

Illinois Workplace Skills Assessment

Practice Items: Set 3

These practice items are intended to give students and teachers an idea of the kinds of items and types of topics covered in the Workplace Skills Assessment. These items have not appeared on a test in the past and will not appear on any future tests.

There are three practice sets. Each set contains practice items designed to assess understanding of the six skill areas measured by the assessment: communication, adapting and coping with change, problem solving and critical thinking, work ethics, technological literacy, and teamwork. In some cases, more than one answer may seem correct, but students should select the best answer choice for that particular test item. The answer key is included at the end of the set.

Please use these practice sets in ways most useful to you and your students. You may want to have students work through one complete set or focus on one topic area across all three sets. You may also select individual items from any of the sets and create your own practice test. In addition to discussing the answer choices, students will benefit from a discussion of the basic concepts underlying the items—employer expectations, prioritizing, effective behaviors when working in teams, and interpersonal communication in the workplace.

Area D: Communication

Use this information to answer the next two questions.

Jamie is conducting a seminar for new employees. She notices that an employee is drawing pictures in a notebook rather than taking notes on the material being presented.

1. **What is Jamie's most likely interpretation of this behavior?**
 - a. Jamie is not speaking loudly enough.
 - b. The employee is a good artist.
 - c. The presentation is too difficult to understand.
 - d. The employee is not interested in her presentation.

2. **What should Jamie do to encourage the employee to listen and be involved in the presentation?**
 - a. Ask the person to leave the room and come back later.
 - b. Stare at the person until the drawing stops.
 - c. Ask the person on a break if there is some concern.
 - d. Talk louder to get the person's attention.

3. **Jon is giving a presentation and Harold raises his hand. If Jon wants to finish his presentation before answering questions, how should he respond to Harold?**
 - a. Say that he'll be glad to respond to all questions at the end.
 - b. Ignore the raised hand and go on speaking.
 - c. Say "No questions right now" in a stern voice.
 - d. Stop and answer the question but say "No more questions until the end."

4. **Chris answers the phone to find an angry client on the other end. What should Chris do first to keep control of the conversation?**
 - a. Hang up quickly before the situation gets worse.
 - b. Tell the caller that this is the wrong department.
 - c. Listen and work toward calming down the caller.
 - d. Transfer the caller immediately to the office supervisor.

5. **Mike has stopped by Tom's office to talk about his latest vacation. After a few minutes Tom stands up and moves closer to the door. What does Tom's body language most likely suggest?**
 - a. That Tom would like the conversation to end
 - b. That Tom is glad Mike stopped by
 - c. That Tom is tired of sitting and needs to stretch
 - d. That Tom has somewhere to go with Mike

6. **Mary gives Sue a stack of letters to address and mail. It is important the letters are mailed on time. Which question would be most important for Sue to ask?**
 - a. "From which post office should they be mailed?"
 - b. "By when do they need to be mailed?"
 - c. "How many letters are in the stack?"
 - d. "How long will the job take?"

7. **Janice is leading a team discussion about ways to address several department problems. Bill, a 30-year employee, keeps interrupting others to give his solutions. Janice can see that the others are getting frustrated with Bill. What is her best next step to reduce the team's frustration?**
 - a. Challenge Bill in front of the group and tell him to be quiet.
 - b. Ignore Bill's behavior and set up another meeting without him.
 - c. Tell Bill that she will give him 10 minutes at the end of the meeting to share all his ideas.
 - d. Talk with Bill privately on a break, compliment his knowledge, and ask him to let the others talk.

8. **Tom is the second-shift leader at a large chemical plant. On his shift, three pumps broke down but were repaired and are working fine now, two second-shift employees called in sick, the only computerized robot was out of service and is still waiting to be repaired, and a small, non-toxic chemical spill had been cleaned up. Tom is getting ready for the shift changeover meeting with Susan, the next shift leader. What is the most important information for Susan to know?**
 - a. When the computerized robot will be back in service
 - b. Which employees were assigned extra work on second shift?
 - c. How the chemical was cleaned up on second shift
 - d. How much it cost to repair the pumps

Area G: Adapting and Coping with Change

1. **Jan has a two-year college degree but lacks computer knowledge and skills. What would likely be best for Jan to do to gain that background?**
 - a. Take a one-day seminar on how to use the computer.
 - b. Buy books about computers and learn that way.
 - c. Take computer classes at a local community college.
 - d. Get an entry-level job using a computer.

