

Central resource for school district  
employee test materials.

# CODESP

## WHAT'S NEW AT CODESP

We've recently beefed up some of the help materials on our web site, adding a wealth of new materials to make things easier for our registered users.

They include :

**Test-Taking Practice Test Links**—available under Links if you're a registered CATS user. The practice tests available on these sites are helpful in studying for many tests, including the Instructional Aide Test.

Included are: Test Prep for Calif. High School Exit Exam, Test-Taking Practice Grammar, Test-Taking Practice: Algebra, and Test-Taking Demos: Basic Math/Pre-Algebra/Algebra and Geometry. A link to LA County's Test Practice area are also included. Please consult these helpful tools as needed, or when counseling test-takers.

**More New Training Materials in CATS Resources**—Included among our vastly expanded resource materials are: Selection Planning Overview, Interview Design Guides, a Job Review Document, etc. Also included are new tutorials on test-taking skills in Power Point format. Be sure to visit the Resources and Links area often, we update it regularly.

**CATS**—Although during the start-up phase we experienced some technological problems with CATS, we have succeeded in ironing out the "bugs" with the valuable aid of our users' feedback. We appreciate all of your helpful feedback and, particularly, your patience. We hope to add more features soon.

**New Staff at CODESP**—CODESP has added new members to its family over the past several weeks, including: Kirk Smith, Selection Supervisor and Amy Tompkins, Selection Analyst. Both of them have many years of HR experience in the State of Louisiana. They are looking forward to meeting you and assisting you with all of your selection needs. Another new employee is Chris Turner who will be helping us mostly with accounting and payroll.

## WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO—

In addition to the enhancements to our website mentioned above, we have been out, "on the road", meeting and training our users. In July, Executive Director Marianne Tonjes gave a presentation on CATS at the Santa Barbara County Office of Education. In September, Selection Supervisor, Kirk Smith, gave a presentation on Selection Planning to CATS users at the Santa Clara County Office of Education. We hope to be able to provide more of this kind of training to our users—not only showing them how to obtain selection materials from CATS, but also, how to most effectively use those materials once they obtain them.

# How To Interview Candidates: Keep It Legal

*edited from an article by [Louise Kursmark](#)*

Fair hiring laws were enacted to give every candidate a fair shake in the interview and selection process. Yet more than 40 years after the first of these guidelines became law, job candidates today still are asked questions that are illegal, insulting and irrelevant to job performance. The keys to eradicating this kind of behavior are ongoing education and consistent interviewing and selection practices.

## Planning and Preparation are the First Steps

As an HR professional, it is your job to train and guide hiring managers and other district interviewers in fair hiring practices. Many companies mandate a formal training program before any employee is permitted to interview candidates; it's also a good idea to provide a written overview for all interviewers and a brief refresher curriculum from time to time. And it is the responsibility of the HR department to stay up to date on new laws and legal interpretation of existing acts.

## Job Relevance is the Key Factor

Your interview questions should be designed to determine a candidate's capability to perform the essential functions you have defined for the job. Just be sure to couch your inquiries in job-relevant language, and don't make assumptions about a candidate's ability or disability.

For example, let's say you are interviewing a wheelchair-bound candidate for a position, and you have determined that an essential function of the job is to visit different schools. It's perfectly legal to ask how the candidate would perform this essential function:

"This job will require you to be out of the office meeting with teachers at various schools several days per week. Can you perform this duty?"

It is not OK to say to this same candidate, "How long have you been disabled?"

In other areas, where a disability is not visible, again you should confine your questions to essential job functions or workplace environment issues. For example, while you cannot ask a candidate if he or she has children or has adequate child care, you can ask about ability to perform the job:

"This job requires you to travel overnight about two days per week and to attend out-of-town conferences once per month. Does this travel schedule present a problem for you?"

## Legal and Illegal Inquiries

Following are some of the key areas that are covered by fair hiring laws. You will see a trend in what is legal and what is illegal -- essentially, you cannot ask questions that will reveal information that can lead to bias in hiring, but you can ask questions that relate to job performance.

- **Affiliations:** Do not ask about clubs, social organizations or union membership; do ask about relevant professional associations.
- **Age:** Do not ask a candidate's age other than "if hired," can a candidate produce proof that he or she is 18 years of age.
- **Alcohol or Drug Use:** The only allowable question relating to current or past drug or alcohol use is, "Do you currently use illegal drugs?"
- **Criminal Record:** Do not ask if a candidate has been arrested; you may ask if the candidate has ever been convicted of a crime if it is job-related.
- **Culture/Natural Origin:** You may ask if the individual can, "upon hire," provide proof of legal right to work in the United States. You may ask about language fluency if it is relevant to job performance. part of the selection process.

- **Disability:** You may ask if candidates can perform essential job functions, with or without reasonable accommodation, and you may ask them to demonstrate how they would perform a job-related function. You may ask about prior attendance records. And you may require candidates to undergo a medical exam after an offer of employment has been made for certain positions.
  - **Marital/Family Status:** Questions about marital status and family issues are discouraged except as they relate to job performance, as in the child care example above.
  - **Personal:** Avoid questions related to appearance, home ownership and personal financial situation.
  - **Race/Color:** No race-related questions are legal.
  - **Religion:** If Saturday or Sunday is a required workday, you may ask candidates if they will have a problem working on those days.
- Sex:** You may ask if a candidate has ever worked under another name. Be sure not to make gender related assumptions about job capabilities.

### How to Deal with Information That Is Volunteered

Despite your careful preparation and question selection, some candidates will volunteer information that you would prefer not to know. The best way to handle this situation is not to pursue it nor to make note of it. You can't erase the information from your memory, but you can eliminate it as a discussion point and selection factor.

