

CITY AND COUNTY DENVER FIRE DEPARTMENT 2025 LIEUTENANT PROMOTIONAL PROCESS

CANDIDATE ORIENTATION HANDOUT



Candidate Information

Introduction

Thank you for participating in the promotional process for the rank of Lieutenant. You have already performed highly responsible work in your current position. Should you be promoted, your performance will have a wide-reaching impact on individuals both within your department, and the community as a whole. You will manage subordinate activities and serve as a role model for many in the department. This document contains an outline of the promotional process you will be participating in for the rank of Lieutenant, as well as some helpful preparation and testing tips.

Disclaimer: The information provided in this handout is meant to be helpful and prepare you for the general nature of the process. It is not meant to advise you of every question or topic that will be covered or every administrative detail you will encounter. Some aspects of the process may be modified, including, but not limited to, order of events, test format, and time frames. It is expected that candidates at the level of Lieutenant will be able to flexibly adjust to conditions that are not exactly as candidates may have expected.

Components of the Selection Process

There are two test components included in the promotional process that contribute to your overall promotional score. These dimensions are described below and weighted as follows:

Multiple Choice Exam (32.0 points maximum)

Assessment Center (62.0 points maximum)

Interview: For this exercise, the assessors will ask you to respond to a series of questions relevant to the rank of Lieutenant.

Presentation: For this exercise, you will be given time to prepare a presentation that you will deliver to the assessor panel.

Tactical: For this exercise, you will be presented with a fire tactical scenario and asked to respond and explain your actions to the panel.

Seniority (6.0 points maximum)

Test Dates, Times, and Locations

Test Component	Date	Time	Location
Multiple-Choice Exam	June 4, 2025	Registration will start at 8:00 am and will close promptly at 8:15 am. The Written Examination will start once registration is closed. Latecomers will not be allowed to register/test.	Police Protection Association (PPA), 2105 Decatur St., Denver, CO.
Assessment Center	July 21-25, 2025	TBD*	Denver Post Building 201 W. Colfax Ave. Denver, CO 80202 1 st Floor, CSC

*The Commission will inform you of your reporting time prior to the Assessment Center.

Test Security and Confidentiality

Prior to participating in the written exam and assessment center, you will be required to sign a security and confidentiality agreement stating that you have not and will not violate test security. Breach of this agreement is subject to prosecution under federal copyright law and would be viewed as an unacceptable integrity failure for an employee, particularly a management candidate. NTN and/or the Department reserve the right to disqualify candidates from the promotional process for violating the confidentiality agreement. This confidentiality agreement applies during and following this promotional testing process.

Prohibited Devices and Materials

Electronic devices and study materials are not permitted in the testing sessions due to test security, confidentiality, and laws associated with this testing.

- Prohibited devices include, but are not limited to, **cellular phones, audio/radio headsets, cameras, recording devices, tablets, watches with internet capabilities (smart watches) and other electronic devices with recording devices and/or communication capabilities.**
- Prohibited materials include, but are not limited to, **your personal study notes, test reference materials, presentation aides, etc.**

If you have any questions about which devices or materials are permitted in the testing sessions, it is your responsibility to speak with an NTN or department representative.

Candidates should not bring these devices or materials to the testing site. If these devices or materials are brought on site candidates will be required to check them in during the registration process. NTN and/or the Department reserve the right to disqualify candidates from the promotional process if it is discovered that they are in possession of any of these devices or materials during the testing process.

Technical Waiver

Technical devices such as computers, audio devices, and/or recording devices may be used by NTN as a part of this process to either record performance and/or enhance the experience of the testing process. Technical issues may arise during the testing process. If so, NTN and the Department will work to quickly resolve the issue. It is the candidate's responsibility to alert a proctor as soon as they become aware of a technical issue.

General Test Information

- You will be responsible for monitoring your own time during the promotional process. Wearing a watch is permitted; however, ensure your watch does not contain any prohibited electronic features.
- Candidates are prohibited from receiving or sending pages, texts, or phone calls during any part of the promotional process. No electronic devices are allowed at the testing site.
- Candidates are prohibited from removing any material from the testing site.

Written Exam

On June 4, 2025, you will take a multiple-choice written examination consisting of 120 multiple-choice questions based on the reading list you have been provided. The written test has been developed and prepared by Ergometrics and Applied Personnel Research, Inc., a human resources consulting firm that specializes in the development of fire department promotional examinations. The questions in the examination have been selected and reviewed by a panel of Denver Fire Department subject matter experts (SMEs). The following is some information that will assist you in preparing for the written examination.