2. **Sally works as a receptionist in an office. She has seen many want ads in the newspaper for receptionist positions at other companies that pay more. She wants to earn more money but is already making the top salary at her present company. What would be her best next step?**
 - a. Ask her boss for a raise.
 - b. Quit and then look for another job.
 - c. Update her resume and start sending it out.
 - d. Tell people in the office that she wants to work somewhere else.

3. **Sandra has just received a promotion and needs to train Kalen to take her position. What is the best way for Sandra to train Kalen to do her former job?**
 - a. Give Kalen a specific task to do and point out all the mistakes.
 - b. Let Kalen do everything on her own without any assistance.
 - c. Continue to do all the work herself and let Kalen learn by watching her.
 - d. Give Kalen some background, review her work, and coach as needed.

4. **Which is generally true about reactions to change?**
 - a. People vary widely in how much they like change.
 - b. Change is always easy if a person prepares for it.
 - c. Change produces anxiety only if it is caused by someone else.
 - d. The person most comfortable with a change is the one who proposed it.

5. **Kim's current job has never required report-writing skills, but Kim will need those skills to transfer to a better-paying job in another department. What is the best way for Kim to gain the necessary skills?**
 - a. Observe people at work who are writing reports.
 - b. Take report-writing classes at the local community college.
 - c. Take a one-day seminar on the basics of report writing.
 - d. Buy a book on how to write a report and practice while at work.

6. **Peter works as a graphic artist. His career goal is to be an advertising account manager. He has limited experience working face-to-face with customers, and he knows that he needs that experience to be successful in his field. Which transition job would best help him work toward his career goal?**
 - a. Artist in a major corporation with a large art department
 - b. Sales clerk in an art supply store
 - c. Account representative for a mail order catalog company
 - d. Front desk clerk at a large hotel

7. **While George is happy with his current job, there have been rumors that his company may be taken over by a larger corporation. What would be the best thing for George to do to prepare for the future?**
 - a. Make sure his resume is up-to-date.
 - b. Quit now and look for another job before the rumors prove true.
 - c. Ignore the rumors since that kind of change is unlikely.
 - d. Accept only short-term assignments since the future is unclear.

Area H: Solving Problems and Critical Thinking

1. **Jane has been hired to manage a sales office that is losing money. In order to turn things around, she will need to make some changes. Which should she do first?**
 - a. Meet with the employees and tell them they will have to work harder or be fired.
 - b. Meet with the employees and explain the reason for the changes.
 - c. Shorten breaks and reduce the amount of time given for lunch.
 - d. Collect sales performance information on each salesperson in the office.

Use the following information to answer the next two questions.

Maurice is a clerk at a small retail store. At the end of every day, he checks the cash register printout against the money in the drawer. For the past three days, the drawer has been exactly 57 cents short each day when compared to the cash register printout.

2. **What should Maurice do?**
 - a. Change the printout to match the money in the drawer.
 - b. Bring the situation to the attention of a supervisor.
 - c. Add 57 cents to the drawer so it will match the printout.
 - d. Do nothing until someone else notices the missing 57 cents.
3. **Which is the most logical explanation for the 57-cent error happening every day?**
 - a. Someone took some change from the drawer three days ago.
 - b. Maurice is unable to count change properly.
 - c. The cash register is programmed incorrectly.
 - d. Another employee is stealing money.

Use the following information to answer the next TWO questions.

André is given a packet that contains a business card, a business envelope, a personal envelope, a red form, and a green information sheet. Attached to the packet is the following note from his boss: Use the information on the business card to address both envelopes and leave the business card on the desk. Completely fill out the red form and put it in the business envelope. Give both envelopes to the receptionist; she knows what to do with everything. The green sheet is yours to keep.

