



**CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR
SENIOR CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR
STUDY GUIDE/SAMPLE TEST**

CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR/SENIOR CORRECTIONAL COUNSELOR

After meeting the job requirements for Correctional Counselor or Senior Correctional Counselor (see job announcement), you are required to pass the examination to obtain a job in this area. The test is multiple choice, consists of 100 questions and the passing score is 60. Applicants applying for Correctional Counselor will be ranked by the results of this exam. Applicants applying for Senior Correctional Counselor will be ranked by a rating of training and experience and take this exam on a pass/fail basis.

The test is comprised of the following sections:

Section	Number of Questions
Written Communication	20
Interviewing	20
Counseling/Interpersonal Skills	25
Human Behavior	20
Case Management	15

TIPS FOR TAKING A MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST

Here are some hints that will help you take a multiple-choice test.

1. LOOK AT THE ENTIRE TEST.

As soon as the monitor tells you to begin, flip through the test to see what you have to do. This will let you know what to expect. You are allowed two and one-half hours to complete your test so budget this time to give yourself time to finish the whole test. Then RELAX – take a deep breath before you start.

2. READ EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY.

Read the questions and all of the choices carefully. Make sure you are reading what has been written and not what you hope or want to see. Then, pick out the one, best choice that answers the question. Make sure you read each question as a separate question and answer it as a separate question. The answer to any one question is not intended to help you choose the correct response to other questions.

3. LOOK FOR THE KEY WORDS.

Read every word in the question. Sometimes there are key words that will help you pick the correct answer. Pay close attention to these words. If you overlook one of these key words, you could miss a question that you really know.

Some of these KEY WORDS are listed below:

BEST	GREATEST	NEVER
COMMON	LESS	NOT
EXCEPT	MORE	SOMETIMES
GENERALLY	MOST	USUALLY

4. ANSWER THE EASY QUESTIONS FIRST, BUT ANSWER EVERY QUESTION.

In this test, all of the questions have the same value. You get as much credit for an easy question as for a hard one. Don't waste time on the hard questions. Answer all of the easy ones first, then in the time left over, go back and figure out the hard ones.

5. DON'T BE AFRAID TO GUESS IF YOU ARE NOT SURE OF THE ANSWER.

If you don't answer a question, you will not get credit for it. There is no penalty for guessing. If you are not sure which answer is correct, first eliminate the choices you know are wrong and chose your answer from the remaining ones.

6. REVIEW YOUR TEST.

When you have finished, review your paper and make sure you have answered all of the questions. Review the questions you were unsure of but make sure you have a good reason for changing the answer.

On the following pages, you will see some samples of the types of questions that you will be expected to answer.

SECTION I

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

The first twenty questions assess your knowledge of report writing, ability to recognize objective and subjective statements, and your ability to recognize clarity of expression as well as use correct grammar and punctuation.

The first five questions assess your knowledge of report writing.

Sample 1: The basic ingredient in a report is

- a. personal opinion.
- b. formal language.
- c. factual information.
- d. statistics.

Answer "c" is the correct answer. Factual information must be included in all reports. Formal language and statistics may or may not be necessary, depending on the report that is written. Personal opinion rarely has a place in reports.

The next five questions are designed to measure your ability to distinguish between statements that are objective (based on observable behaviors) and subjective (based on judgements about behaviors) and between statements that are central (essential) and peripheral (only slightly connected to information that is essential or important). You will be given a case study and will determine if the phrase presented to is objective/subjective and central/peripheral.

Sample 2: Client is a hospital volunteer but has not found regular employment. Saw client on a cloudy day coming out of a store when client stated he was to be at the hospital. Called hospital and they reported he has not been there all week.

Is the following phrase

- a. objective, peripheral.
- b. objective, central.
- c. subjective, peripheral.
- d. subjective, central.

"Saw client on a cloudy day"

Answer "a" is correct. While seeing the client and the weather is based on observation, the weather adds no important information to the report.

The third set of questions in this section is designed to measure your knowledge of correct grammar and word usage.

Sample 3: Each officer _____ the log book on the shelf at the end of _____ shift.

- a. place - his
- b. places - their
- c. places - his
- d. place - their

Since the only grammatically correct sentence is "Each officer places the log book on the shelf at the end of his shift", the correct response is "c."