Book-Referenced Written Exam

At your scheduled time, you will take a multiple-choice written test consisting of 120 questions. You will have two and one half (2 ½) hours to complete the written exam. The exam will be based on the following announced references:

Please refer to job posting for the full list of [source materials](#).

Book References

Your department has determined the above publications necessary to read in preparation for your upcoming promotional process. You are competing with other outstanding members of the department. Studying the publications assigned is one way you may improve your chances of ultimately being a top competitor.

Purpose of Book-Referenced Test

Higher-level positions call for deep knowledge of technical topics. The department is interested in promoting future leaders who will do the necessary studying and use the information on the job. As a promotional candidate, these tests are your opportunity to demonstrate your study ethic and effectiveness. The books assigned for this exam represent only a small portion of the formal study that will be required upon promotion. This test is not intended to measure all aspects of your promotional potential. It is designed to look at your ability to absorb important information that comes from reading materials.

[Preparation strategies below are suggestions only. Each individual is personally responsible for determining which preparation strategies and tips are appropriate for himself/herself.]

Preparation Strategies

Again, studying the selected publications is one way to improve your chances of ultimately being a top competitor. There are many different approaches that one can take to studying.

An excellent way to prepare for a multiple-choice book-reference test is to read each publication twice. First, read it straight through so that you understand the general focus, as a whole. Then, reread the publication, making notes and highlighting the most important points that you see in each section. Other strategies are to use acronyms for remembering information or to form a study group. In the end, the choice is personal. When you find a strategy that works best for you, test yourself by considering how you would explain the content of a section to a subordinate.

Study Tips

1. **Minimize environmental distractions.** Try to limit the amount of distractions in your environment when studying. This includes, but is not limited to email, cell phones and even other people. Eliminating distractions will make it easier for you to concentrate and retain the information you are studying.
2. **Avoid burning the midnight oil.** For many people, it is harder to retain information when tired. If possible, try to study when you are well rested and ready to concentrate.
3. **Review chapter overviews or summaries.** Chapter overviews and summaries typically provide information on the most important points in a chapter. Many times, it is helpful to review these areas before reading a chapter to help you understand what the important topics are in the chapter. After reading the chapter, overviews and summaries can be used to test yourself on critical knowledge from the chapter.
4. **Quiz yourself.** After reading a chapter or section, quiz yourself on important topics, definitions, etc. You can also develop questions regarding the material based upon headings and specific terms prior to reading it and then, while reading the section or chapter, try to answer those questions.
5. **Have someone quiz you.** After reading a text, a great way to see if you have retained information is to have someone ask you questions regarding the material you just read.
6. **Avoid cramming.** Spreading your studying out over time will help you concentrate and retain the information you read.
7. **Look up words or phrases you don't know.** Have a computer or dictionary available when studying so that you are able to look up words and phrases that you don't know.
8. **Mark it up.** Highlight and/or underline important sections of the text while you study. This will help you concentrate on important topics and make it easier to review the material again later.
9. **Take notes.** Taking notes of the important topics in the text you read can help you remember what you read and be an efficient study aid.

Test Taking Tips

The written test items have four answer choices. To get the highest score, 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. Bring to the test administration site whatever personal items you need for the exam, such as eyeglasses or tissues.

Here are some additional tips to help you during the book-referenced exam. These simple procedures 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. Specific instructions will be provided at the test site.
- 2. Get familiar with your test.** When you begin the multiple-choice written test, glance through it to acquaint yourself with the task ahead of you. You do not have to go through the questions in the order you find them.
- 3. Check the time.** Check your watch periodically throughout the exam so that you know how much time you have remaining.
- 4. Don't spend too much time on one question.** If you have a difficult time with a question, go on and come back to that question later. Do make a note to come back to it, though. You may come back with a fresh approach, and a question you had trouble with earlier may seem easy.
- 5. Read thoroughly.** Read every question carefully before you attempt to answer it. This advice may sound too simple, but it is important. The major reason people miss questions when they know the material is that they do not read the question completely.
- 6. Circle or underline key words.** When reading a question, circle or underline key words that are important to the question stem. This will both help you focus on the critical aspects of what is being asked, as well as help you remember the important aspects of the question if you need to skip it and return to it later in the test session.

7. **Break a sentence up if you don't understand it.** Sometimes sentences in a question stem can be long. If you don't understand the sentence, use slash marks to break it into smaller sections to better understand the sentence.
8. **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 of the 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.
9. **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.
10. **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.
11. **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.
12. **Fill out your answer sheet correctly.** 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.
13. **Use your time wisely.** If you finish early, use the remaining time to answer questions you skipped, re-evaluate questions you were unsure of and check to ensure that you filled out your answer sheet correctly.
14. **Test Proctor/Procedures.** A test proctor will be available during the exam to help the candidates with the testing procedures only; 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. If you have any questions about the testing procedure, make sure to ask for assistance before the test begins.

