

**FIREFIGHTER INTERVIEW  
PRACTICE BOOKLET**



**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE  
SERVICE**

# Introduction

## About this booklet

This booklet has been developed to help you prepare for your Firefighter Interview. This booklet is divided into the following sections:

- **The Interview** – this section will give you a brief description of what the interview is and what will happen.
- **Preparing for your interview** – this section provides you with some general advice on what to do and think about before your interview.
- **Talking about your experience** – this section provides some advice on how to phrase your answers.
- **Structuring your answer** – this section gives advice on choosing appropriate examples and which areas you need to cover in your answers.

We strongly recommend you set aside some time to read through this booklet and consider the best examples you can use to demonstrate your experience.

# The interview

The interview will be conducted with two people; who will take it in turns to ask you questions about you and your experiences and take full notes to ensure that a record is kept of all the examples you give.

Your interview will last approximately 1 hour. Initially your interviewers will introduce themselves to you and talk you through the procedure of the interview. The main aim of the interview is to find out about you and to gather examples of when and how you have used skills that are important for potential firefighters. Your interviewer will ask you questions which you should answer based on your personal experiences and apply relevant examples.

# Preparing for the interview

Here are some suggestions of what you can do to prepare for your interview:

- Think about the organisation and why you want to be a firefighter
- Think about the examples you used on your application form and any further relevant examples from your CV.
- Practice talking about everything in your application.
- Think about what questions an interviewer might ask and what examples you would give.

## Practical Tips

- Confirm the date, time, location and route, the name and telephone number of the person you are meeting and what they expect you to bring. Carry this information with you to the interview.
- If you are unable to attend the interview, telephone the Recruitment Team as soon as possible.
- Leave plenty of time to get there, always plan to be 10 minutes early. If you think that you are going to be late, telephone and let them know as soon as possible.

## What to Wear

- Aim for clean and smart.

# Talking About Your Experience

As in your application form, the main body of your interview will investigate your experience. Specifically, your interviewers will be looking for examples of what you have actually said, done or decided. Your interviewers will not be able to give you credit for hypothetical examples of what you would or might do in a particular situation. In the same way, your interviewers cannot give you credit for what other people may have done. It is acceptable to describe the context of an example within a team effort, but you must also specifically refer to what you did within that team. For example, if you are talking about a team effort and referring to, 'what we decided', it is important to clarify what specific contribution you made to that team's decision.

<b>Don't say</b> ☒	<b>Do say</b> ☑
'We said...'	'I said...' or 'he said...'
'It was decided...'	'I decided...' or 'she decided'
'Usually we spoke to...'	'I spoke to...'
'I would write...'	'I wrote...'
'We solved the problem by...'	'My contribution was to...'

# Structuring Your Answer

When structuring your answer try to use the following **STAR** approach:

- **Situation** - When, where, with whom? Set the context of your example.
- **Task** - Describe the situation, task or problem you were faced with.
- **Action** - What action did **you** take? It is important you give examples of your individual actions – you will get no credit for a group decision.
- **Result** - What results did you achieve? What conclusions did you reach? What did you learn from the experience?

After you have given your example, your interviewers will ask follow up questions to clarify their understanding.

## Choosing an Example

Your interviewers are primarily interested in your personal experiences. When you are choosing an example you are encouraged to think about situations at work, college, in your home life, in your hobbies, or in any other clubs or organisations you may be a member of. It is important that you choose an example that is clear in your memory, so that you will be able to confidently talk your interviewers through what you did and why.