

Preparing Workers for 21st Century Employment Situational Judgment Reading Practice Exercises Instructor Key Form 1

Introduction:

Life is filled with choices. People make choices every day while at work. The choices made directly impact success on the job. Sometimes it is hard to make the best choice while under pressure especially if the response has to be immediate. Your clients/students can benefit from the opportunity to practice making good choices and avoiding making catastrophic mistakes in a non-threatening situation.

Situational Judgment is a complex psychological concept that has been studied and reported on in many professional publications. The fifteen scenarios presented here were written to provide practice for students. The answers in this key are the author's ideas of how the situation can best be resolved along with a short explanation as a rationale. Each scenario key also contains the author's thoughts on the worst choice followed by a short explanation.

Judgment is by its nature subjective. Each of us must answer for the choices we make. There are times when we believe we have made a good choice only to find out that a supervisor does not agree with that choice. So it will be with some of the author's answers in this key. It is important for participants to consider the long-term impact of choices. In this light most will come to see the author's point of view.

The following are the directions to participants:

Read each of the situations that follow. There are four choices presented for each scenario. You will choose two answers for each. Pick the best choice first. Then decide on the worst choice. The worst choice is one that will possibly cause the person to lose the job. Your instructor will tell you how to mark your answers.

You may instruct students to answer directly on the practice exercises or have them use the answer sheets provided.

**Situational Judgment Scenarios
Instructor Key
Form 1**

**Scenario # 1
Responsibility**

Take responsibility for completing one's own work assignments (accurately, on time, to a high standard of quality, even when the work is physically or mentally challenging, as efficiently as possible, to minimize costs, rework, and production time).

Juan is a boat mechanics helper. He notices that Larry (one of the three mechanics) does not add a very important step at the end of the rewiring/electrical repair. Juan has heard from the other two mechanics that without properly securing the wire there could be a possibility of a fire or explosion. He has mentioned this to Larry, but Larry just laughs and says it takes too long and is not necessary. What should Juan do?

- A. Tell Larry he is not doing the job correctly, because the other mechanics do it differently.
- B. Talk to the other two mechanics and tell them that Larry does not think this last step is important.
- C. Say nothing because he does not want problems.
- D. Go to the boss and ask him to explain why the last step is necessary.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is D. When learning a job, it is important to ask questions. The boss should always be consulted for the final say as to how a job should be completed.

The worst answer is C. When learning a job it is important to identify the correct procedures especially where safety is concerned. A worker should never knowingly be part of turning out an unsafe product.

**Scenario # 2
Acquire and Use Information**

Work with Others: Serve clients (address customer comments, questions, concerns and objections with direct, accurate, and timely answers).

Deidra is a ticket agent for a major airline. She has been on the job for two weeks. Today a customer is unhappy. He wants Deidra to get him on an earlier flight. The flight is full. The customer becomes very angry. He begins to shout at Deidra. He will not leave. What should Deidra do?

- A. Shout back at the customer, he started it!

- B. Leave her station; just walk away.
- C. Request a supervisor's help.
- D. Call security to remove the angry customer.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is C. Deidra should request a supervisor to help her with the difficult customer. Knowing when to ask for help is an important skill at work.

The worst answer is A. Shouting at a customer only makes the person angrier and solves nothing. This kind of behavior is never acceptable at work.

Scenario # 3

Acquire and Use Information

Self Management: Display responsible behaviors at work (maintain appropriate grooming and hygiene).

Simon has started a new job. He works at a local restaurant in the kitchen. The dress code requires that all workers wear hairnets. Simon thinks this is a silly rule. His hair is not that long. Simon really likes his new job. He just doesn't like the way he looks when he wears a hairnet. What should Simon do?

- A. Refuse to wear the hairnet because it looks "uncool."
- B. Talk to employees of other restaurants about the rule.
- C. Wear the hairnet because it is the restaurant's rule.
- D. Complain to the customers about the rule.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is C. Hairnets are required in restaurants for safety and health related reasons. It is important to follow these rules.

The worst answer is A. Refusing to wear the hairnet will likely result in Simon losing his job. Rules must be followed by everyone.

Scenario # 4

Responsibility

Demonstrate a willingness to work.

Sue works in a restaurant setting up the tables. Ching, her supervisor, has noticed Sue often watches other people work instead of getting her job done. Ching knows when one person is slow; it makes it difficult on the other workers. Ching talks with Sue about getting the tables set up faster. What should Sue do?

- A. Tell Ching she is not lazy and is working as fast as she can.
- B. Rush around and set the tables quickly but not carefully.
- C. Make more of an effort to work faster and more efficiently.
- D. Tell Ching that she doesn't really like this job anyway and she will be quitting soon if Ching does not leave her alone.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is C. Sometimes we don't realize that we are not working to our capability and it takes someone else to help us see we can do better.

The worst answer is D. Quitting and walking away shows immaturity and builds a negative personal work history.

Scenario # 5

Acquire and Use Information

Ask for clarification or help from supervisor or appropriate others when needed.

