

Oral Board: What to Expect

What is an oral board? *Oral Board* is a title used for a structured interview examination. An oral test is normally used to evaluate knowledge and abilities not easily tested by other means.

What do you mean by a “structured interview”? The interview questions are carefully constructed to be job related and to evaluate specific competencies required for successful job performance. Department subject matter experts are part of the committees formed for development of structured interviews. To ensure consistency, the same set of questions is asked of each candidate being interviewed. One panel is used to evaluate the full group of candidates. A scoring system is developed in advance, and evaluators are trained in the predetermined criteria and rating scale used for scoring.

How are the panelists chosen to conduct the interviews? A minimum of two and preferably more panelists will be used, and they will be knowledgeable in the fields or subjects being tested. Often, three or more panelists will be scheduled, so that adequate participation is ensured, should anyone have to cancel. Civil Service coordinates with department subject matter experts, management, and bargaining unit representatives on the selection of panelists/oral board members.

How do you decide how many people to interview from the pool of applicants? The number of candidates examined is determined in advance, in cooperation with the department and the bargaining unit. The number is specified on the job announcement. Primary considerations are the number of promotions expected during the life of the eligibility list and the practical demands involved in planning a structured process that gives equal opportunity for each candidate.

Is this process confidential? Yes. Individual performance is not discussed with anyone outside of the confidential scoring process. Your supervisors and managers do not see your results. You can come to Civil Service to see your ratings and anonymous feedback from the evaluators after you receive your results.

How should I prepare? Think about how you would prepare and present yourself if you were to interview for the job you are applying for. You will receive brief instructions before you go into the interview room. You can ask for questions to be repeated during the interview if needed. We want you to be as comfortable as possible so that you can do your best and minimize nervousness.

Still have questions? Contact us! Email: civilservice@spokanecity.org Phone: 509.625.6160

