

Inside Info to Help You

What do you need to know about government tests and interview selection?

Many candidates in or outside government “don’t know what they don’t know” about Public Service competitions generally—or about application screening, multiple-choice tests and competency-based evaluation specifically. External candidates in particular need to understand that federal recruitment is far more complex than recruitment methods elsewhere.

Government information—whether online, by phone, or at job fairs—is opaque. Worse, internet chit-chat is rife but largely misinformed. To be an informed candidate, **look over our cautions below:**

- With rare exceptions, there is no personal review of candidate application materials—**only test scores count**. Degrees and where obtained, scholarships, marks, experience or languages can’t be quantified and used in early stages of evaluation, if at all, as the volume of applicants precludes individual attention.
- **Age is not a factor in hiring**—despite the Post-Secondary Recruitment label for the annual competition that often deters candidates who are not recent university or college graduates. “Post-secondary” just means that you must have a post-secondary degree.
- **Multiple-choice tests are the same for all jobs:** the unsupervised online and supervised in-person PSEEs.
- **Test scores can be manipulated:** scores can be weighted equally or differently; a high cut-off can be applied for one test once the other test pass-score is met; scores alone can be circumvented with an exclusion order to promote employment equity; scores can be adjusted using a z-score formula to factor-in regional differences; scores can be downplayed by using computer-screening for certain attributes or by random selection to advance candidates from the pass group.
- **“Passing” the tests doesn’t mean you will get an interview**, or even to the pool from which interviewees are drawn.
- **Protect your candidacy** from application system breakdowns; incorrect info posted for test dates, times and locations; score-retrieval problems; misdirected emails or emails sent by government consultants that go into spam. **Keep checking your online file** and contact the government quickly if needed to find out if your application is still in the mix.
- Despite glib government statements to the contrary, **you can prepare for the tests**. You need **the right instructions, the right sample questions, and the right knowledge and insights** that apply specifically to Canadian federal government tests, which our study materials provide. Boilerplate prep material—and questions for similar-sounding but different foreign tests—is everywhere, so **be cautious before spending your money**.

Click here to return to the [webpage](#) to see our test descriptions with **representative sample questions** that show you what you need to excel.