

Test Taking Tips

Always select the best choice listed, even if more than one seems good to you. Be sure to read all answers before deciding your final answer. Don't focus on a choice that is not given to you. Don't get distracted by thinking of other possible responses that are not among the choices presented. Don't get stuck on the idea that you want to combine two responses. Show your judgment by picking the one answer that, by itself, is better than any other answer, by itself.

Prepare yourself physically and mentally for your exam as you would prepare yourself for any special assignment that requires concentration. Get the amount of sleep that will leave you most alert. It's also a good idea to eat a nutritious and hearty meal to help you stay focused throughout your exam. Unusual changes in your routine may cause you problems during your exam. For example, consuming more caffeine than usual may make you jittery; less than usual may leave you listless. Try to remain calm and relaxed before and during your exam. If you feel anxious, take a few moments to calm yourself down.

Here are some additional tips to help you. These simple procedures will help you avoid marking the wrong answer when you know the right one.

- 1. Listen to the instructions.** Before you begin the exam, it is important that you read and/or listen to all instructions carefully. Ensure you know how to correctly fill out the answer sheet or use the computer. Specific instructions will be provided at the test site.
- 2. Read all of the answers before choosing one.** The most common answer people choose is *a*, whether it is right or not. That is because they think the first answer looks okay, so they stop reading. Don't make the mistake of not reading all answers before making a selection. Even if *a* looks like a really good answer, one of the other answers may be better. When you read the other alternatives, you may think of something you had missed at first.
- 3. Use process of elimination.** If you aren't sure of the correct answer use process of elimination. Eliminate answer choices that you know are definitely wrong. Then focus on selecting the best answer from the choices remaining.
- 4. Do not read something into the question that is not there.** On a situational question, assume that everything is normal unless the question tells you differently. Assume that the pavement is dry; visibility is good; your supervisor is competent; and citizens are behaving normally. When something is amiss, the question will tell you. Stick to the facts of the questions.
- 5. Answer every question.** There is no penalty for guessing. Even if you don't know the correct answer, you have one chance in four of choosing the right one. If you can eliminate one or two of the alternatives, your chances are even better.
- 6. Fill out your answer sheet correctly if taking a paper exam.** In marking the answer sheet, be sure to fill in the blank that corresponds to the answer you have chosen. If you skip a question, make sure you skip to the right space on the answer sheet. If you mark the wrong answer and want to change it, erase your first mark completely. Remember to only mark *one* answer for each question.
- 7. Ask your Test Proctor.** A test proctor will be available during the exam to help you with the testing procedures; however, he or she will not explain the meaning of any question, define words, or give information which may be of help in answering a question.