Test Your Assumptions

When taking your test, don't compromise your chances of success by trying to follow test-taking tips you may find online. Many of these tips are just bad advice and could cost you points. Use the following statements to test your assumptions.

True or False?

True	False	
_____	_____	1. If you don't know the answer to a test question, take a guess. <i>True! Guessing is not penalized and you just might get it right.</i>
_____	_____	2. Choose the longest answer option. <i>False! General pattern responses like this are a very poor way to approach a modern test. The length of the answer choices is not an indication of an incorrect or correct response.</i>
_____	_____	3. Choose the answer option that seems most logical to you. <i>True! Rely on your knowledge of the assigned publications to think critically and logically when answering a question.</i>
_____	_____	4. Choose the answer with a middle value when other options are higher or lower. <i>False! This is another piece of bad advice you might come across somewhere. No such pattern as this is present on Ergometrics' tests.</i>
_____	_____	5. More often than not, the correct answer is B or C. <i>False! Once again, poor advice. General pattern strategy is not a way to pass a modern test. There is no pattern to Ergometrics' correct answers. Answer questions by content, not by old, incorrect advice or superstitions.</i>

Assessment Center Exercises

The preparation strategies below are suggestions only. Individuals are personally responsible for determining which preparation strategies and tips are appropriate for them.

Interview Questions Exercise

For this exercise, you will be asked to respond to a series of questions relevant to the rank of Lieutenant. You will be given a set amount of time to answer each question.

At the time of the exercise, you will be informed of the number of questions and the length of time you will have to answer each question.

Test Tips

- Listen to each question carefully.
- Think about the long- and short-term impact of the situation presented, on the people involved and on the department.
- The total time given to answer each question is time that can be used to both organize your thoughts and respond to the question.
- You do not have to use the entire time given to answer each question.
- Ensure your answers are clear and concise, but fully answer the question asked.
- Seek to find a solution that will benefit all parties involved.
- It is important to monitor your time when answering each question.
- Speak loudly and clearly so that the assessors are able to hear and understand you.

Example Exercise

****This sample exercise is provided to familiarize you with the exercise format. The actual assessment center exercise will differ in content, timing, and specific instructions. NTN explicitly disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or suitability of these materials for any particular purpose. Completing these practice questions does not guarantee performance or success in the actual assessment center. Practice materials are confidential and intended for individual preparation only.****

Instructions

You will now complete the interview exercise. You will have a set amount of time to answer each question. We will stop you when your time is up regardless of where you are in your response. It is your job to manage your time appropriately. Please inform the panel when you have completed your response and are ready for the next question.

Questions

1. Describe your leadership style and how you adapt it to different situations and team members.
2. Imagine you've been assigned a team with low morale due to recent policy changes. How would you address this situation and rebuild team morale?
3. A conflict arises between two of your team members, impacting their performance and the team's dynamic. Describe how you would mediate this conflict and restore a productive work environment.

Oral Presentation Exercise

Prior to going before the assessor panel, you will be given a set preparation period, where you will be able to review the presentation topic and prepare your presentation. After the preparation period is complete, you will go before the assessor panel where you will deliver your presentation.

You will be informed of the length of the preparation time, the topic of the presentation and the amount of time you have to complete the presentation at the time of the assessment center.

Test Tips

- You do not have to use the entire time given for the presentation.
- Ensure your presentation is clear, concise, and includes all necessary information.
- It is important to monitor your time while presenting the information.
- Speak loudly and clearly enough for the assessors to hear and understand you.
- Ensure your presentation follows a logical sequence.
- Keep your audience in mind.
- Remember to keep in mind the position that you are applying for.

Example Exercise

****This sample exercise is provided to familiarize you with the exercise format. The actual assessment center exercise will differ in content, timing, and specific instructions. NTN explicitly disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or suitability of these materials for any particular purpose. Completing these practice questions does not guarantee performance or success in the actual assessment center. Practice materials are confidential and intended for individual preparation only.****

Instructions

You will now have time to read these instructions and prepare for the oral presentation exercise. You will have time to prepare your response to the prompt prior to going before the assessor panel. Once in front of the panel, you will deliver your response to the panel as if they are the intended audience. There will be no interaction by the assessor panel during your presentation. The assessor panel will simply be a passive audience that you will be presenting to, unless specific instructions provided to you indicate otherwise. A notepad has been provided for you if you would like to take notes and you may take these notes with you when you go before the panel. However, anything you write will not be scored by the panel; you will only be graded on what you say.