### Consistency Equals Fairness

Carefully planned questions and a structured interview process that is the same for all candidates will ensure equal treatment of all who apply. Keep the focus on what the job requires and how each candidate has performed in the past. Perhaps most importantly, make fair hiring part of your company's mission and value statement, championed from the top down and an integral part of selection.

## RELATED HELPFUL LINKS

### [Legal Context of Assessment-Employment Laws and Regulations](#)

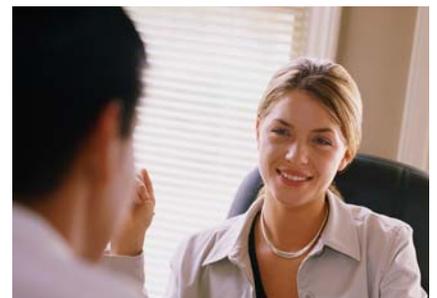
The number of laws and regulations governing the employment process has increased over the past four decades. Many of these laws and regulations have important implications for conducting employment assessment. This link discusses what you should do to make your practices consistent with legal, professional, and ethical standards.  
<http://www.hr-guide.com/data/G361.htm>

### [California State Personnel Board](#)

Good source for governmental publications/rules on testing.  
<http://www.spb.ca.gov/TVC/publications.htm>



**WWW.CODESP.COM**



# UPCOMING WRIPAC TRAINING

## ***Holiday Inn - San Diego on the Bay***

January 25, 2006 Training      January 26 - 27, 2006 Conference

Join other public agency HR staff for training in San Diego. Two one-day training topics will be offered including Workforce Planning and Training and Experience Applicant Evaluations (Supplemental Application Forms). The regular two-day WRIPAC meeting will follow on the 26th and 27th. There is only a fee for the Pre-conference training classes, the two day meeting that follows is free and all public employers are invited. Presentations during the conference will focus on assessment-related HR topics. For registration information, go to [www.wripac.org](http://www.wripac.org), or email [kirk@codesp.com](mailto:kirk@codesp.com) if you have questions.

## DIRECTOR OPENINGS

### Director IV, Classified Personnel

*Deadline: 10/24/2005* San Ramon Valley Unified, Danville

***Contra Costa County*** \$69,812 - \$94,724

### Director, Human Resources

*Deadline: Until Filled* Foothill DeAnza Community College, Los Altos

***Santa Clara County*** \$86,736.96-\$89,952.96

### Director-Human Resources

*Deadline: 10/10/2005* Torrance Unified, Torrance

***Los Angeles County*** \$6,094-\$7,406 per month

## NEW TEST MATERIALS

If a CODESP member cannot find the test materials they need after logging in and clicking on Resources, CODESP staff will develop custom materials. Multiple Choice test items are requested through completion of the CATS Request Form. Examples of the type of topics of the materials (interviews and/or multiple choice test items) developed this past month include:

**Welder (update)**  
**Medi-Cal**  
**Customer Service**

**SQL and Cold Fusion**  
**Smog Check and Auto Emissions**

**DON'T FORGET TO UPDATE YOUR CATS USER'S PAGE EVERY TIME  
THERE IS A CHANGE IN CATS ELIGIBLE STAFF IN YOUR OFFICE!**

# TRAINING/EVENTS

Logon and Click on **Events** to Register Online  
Guests Don't Need to Log-On to Register

**Member Login**

Before registering, please log in to access your account.

Login:

Password:

[I Need Help Logging In!](#)

**i** If you are registered for CATS, please log in above. If you are not registered in the CATS system, fill in and submit the form below to register for this event.

First Name:\*

Last Name:\*

Email:\*

Address:\*

City, State, Zip:\*  CA

District:\*

Phone:\* (  )  -  ext:

Fax: (  )  -

We are in the process of scheduling Selection Planning training meetings in the following areas:

**Fresno County**  
**Kern County**

and Legal Updates in Selection in:

**Sacramento County**

Check back to the Events area often for details. If you would like a training meeting in your area, please let us know. The meetings are free and are typically on Fridays from 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon.



## MEMBERSHIP DOCUMENTS

### SAMPLE TESTS (NOT TO BE USED AS PRACTICE TESTS)

#### CUSTODIAN

#### FOOD SERVICE

#### INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE

#### OFFICE CLERK

#### SECRETARY

#### SPANISH

Spanish - Translation

Spanish Fill-In Vocabulary

Spanish/English & English/Spanish

## EMPLOYMENT DOCUMENTS

### SPANISH UNDER INTERPRETER IN EACH CATEGORY

### SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION FORMS

### INTERVIEW DESIGN INSTRUCTIONS AND PANEL GUIDES

### INTERVIEWS

### WRITING EXERCISES

### PERFORMANCE EXERCISES

### INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE OBSERVATION

## TESTING DOCUMENTS

### TEST DEVELOPMENT FORMS

Job Review Document (mini job analysis)

Selection Plan Overview

SME Security Agreement Form

### CATS TEST REQUEST FORM

## TUTORIALS

CATS Tutorial - Item Analysis

CATS Tutorial - Obtaining and creating selection materials

CATS Tutorial - Registering For CATS

CATS Tutorial - Registering for Events

Instructional Aide Tutorial (For Member's Only Not to be Posted on District Websites)

Selection Plan Overview (also found in Testing Documents)

Test Taking Tips (General PowerPoint Presentation) for Paraeducators

Test Taking Tips (Math Power Point Presentation) for Paraeducators

Test Taking Tips for (Language/Reading PowerPoint Presentation) for Paraeducators

Test Taking Tips-General Tutorial (For Member's Only Not to be Posted on District Websites)

Click on Resources

New Sample Tests to Access Spanish/  
English Language Skills

New Information About Test Development  
and Developing a Selection Plan

New PowerPoint Training  
on Test Taking