4. **Which should André leave on the desk?**
 - a. The business envelope
 - b. The business card
 - c. The green sheet
 - d. The red form

5. **What should André do if he is uncertain how to fill out an item on the red form?**
 - a. Ask the receptionist for advice.
 - b. Leave the item blank and return the form.
 - c. Guess what should be written and return the form.
 - d. Attach a note explaining his reason for not answering the item.

Use this information to answer the next THREE questions.

Make a table with three columns and three rows. The table will show how a community agency gets its funding. Label the columns in the following order from left to right: Administration, Facility, Program. Label the rows in the following order from top to bottom: Grants, Gifts, Pledges. In the first two rows of the Administration column, put \$10,000 and \$30,000. In the second and third rows of the Facility column, put \$50,000 and \$10,000. In the first and second rows of the Program column put \$50,000 and \$10,000. In the last row of the Administration column and the first row of the Facility column put \$5,000.

6. **How much money will the agency receive from Gifts?**
 - a. \$45,000
 - b. \$60,000
 - c. \$65,000
 - d. \$90,000

7. **How much money including pledges will be available for Administration?**

- a. \$40,000
- b. \$45,000
- c. \$50,000
- d. \$65,000

8. **How much grant money is available for Facilities?**

- a. \$ 5,000
- b. \$10,000
- c. \$30,000
- d. \$50,000

Area J: Work Ethics

1. **Mike works for the state government. Recently he received a job offer from a private company. How much notice should Mike give before leaving?**
 - a. Two hours
 - b. Two days
 - c. Two weeks
 - d. Two months

Use this information to answer the next TWO questions.

Marsha and Brandon work in the Human Resources department. One day Marsha is alone and gets a call from Terry, another employee, who has not received the packet of health insurance information that Brandon had promised to send to him.

2. **What is the best way for Marsha to respond to the call?**
 - a. "I'm sorry that happened. Let me send you another one today."
 - b. "I'm sorry that happened. Brandon never does things right. I'll send another one."
 - c. "That's Brandon's job. I'm the only one here. You'll have to wait or call back later."
 - d. "What a shame. I must have made an error. Please forgive me."
3. **What should Marsha say to Brandon?**
 - a. "Terry didn't receive his packet. Why didn't you send it out?"
 - b. "Terry didn't receive his packet. That really made us look bad!"
 - c. "Terry didn't receive his packet so I sent him another. Was there a mix-up?"
 - d. "Terry didn't receive his packet so I sent another one and let him know you messed it up."
4. **Kim's company requires all employees to wear safety glasses when walking through the machine shop area. What is the main reason for this requirement?**
 - a. To protect employees from injury
 - b. To prevent employees from filing lawsuits
 - c. To comply with government regulations
 - d. To make sure employees can see the equipment

5. Jason has taken the department laptop computer home for several days at a time this month so that his son can do school projects. All employees know that the laptop is needed for daily department work. Jason's supervisor has learned of this situation. What should the supervisor do next?
- a. Say nothing unless another employee complains.
 - b. Ask Jason to keep the laptop at work since others use it, too.
 - c. Let Jason keep taking the laptop since Jason is a productive employee.
 - d. Let Jason keep taking the laptop because he has only taken it a few times.

Area K: Technological Literacy

1. **Which unit is the smallest unit of information storage on a computer?**
 - a. Ohm
 - b. Zip
 - c. Byte
 - d. Watt

2. **Joe needs information about some employees from another department supervisor. What is the best way for him to ask for that information so that the request can be kept confidential?**
 - a. In person
 - b. By e-mail
 - c. By voice mail
 - d. On a conference call

3. **If Jamal wants to have proof that the person to whom he sent information actually received it, which is the best way for him to send that information?**
 - a. E-mail
 - b. Telephone
 - c. Voice mail
 - d. Registered letter

4. **Why is it necessary to save information on a disk or on line often?**
 - a. In case of a computer crash
 - b. In case of a virus on the Internet
 - c. In case of printer problems
 - d. In case of Internet congestion

