

TOP 10 WAYS TO BE AN OUTSTANDING CANDIDATE FOR THE MISSOULA POLICE DEPARTMENT

10. LISTEN CAREFULLY. Be an active listener, especially during the interview process. Listen carefully to the questions asked and think before you respond. Take a few seconds to formulate a thoughtful, concise answer. Active listening is a valuable skill in this job.

9. KNOW YOURSELF. Know why you want to work in this profession, and how your background, skills and aptitude indicate success in performing specific duties. Agencies want to know your capability and potential to address the various issues and challenges faced in police service.

8. CANDOR AND SINCERITY. Demonstrate sincerity, candor, integrity and personal conviction. If you are not yourself, it will show! Avoid canned responses; they want to see who you are, how you think and what you value.

7. TRUTHFULNESS. In all phases of the hiring process, be completely truthful and omit nothing asked of you. Everything you say or write in the entire process will be cross-compared. Untruthfulness in any form results in immediate disqualification – and is the #1 reason candidates are eliminated from the hiring process. Integrity, honesty and trustworthiness are the bedrock requirements of public service professions. No agency will equivocate with a shortcoming in this area.

6. PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS ATTIRE. Dress and groom professionally and conservatively during any interview. Failure to do so needlessly stacks the deck against you right away. Agency representatives are conservative and expect professional appearance in dress and personal grooming. If you are unsure what constitutes conservative attire and grooming, ask someone who knows.

5. PUNCTUALITY. Arrive at ALL appointments at least 10 minutes early. Develop a habit of being early. No reasons will be accepted for late arrivals. Anticipate any possible cause for a delay; scope out the parking availability and nearest to the department prior to your appointment. Accommodating a late arrival adversely affects the entire interview schedule and portrays poor time management skills.

4. KNOWLEDGE OF THE DEPARTMENT AND PROFESSION. Applicants must have a solid knowledge of the specific duties and demands of this profession, as well as, knowledge of this agency and City. Good sources are our website, City Council reports, Missoulian archives, talking to agency personnel, friends in the profession, and ride-a-longs. This knowledge will be tested in virtually every contact and interview.

3. FOLLOW APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS. You must read and meticulously follow all instructions. Application and background forms must contain all required information. Failure to follow written or verbal instructions reflects poorly on the candidate, and in most cases may result in disqualification. Public safety positions demand rigorous attention to detail and thoroughness. Sloppy, incomplete and error-filled paperwork indicates the candidate's lack of professional attitude.

2. COMMUNICATION SKILLS. Oral and written communications skills are critical in police work, and are emphasized in the testing and interview process. Practice through mock oral board interviews and video/audio taping yourself. Make eye contact with all panel members and practice concise, confident answers. Eliminate distracting verbal and nonverbal mannerisms. Oral communications skills and the ability to establish rapport with an interview panel can be developed through practice and honest feedback from others.

1. PREPARATION. You must prepare for EVERY stage of the hiring process. This includes the initial testing process, interviews, background investigation, etc. The prepared are noticed and so are the unprepared. Be noticed for the right reasons! Prepare for commonly asked oral board questions. Maintain physical fitness and practice wellness. Very narrow point margins typically separate candidates and diligent preparation often makes the difference between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

GOOD LUCK TO YOU AS YOU PURSUE A CAREER WITH THE MISSOULA POLICE DEPARTMENT.

