



INTERVIEW TIPS



WHAT IS IT?

South Metro Fire interviews are designed to be fair, objective, and focused on specific competencies for firefighters and firefighter/paramedics. The oral board interviews are conducted for both ranks at the same time, and the highest-scoring candidates are selected overall, regardless of rank. The candidates are asked standard interview questions including scenario-based questions that measure 5-7 competencies. The candidate is evaluated by multiple panel members using an established scoring criteria. The strongest responses are clearly articulated, thorough, and aligned with the department's values.

The competencies assessed help determine how well a candidate aligns within our culture. We take the selection of our recruits very seriously. Our line personnel work 48-hour shifts together, and we are committed to building a team of professionals who support one another and build long, successful careers together.

WHAT COMPETENCIES MAY BE EVALUATED?

- Oral communication skills
- Decision making under pressure
- Conflict resolution
- Interpersonal skills
- Ethical judgement and integrity
- Teamwork
- Customer service
- And many more!

HOW TO PREPARE

1. Participate in mock interviews in front of multiple people similar to the oral board setting.
2. Choose individuals who will provide honest, constructive feedback.
3. Interview with a variety of people to gain diverse perspectives.
 - Including people you do not know well can be helpful, as they can provide an objective, outsider's perspective.
 - Candidates should ask feedback questions to their mock interview panel, such as: Did I answer the question, did you understand the scenario given, how was my communication and eye contact?
4. Practice techniques to help manage nerves and reduce stress during the interview.
5. Most importantly, be yourself!
 - SMFR panel members can often tell when responses are not genuine, so it's important to answer authentically rather than simply saying what you think they want to hear.

HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR RESPONSES

When preparing your interview responses, it is helpful to use the STAR method below. This approach allows you to deliver a clear, structured answer that helps interviewers understand your experience, the context of the situation, and the character traits you demonstrated.



PREPARE
Listen to the question
Think of an event
Plan & organize in a few seconds
Breathe!



SITUATION
(20%)
Provide context and background.
"On a house fire..."



TASK
(10%)
Describe the problem and challenges.
"My assignment was..."



ACTION
(60%)
Explain what you did and how.
"I took initiative by..."



RESULTS
(10%)
State outcome, impact, or lesson.
"We successfully contained the fire..."