Umberto works as a maintenance man at a large condominium complex. Today Umberto is asked to remove grease from the marble floor at the front door. He has the correct chemicals but is not sure of the procedure. The supervisor will not be there until late afternoon. This needs to be completed now so no one will slip and fall. What should Umberto do?

- A. Do not do anything until the supervisor comes back in the afternoon.
- B. Go ahead and clean the marble with the product even though he is not sure of the correct procedure.
- C. Call the chemical company help line listed on the package to confirm the directions and complete the job now.
- D. Block the front door so no one can come in or out until the supervisor comes back in the afternoon.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is C. Maintenance personnel have been made aware of how to get in touch with the chemical company for additional help with the use of the products. One should never use a chemical when not sure how to use it correctly.

The worst answer is A. If you do not do anything and someone gets hurt the condominium would be liable for a lawsuit. Umberto could lose his job.

Scenario # 6

Use Technology

Learn how to use appropriate computer-based technology to get the job done most efficiently.

Paul works at an auto repair shop. He has worked on cars for over thirty years. He knows his customers and does a good job. Paul's boss is putting in a new computer system. The computers will diagnose what is wrong with the cars. Paul's boss has spent a lot of money on the system. He is requiring that everyone use it. Paul's boss knows that other auto shops in town are using the system because it makes repairing cars quicker. Paul is angry about the change. He does not think there is a good reason to ever use a computer. He knows how to tell what is wrong with a car. What should Paul do?

- a. Go to another auto repair shop that does not use a computer system.
- b. Tell his boss the computer system is worthless and that he refuses to use it.
- c. Talk with his boss about his concerns and ask for help in learning how to use the computer system.
- d. Change jobs to another field that doesn't use computers.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is C. Sometimes people are scared of technology and change. Asking for help in the use of technology can help a worker gain better skills.

The worst answer is B. Refusing to change is a negative answer to any situation. All jobs require change. It is important for workers to learn new things.

Scenario # 7

Acquire and Use Information

Read and understand information presented in written form well enough to get the job done. Communicate in spoken English well enough to get the job done.

Ask for clarification or help from supervisor or appropriate others when needed.

Monique is working as a teacher's assistant. She has her college degree from her home country in math, but is unable to secure a teaching position due to not being able to pass the teacher's exam in English. She will take the exam again in three months. What should Monique do?

- A. Quit her job and go to a private school to be tutored in English even though she does not have any money.
- B. Look for free classes that teach English at community schools or centers, libraries, online courses or other programs to help prepare for the exam.
- C. Just take the exam again without any additional preparation.
- D. Study for the exam at the school library during her work hours.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is B. Most communities have free classes or tutoring for people that need to learn English. There are also online courses that can be of help. Monique needs additional preparation if she wants to pass the exam.

The worst answer is D. It is not permissible to use work hours to study or for any other personal reasons. This is not part of her work duties.

Scenario # 8

Use Technology

Be able to use a telephone, pager, radio, or other device to handle and process communication.

Walter has just gotten a job as a security officer at an office building. As part of his job, Walter must check each office every three hours. Walter must also check in with his supervisor every three hours. The company has given Walter a phone and a list of codes for the security system. During his first evening on the job, Walter gets confused on how to use the security system. What should he do?

- a. Call the supervisor and ask for assistance on how to use the security system.
- b. Sit at the front door to ensure no one enters the building.
- c. Wait until tomorrow and talk with the supervisor about how to work the security system.
- d. Lock the front door and leave for the evening as there is nothing more that can be done.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is A. Technology can be difficult to learn. However, Walter needs to complete his job to the best of his ability. Calling for assistance is the responsible thing for Walter to do.

The worst answer is D. Even though the building is locked, Walter has been hired to guard the building for the evening. Leaving without telling anyone is termed a dereliction of duties.

Scenario # 9

Use Technology

Make sure that all equipment is in safe working order.

Jason has had to work overtime all week. He works as a repair person at a large hotel chain. Today, Jason finally gets to go home after having been on the job for twelve

hours. As he gets ready to leave, Jason notices that a pipe in the laundry room appears to be leaking water. Jason is exhausted. What should he do?

- a. Leave a note about the leak in the manager's mailbox
- b. Go home as he has already worked over his allotted hours for the day
- c. Put a sign out warning people about the wet floor
- d. Fix the leak prior to going home as it is a safety issue for the hotel

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is D. Jason's job is to ensure that equipment is in safe working order. He needs to fix the leak so that it does not cause further damage or an unsafe situation for others.

The worst answer is B. Going home and not telling anyone about the leak could result in damage to the hotel or possible personal injury to anyone who might slip on the wet floor.

Scenario # 10

Allocate Resources

Manage time effectively to get the work done on schedule, prioritize tasks, and make sure the urgent tasks are completed on time.

Serena works at the hospital as a CNA. One of the nurses, Wendy, does not fill in her charts in a timely manner. This is the fourth time this week Serena has privately asked Wendy to complete the charts, so she can complete her job on time. Wendy always replies she is too busy. This would be acceptable; however, Wendy spends a lot of time telling personal stories at the nurse's desk. What should Serena do?

