CritiCall

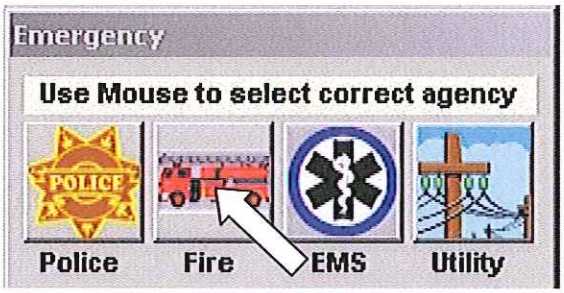
Pre-Employment Test: Computer and other related Skill/Ability Requirements

The CritiCall pre-employment test measures underlying skills and abilities a person needs to possess prior to any training they might receive once hired. Because it measures skills and abilities needed prior to training, a test taker does not need to possess any specialized dispatcher/calltaker knowledge or training to be able to read, understand, or answer the test items. However, there are some very basic, computer-related skills that a test taker must possess in order to properly demonstrate the other abilities measured during the test.

During the pre-employment test, a qualified applicant should be able to:

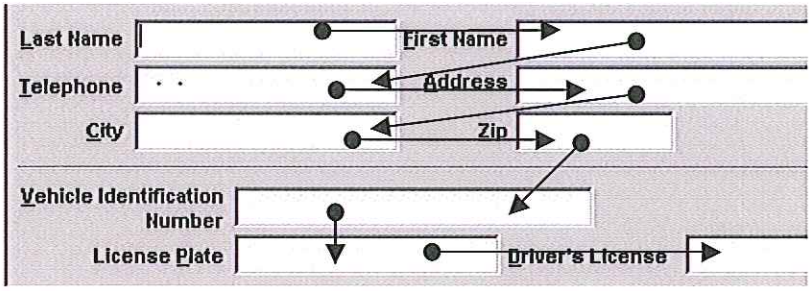
- Accurately move a mouse pointer or cursor to specific locations on the computer screen.
- Press down and release a left-mouse button once each time required.
  - To use the mouse during the test, position the mouse-pointer/cursor to the desired screen location, and then press down and release the left mouse button once. During the test, this will be referred to as "clicking" the mouse. Throughout the test you should use only single clicks of the left mouse button.

For example, during the test you may be required to move and place the mouse pointer over one of the four symbols/icons shown in the box to the right (indicating Police, Fire, EMS, or Utility Company) and left-click once to express your choice.



- Use the keys on a keyboard (including all of the letter and number keys, plus the **Tab**, **Shift**, **Enter** and up/down arrow [↓↑] keys) to enter information or navigate around the screen. (Note that the side-to-side arrow keys [←→] will not work during the CritiCall test.).

When you press the **Tab** or ↓ key, the cursor will move to the right if there is a field adjacent to the right, or down (or down left) if there is no field adjacent to the right. The **Shift + Tab** keys or ↑ key move the cursor in the opposite pattern.



- You can also move to a specific field by pressing the letter key that is underlined for that field (such as **L** in **Last Name**) while simultaneously pressing down the **Alt** key. In other words, in the example above if you press down on **C** and the **Alt** key at the same time, your cursor will move directly to the **City** field.
- In addition to using the arrow keys or the keystroke-combinations described above, you can also move from field to field using your computer's mouse.

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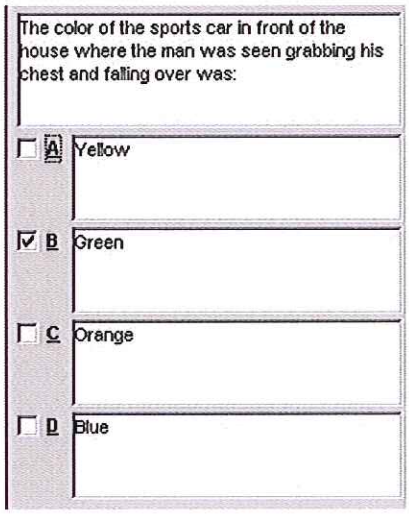
- Follow the instructions provided in writing and/or verbally during the test. Practice test items/questions are offered before each section of the test to help you determine if you are following the instructions correctly. Scores from the practice items are not included in your final test score. You are not required to take the practice items and you will be given an opportunity to bypass them during the test if you wish.