Prompt

A local community group has expressed concerns about increased response times to non-emergency calls in their neighborhood. Your supervisor has asked you to prepare and present a 10-minute presentation to the community group outlining your proposed strategy to address these concerns, focusing on resource allocation, community engagement, and performance measurement.

Fire Tactical Exercise

The tactical exercise is designed to evaluate your ability to manage a fire incident. During the exercise, you will be the first arriving fire department responder, functioning as a Lieutenant at Denver Fire Department, and shall assume and maintain the role of incident commander. Various engine, truck, auxiliary crews, etc. may become available to carry out simulated fireground tasks.

The tactical exercise will be video-based. All candidates will see the same video. Incident conditions and updates will change based on a pre-programmed schedule, not based on your responses, actions taken, or assignments given. The video will automatically advance you through the exercise. The simulated emergency scene will not display task-level events.

The fire scenario will be divided into multiple segments, each with a response period and an onscreen count-down timer indicating the time you have remaining. You will be instructed by the video narrator when to begin your response for each segment. Direct your oral responses to the assessor panel.

You will be given the fire scenario and the amount of time you have to conduct the tactical at the time of the assessment center.

Test Tips

- Communicate everything you are thinking. If you don't say it, it can't be scored.
- Monitor your time during the exercise.
- Wait for the video to prompt you for a response.
- Speak loudly and clearly enough for the assessors to hear and understand you.
- Consider department policies and procedures when making your decisions.

Assessment Center Preparation

Although you may be able to do well without preparing, you can always do better with preparation. Remember, you are competing against others who are also qualified candidates, so you need to do your best to stand out as excellent. The more prepared you are, the more relaxed and confident you will be.

The information below is meant to be a brief, general overview to help you prepare for the assessment center exercises. There are many other resources available, including books, classes, and online resources, should you choose to use them.

In each exercise, you will be observed/rated by a panel of raters who may ask questions, listen to your answers, and observe your behavior. There is nothing to be gained—and much to be lost—by trying to pretend you are someone other than who you are. You do, however, want to show yourself to your best advantage.

Here are some key things to remember as you prepare for the assessment center:

Understand the job

Understanding the job itself is an important way to improve your competitiveness for promotion. The more you understand about supervision, management, department practices, and organizational goals, the better you will be able to answer potential questions relating to the job and organization. Expand your understanding of management issues and solutions through methods such as: studying, seeking mentors, and/or reading a management or leadership book. Adequate preparations can minimize how much you will need to “wing it.”

An assessment center is like an emergency response: you never know precisely what the demands will be. However, the more you have practiced what you can, the easier it is to improvise and adapt. You will have to demonstrate flexibility and on-the-spot thinking, so working to develop these skills in advance will improve your performance at the assessment center. Study your handouts. Learn as much as you can about the job. Think about how you would handle management challenges like those you have seen during your employment.

Arrive early

Arriving early at the testing site is one of the easiest and most effective ways to minimize stress.

Display confidence

You are applying for a position of greater responsibility. You will need to be a role model of confidence and credibility. Imagine the most effective supervisor you can think of and embody that supervisor's demeanor.

Show that you can communicate openly with managers. Answer questions directly and be sure to use eye contact.

Do not self-deprecate or apologize for your answers.

Do not pretend

Represent yourself honestly and do not try to fake it. Do not spin your experience to sound like something it is not. Use vocabulary that you are comfortable with to not create doubt regarding your credibility, intelligence, and integrity. It is easy for panelists to identify candidates who have memorized answers to questions that they do not really understand or believe.

Think aloud

Whatever your answer to a question is, the panel may understand it better if you think aloud. Considering options is an important part of management thinking.

Imagine yourself in the panel's place

Be friendly and respectful to the panel; they are trying to do a good job, just like you. Do not act offended or defensive if they ask for information that you think they should already know. This is your chance to show how gracious you are in public situations and how easy you will be to work with.

Do not make assumptions

The panelists are considering large amounts of complex information about many candidates. Do not assume anyone has memorized or knows anything about you. Directly convey all information you think the panel would find valuable in understanding who you are as a candidate.

Be concise in your communication

Sufficient time is provided during the exercises to communicate the necessary responses. Time management is a critical management skill that requires preparation and organization.

Relax as much as you can

Be sure to get rest and a good night's sleep before your assessment. During the assessment center, try to maintain physical relaxation and use appropriate gestures while communicating. Remember to smile and do not feel that you have to fill every silence. At the end of the exercise, thank the panel for their time.

Do your best

Remember, representing yourself honestly and doing your best are most important.

Good luck to you in the promotional process!