- A. Ask another nurse to fill in the chart.
- B. Go immediately to the supervisor and complain that Wendy is talking too much and not doing her job.
- C. Keep asking Wendy and then just wait until she fills in the chart.
- D. Request a meeting with Wendy and the supervisor to discuss a solution.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is D. Since Serena has already tried speaking to Wendy about the problem and there has not been any solution, Serena needs to include her and the supervisor in the next meeting.

The worst answer is B. Going to the supervisor to complain about what you think is happening is not acceptable and you may be labeled as a tattle-tale. Trying to work out solutions produces better results.

Scenario # 11

Use Systems

Go to the appropriate person/source when approval is needed for work related activities.

Zach works for a new supervisor. The supervisor has implemented new rules for the department. Zach does not like the new rules. However, he likes his job and other people at the company. Zach wants to attend a state-sponsored workshop. He is not sure whether his new supervisor will approve. What should he do?

- a. Ask for a personal a day off from work. Attend the workshop and not tell the supervisor.
- b. Request approval for the workshop from the owner of the company as the owner likes Zach.
- c. Talk with the new supervisor about the benefits that information from the workshop will provide to the department and request permission to attend.
- d. Forget about attending the workshop, since the supervisor will never approve Zach attending.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is C: It is important to go through the chain-of-command when requesting approval for any work-related activity.

The worst answer is B: Going above one's supervisor to get permission for an activity can be termed insubordination. Zach should first speak to his own supervisor.

Scenario # 12

Integrity

Maintain confidentiality, as appropriate, about matters encountered.

Mandy works for a psychologist. She types the notes from the counseling sessions. As she is typing, Mandy notices that the client is a neighbor. Mandy reads the personal information. She is very shocked at what she is reading. What should she do?

- a. Talk to her neighbor about her problem.
- b. Type the notes and not say anything to anyone.
- c. Talk to the psychologist about what to do as this is her neighbor.
- d. Ask the psychologist to assign someone else to type the notes.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is B. Many jobs require confidentiality. This means that a worker should do his/her job and not share the information with others.

The worst answer is A. The neighbor expected complete confidentiality when going to the psychologist. Talking to the neighbor about a confidential record is unprofessional. This would be grounds for being fired.

Scenario # 13

Allocate Resources

Manage time effectively to get the work done on schedule, prioritize tasks, and make sure the urgent tasks are completed on time.

The supervisor is coming to inspect the new construction on a house. There have been many problems and delays. Jamal has just spilled a large jar of nails and a can of paint on the floor. He also has pieces of wood and mesh wire thrown all over the ground. It makes it difficult for everyone to move around. What should Jamal do?

- A. Clean up the nails so they don't dry in the spilled paint and make the clean up much harder later, then clean up the mesh and wood.
- B. Take his lunch break now because he can't work while the supervisor is there.
- C. Go work on another area of the house and tell everyone he doesn't know how the nails and paint got on the floor.
- D. Clean up the mesh and wood because it is easy to pick up fast.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is A. It is important to deal with accidents quickly so they do not cause any future problems when trying to complete a job.

The worst answer is C. One should never lie or try to blame others for a mishap that they have caused. This can then cause a delay in completing a job.

Scenario # 14

Integrity

Demonstrate integrity.

Betty works for a florist. However, today she did not receive the correct roses for a customer's order. She does not have enough time to find the correct roses and still have the customer's order delivered in time. What should Betty do?

- A. Call and tell the customer she can use other roses for the arrangement.
- B. Call and tell the customer they need to call another florist.
- C. Make the arrangement with the incorrect roses and have them delivered.
- D. She should inform her supervisor/owner about the problem and follow that advice.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is D. When there is a decision that affects the integrity of a business, the owner should make the final decision.

The worst answer is C. It is never acceptable to knowingly do a job incorrectly.

Scenario # 15

Know How to Learn

Accept help from supervisors and coworkers

Pauline just started working as a nursing assistant yesterday. This is her first full-time job. She wanted the job and wants to do well, but her supervisor, Ms. Bailey, scares her. Yesterday she told Pauline, "Don't make the beds like that." and then rushed off. Later, Ms. Bailey came back and said, "Here, fill in the chart." Pauline didn't know how. Pauline knows that Ms. Bailey wasn't happy with her work yesterday. Pauline is worried about talking with Ms. Bailey since she always seems so busy. Pauline is afraid that Ms. Bailey will think that she isn't a good worker if she asks questions. What should Pauline do?

- a. Ask Ms. Bailey if she can make an appointment to talk with her. Pauline should explain that she likes the job and wants to do well, but that Ms. Bailey is going too fast for her to understand all of the instructions.
- b. Watch how other employees complete the job.
- c. Explain her problem to a co-worker and ask what to do.
- d. Complain how unfair and incompetent Ms. Bailey is as a supervisor.

The best answer is:

The worst answer is:

The best answer is A. Setting an appointment time will provide both Pauline and Ms. Bailey with time to discuss Pauline's concerns and Ms. Bailey's expectations. Pauline needs to know what her supervisor expects of her employees, rather than getting the information from others.

The worst answer is D. Complaining about your supervisor to others is unprofessional. This type of behavior is not productive to learning.