The last five questions measure your ability to recognize the clearest, most correct sentence. You will be shown four sentences and asked to choose the one that communicates most effectively.

Example 4: Select the most effective sentence.

- a. The man was stubborn and also he was difficult to convince.
- b. The man was stubborn and difficult to convince.
- c. Not only was the man difficult to convince, in addition, the man was also stubborn.
- d. Due to his being stubborn, the man was difficult to convince.

Answer "b" is the correct answer. It expresses the idea clearly and without excessive wording.

SECTION II
INTERVIEWING

This section is designed to measure your knowledge of interviewing techniques.

Sample 5: The main purpose of an interview is

- a. to get sufficient data to give a medical diagnoses of client's problem.
- b. as a way to explore the client's problem and help determine a treatment plan.
- c. as an inexpensive tool to gather information about a client.
- d. for statistical purposes.

Answer "b" is the correct answer. Gaining sufficient information about a client to determine the appropriate method of assistance is the main reason for interviews.

Sample 6: A measure of client progress is

- a. increasing number of appointments canceled by the client.
- b. seeing the client in social situations.
- c. increase in the client's regard for the interviewer.
- d. decreasing need for the interviewer's support.

Answer "d" is the best answer. One measure of client progress is increased independence from the emotional support of the interviewer.

Section III

Counseling/Interpersonal Skills

This section is designed to measure your knowledge of counseling techniques and interpersonal skills by asking theoretical and situational questions.

Example 7: In preparing for an interview, the first thing an interviewer should do is to

- a. construct a list of questions to be used in the interview.
- b. decide what he wants the interview to accomplish.
- c. gain the confidence of the person to be interviewed.
- d. discover the point of view of the person to be interviewed.

Answer "b" is the correct answer. In solving any problem or accomplishing any task, you must first be clear about what you expect as the results. This will determine the method you will use and help you structure the questions. You cannot gain the person's confidence or discover his point of view until the interview has started.

Example 8: The Smiths (Mary, the mother, age 40 and her daughter, Joan, age 16) are your clients. The major issue being addressed is Joan's attempted arson. To obtain a case history, you should

- a. talk mainly to Joan about the possibility of being burned.
- b. direct most of the discussions to Mary since she is the adult.
- c. engage both in a discussion around the central issue.
- d. direct most of the discussion to the most outgoing person.

Answer "c" is the correct answer. You should gain information from both people to obtain the most accurate and complete case history.

Section IV

Human Behavior

This section measures your knowledge of human behavior.

Sample 9: Any strong emotional state will affect a person's

- a. current perceptions.
- b. genetic make-up.
- c. reflexes.
- d. past learning.

Answer "a" is correct. Emotional states cause physiological changes that affect the way events are sensed and remembered.

Sample 10: Predictions of behavior based on past behaviors are often inaccurate because

- a. patterns of behavior are in a constant state of change.
- b. behavior cannot be explained by the scientific method.
- c. underlying psychological mechanisms are not fully understood.
- d. quantitative methods of measuring stimuli and responses are not available.

Answer "c" is the correct answer. Past behaviors offer some clues in predicting behavior but motivations and perceptions will also influence behavior. To predict behavior, you must look at the person in a holistic manner and not focus only on one part.

Section V

Casework/Casework Management

The last section measures your knowledge of casework and casework management.

Sample 11. The aim of casework is to

- a. give financial assistance to help the client achieve success.
- b. find the cause of a person's difficulties and refer him to the proper source.
- c. help the person understand his problem and help him make a satisfactory adjustment through the use of a professional helping relationship.
- d. improve the person's environment.

Answer "c" is the correct answer. The purpose of casework is to help a person gain insight to his behavior and, with the support of a counselor, find better, more appropriate methods of dealing with his environment.

Sample 12: Which of the following messages should you respond to first?

- a. A message that a client's child has run away.
- b. An employer suspects one of your clients has stolen the firm's petty cash fund.
- c. A welfare agency in Illinois asking you for information about your client.
- d. A client has a new address and phone number and needs to have his records updated.

Answer "a" is the correct answer. In this case, the child may be at immediate risk. You need to see what has been done and how you can help solve the problem.