5. **Shondra is selecting equipment for the office. Which should she select to provide the office with the same message-taking capabilities as answering machines?**
 - a. Fax machine
 - b. Photocopier
 - c. E-mail
 - d. Voice mail

6. **Chris has written a program complete with graphics and text that is over two hundred pages long. He needs to save the program to disk. What kind of storage capacity will he need?**
 - a. Gigabyte
 - b. Gigawatt
 - c. Megahertz
 - d. Megabyte

7. **Nathan has important information to send Harriet about a new computer component that will help both their companies. He wants to make sure that only Harriet can see the information. Which should Nathan do if he wants to keep the information confidential?**
 - a. Attach a document to an e-mail message.
 - b. Leave a voice-mail message.
 - c. Deliver the information in person.
 - d. Place a conference call.

8. **Which of the following is most likely the correct Internet address for Maple University?**
 - a. www.maple.com
 - b. www.maple.gov
 - c. www.maple.edu
 - d. www.maple.net

9. **Sam works for FishCo and is trying to find information about FishCo's main competitor, SwimFood. Which Internet address is the best choice for Sam to use when looking for information about SwimFood?**
 - a. www.goswim.org
 - b. www.swimfood.edu
 - c. www.swim.net
 - d. www.swimfood.com

10. **When using computer programs that contain confidential company information, what is best to do in order to prevent others from gaining access to the material?**
 - a. Always exit the program and log off before leaving the computer.
 - b. Tell everybody to leave the computer alone while on break.
 - c. Minimize the program on the tool bar and rename it.
 - d. Let the screen saver blank out the screen when the computer is unused.

11. **Which is the most common way computers contract viruses?**
 - a. By exchanging programs and files between computers

- b. By putting an unformatted floppy into the computer
- c. By receiving internal company e-mail
- d. By surfing the web

Area M: Teamwork

1. **Six team members need to write a detailed report at the end of their project. What is likely the best first step for them to take to get this task done?**
 - a. Split up the work into six equal parts.
 - b. Break into three pairs and work as teams.
 - c. Discuss the task and find out who has the expertise to write the report.
 - d. Get to know each other in a social way and then decide how to go about writing the report.

2. **Tom is an expert at operating mechanical equipment. The company has recently introduced a new piece of equipment, and it's Tom's responsibility to make sure all shift workers know how to use it. Lorena is the newest shift member and has never operated mechanical equipment before. Which is the best way for Tom to be sure that Lorena can operate the equipment?**
 - a. Operate the equipment for Lorena while she watches.
 - b. Watch Lorena use the equipment and praise or correct as needed.
 - c. Tell Lorena to watch a video training program and call if she has questions.
 - d. Watch Lorena use the equipment and point out all her mistakes.

3. **Paula has been asked to train a new employee on the company's e-mail system. What is likely the first thing Paula should do to make the training work well?**
 - a. Find out how much the employee already knows about e-mail.
 - b. Sit at the employee's computer and demonstrate the e-mail system.
 - c. Give the new employee a book that explains the e-mail system.
 - d. Tell the new employee to try the e-mail system and ask for help if needed.

4. **Several members of a work team disagree about how to complete a project. How should this disagreement be resolved?**
 - a. Vote on the best solution.
 - b. Ask to change the project schedule.
 - d. Form a committee to discuss how to solve the project problem.
 - c. Talk through the problem to come to a solution all can accept.

Answer Key: Set 3

Area D: Communication

1. D
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. A
6. B
7. D
8. A

Area G: Adapting and Coping with Change

1. C
2. C
3. D
4. A
5. B
6. B
7. A

Area H: Solving Problems and Critical Thinking

1. D
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. A
6. D
7. B
8. A

Area J: Work Ethics

1. C
2. A
1. C
2. A
3. B

Area K: Technological Literacy

1. C
2. A
3. D
4. A
5. D
6. A
7. C
8. C
9. D
10. A
11. A

Area M: Teamwork

1. C
2. B
3. A
4. C