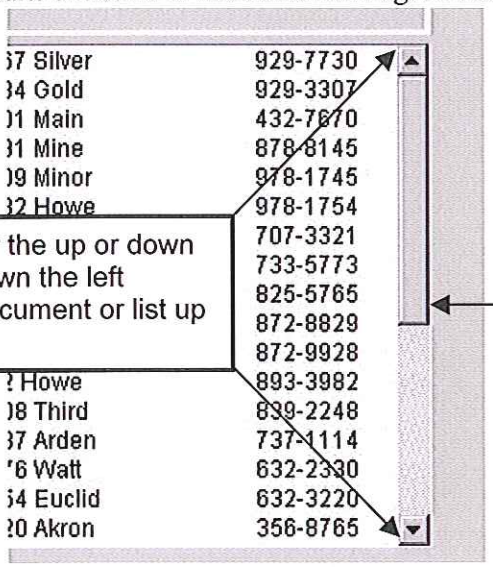
- Listen to and use verbal/spoken information provided over a headset. You frequently must enter the information you hear into a computer using a standard keyboard. You will be able to reasonably control the volume of the information heard in the headset you will be provided during the test.

- Choose a multiple-choice response by clicking your mouse over the small box to the left of your choice or by pressing the **A**, **B**, **C**, or **D** key on the keyboard.

A "check mark" indicates your choice during multiple-choice questions. In this example, the check mark next to alternative **B** ("Green") was placed by either moving the pointer over the small box to the left of the letter **B** and clicking once, or by entering the letter **B** on the keyboard. You can change your response as many times as you wish before you move on to the next test item by either clicking on a different box or by entering a different letter.



- Use "scroll bars" that appear on the right side of some documents or lists on the computer screen so that you can view those parts of the list or document that might be hidden from view.



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Other Skills and Abilities That May be Measured During the Test

The following is a list of some of the other abilities that may be measured during the test. Please note, however, that not all agencies use the test to measure every ability listed below.

During the test you may be asked to demonstrate your ability to...

- Follow rules and directions.
- Make decisions quickly and accurately based on rules you are provided.
- Enter data or information (such as names, telephone numbers, license plate sequences, etc.) into a computer using a keyboard.
- Hear, comprehend, summarize, and/or answer questions about information told verbally in short story form.
- Use written information provided on lists (such as an alphabetically-sequenced telephone book).
- Recognize if bits of information, such as addresses or names, are similar or different.
- Quickly learn and later recognize information that is shown in writing, such as descriptions (e.g., red car, blue boat, green shirt).
- Perform basic arithmetic (such as addition, subtraction, percentages) without a calculator or other tools.
- Hear and remember pieces of information, such as telephone numbers or license plate numbers, for a short period of time.
- Evaluate information provided in order to prioritize or categorize incidents.
- Evaluate information and identify the most correct solution based upon that information.
- Determine routes and/or locations using very basic maps. (No prior map-reading training required.)
- Correctly spell commonly-used words that might delay badly-needed assistance if misspelled.
- Communicate using sentences or phrases that clearly express the intended meaning.
- Read and comprehend written passages.

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Dear Applicant:

One of the important abilities needed by a public safety communications employee is the ability to make decisions based upon structured rules. To test your ability to make decisions during the computerized test, you will be asked to quickly and accurately indicate which type of agency (i.e., Police, Fire, Emergency Medical Service, or Public Utility Company) should be dispatched to the scene of an incident according to the rules listed on the attached page.

You should read and learn these rules before taking the test. Experience has shown that the better an applicant knows these rules, the better they will do during the decision making portions of the test.

It should be noted that these rules were developed specifically for the CritiCall test and do not reflect the official policy of this or any other public safety agency. You should **not** rely on your prior knowledge about either this agency or any other agency when making your decisions. ***Use ONLY the attached decision rules to make your decisions during the test.***

Examples

Based upon the attached rules, if you were given the scenario of,

- "Man throwing rocks in an attempt to hurt children walking nearby," you should select POLICE as the correct response since the man was attempting to physically harm another person.
- "Electrical power lines knocked down during a severe hail storm," you should select UTILITY as the correct response because there is a problem with broken or malfunctioning electrical power lines.
- "Child cuts hand on sharp knife," you should select EMS as the correct response because this is an emergency medical condition requiring intervention by medically trained personnel.
- "Smoke seen coming out of day-care school's windows," you should select FIRE as the correct response because there are the immediate signs of a fire in progress, such as flames or smoke.

Rules to be used for responding to scenarios during the CritiCall™ Personnel Selection Software Test

Police

Police Department should be dispatched when someone is attempting or threatening to physically harm another person, or has actually physically harmed another person, or when a person causes or is in the process of causing harm to another person's property.

Fire

Fire Department should be dispatched when there are the immediate signs of a fire in progress (such as flames or smoke), when a fire alarm is sounded, or when a person who is trapped or confined needs to be rescued or released.

EMS

Emergency Medical Service should be dispatched when there is an emergency medical condition requiring intervention by medically trained personnel.

Utility

Public Utility should be dispatched when there is a problem associated with malfunctioning or broken public water systems, electric power systems (including, but not limited to, electrical power lines, streetlights, and traffic signals), natural gas systems used for home heating, or blocked sewer drainpipes.