  - B. weather

The correct answer for Sample Question #8 is answer choice "B" (too). The sentence is about flooding that results from an excessive amount of rain and "too" means "to a higher degree than is desirable".

The correct answer for Sample Question #9 is answer choice "A" (whether). The word "whether" expresses a choice between alternatives. In the sample question, the alternative is implied. More formal expression of the idea would read ". . . whether or not the office will be open . . ." or ". . . whether the office will be open or closed on . . .".

### **3. READING AND FOLLOWING WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS: 30 QUESTIONS**

Clerical and administrative support jobs often require reading written materials to obtain information needed to perform important job tasks. This part of the test is designed to assess the ability to read, understand, and interpret written materials and follow written instructions. The questions to assess these abilities will be based on reading passages.

### **Sample Questions #10 and #11**

Use the information in the reading passage below to answer the questions that follow.

## Department Correspondence

To ensure all written materials, which leave the office, are in a standard format, management has created the following guidelines to be followed for all written information sent outside the Department. All letters from management or employees must be on Department letterhead. Standard notices and information brochures must have the Department logo near the top of the cover page. Individual letters should be personally signed, but standard notices and public announcement bulletins may be from the Department in general or may have a computer-generated signature. If the person who is sending correspondence is not available to sign a letter when it is completed, someone else may sign that person's name. In this case, the signer must also include his or her initials at the bottom right of the signature. However, no one should sign a letter for another employee of the Department without prior consent.

10. According to the reading passage, the Department logo is required to be on:
- A. all letters from management or employees.
  - B. information brochures and standard notices.
  - C. any kind of correspondence that has a cover page.
  - D. any letter that has a computer generated signature.
11. According to the reading passage, under which of the following circumstances is the use of a computer-generated signature acceptable?
- A. When the person who is sending a letter is not available to sign a letter.
  - B. When the written material that is being sent is from the Department in general.
  - C. When the written material being sent is a standard notice or public announcement bulletin.
  - D. Only when the person who is sending a letter is unavailable and has not given consent for another to sign his or her name.

The correct answer to Sample Question #10 is choice "B". Within the reading passage, the information requested is contained in the sentence: "Standard notices and information brochures must have the Department logo near the top of the cover page." There are no other references to the logo in the reading passage, so none of the other answer choices can possibly be correct.

The correct answer to Sample Question #11 is choice "C". The information in the reading passage regarding computer-generated signatures is contained in the sentence: ". . . standard notices and public announcement bulletins may be from the Department in general or may have a computer generated signature." There are no other references to these kinds of signatures in the reading passage, so none of the other answer choices can possibly be correct.

The best way to approach these types of questions is to carefully read the entire passage first, before reading the questions. Then read each question and go back to the reading passage to read it again and locate the specific information requested by the question. Then you can eliminate from consideration those answer choices that are clearly incorrect or are true statements but are not the answer to the question that was asked.