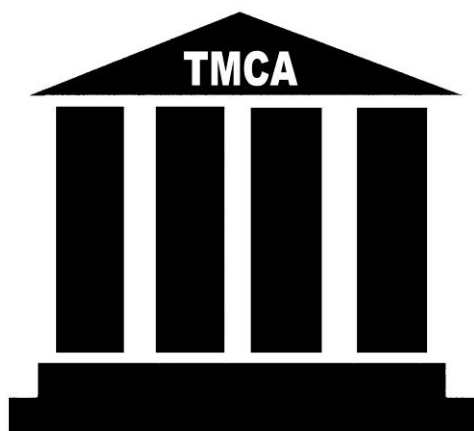


Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program



Study Questions



Level III

Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program

The Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, in cooperation with the Texas Court Clerks Association, the Texas Municipal Courts Association and Texas State University- San Marcos, is sponsoring the *Municipal Court Clerks Certification Program*. This optional program for municipal court clerks is designed with three levels of certification. In order to advance through the different levels, clerks must pass a standardized written exam and satisfy other conditions.

Purpose of Study Questions

The study questions provided here are to be used as an aid in preparing for the Level III exam. There is a set of questions for each of the books required for Level III. The best way to be prepared for the Level III exam is to read each book on the reading list. As you read each book, answer the questions prepared for that book. Before taking the test, review the questions.

See the following pages for a complete list of the books required to be read for Level III. The test is comprised of questions from each of these books. This study guide is produced by the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (TMCEC).

TMCEC is a project of the Texas Municipal Courts Association and is funded annually by a grant from the Court of Criminal Appeals. Its purpose is to provide educational programs and materials to assist municipal court judges and court support personnel in their work.

Secondary Source of Law

These materials are for educational purposes only and may not be used as a substitute for legal advice or counsel. Should any material in these publications conflict with required legal procedures in the State of Texas, contact your city attorney for advice. If you have any questions or comments about the required books, please contact the Center at 800/252-3718.

The views expressed in the required readings are solely those of the authors and not those of the Center or the Board of Directors, the Texas Municipal Courts Association, or the Texas Court Clerks Association. Judges and their staffs should contact their city attorneys with any specific questions about the operations of their courts.

Questions or Comments

TMCEC intends to periodically review these books and your ideas and suggestions concerning this material will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about the material in this study guide or if you would like to send us your ideas and suggestions concerning this and subsequent revisions of this work, please contact the Center:

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Study Tips for the Municipal Clerks Certification Program

The following is a list of study tips that is intended to help you successfully prepare for taking the tests for each level of the Clerks Certification Program, which is co-sponsored by the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (TMCEC), the Texas Municipal Courts Association (TMCA) and the Texas Court Clerks Association (TCCA). If you find other practices that helped you prepare for testing, please contact TMCEC at 800/252-3718 and we will add those to this list.

1. Relax! You can do this. After all, there are many clerks who have already passed and say that the experience has added greatly to their confidence in their abilities and to their career.
2. Be pleased and proud that you have a program that recognizes your professionalism and the complexities of your work. You now have a means of developing a career path that should make you more valuable to your city.
3. Keep a positive focus: success includes reaching retake status. This is a professional program that requires effort on your part. You already know that you deal with a set of complex, complicated laws that require much thought and analysis to administer.
4. If you are concerned about having to tell people that you did not pass the first time, avoid telling anyone that you are taking the exam. Announce your success after you pass. However, some people do better with motivational support from others. Get together with other clerks to study. This support from may help throughout your preparation.
5. Register within the time deadline for the test. Do not postpone the date you take the exam because you get nervous. (The money is not refundable.) Everyone has second thoughts. Just take the exam anyway, even if you haven't studied as much as you had planned. If you do not pass and get into a retake situation, then you can focus your study on the areas of the test that you experienced the most difficulty.
6. Remind yourself as you study that you will reap rewards though your increased knowledge. Also, you will earn the esteem and respect of your colleagues and others in your profession. Keep this in mind when you may be tired and discouraged.
7. Cities are beginning to recognize the importance of the program and making the certification program a requirement for performing the job. To encourage clerks to participate, some cities are giving merit raises for achieving each level of the program.

8. Become a “smart reader.” Being a “smart reader” means reading faster, improving reading comprehension and improving reading recall. “Smart readers” read long phrases instead of words; pre-read as a filter for deeper reading; scan documents for key words; skim material for structure; and deep read for comprehension when necessary. The following are tips to help you become a “smart reader”: (1) skim each topic in the study guides by reading the table of contents; (2) scan each chapter by asking yourself, “Do I already know this?”; (3) review legal terminology before reading the text of each chapter; (4) prioritize the information in each chapter into the following categories: completely understand; general knowledge, no knowledge; (5) after prioritizing the information, generally review information that you understand; read information that you have general knowledge of for concepts, key words and issues; and information that you have no knowledge of learn definitions and then break information into smaller segments and master each segment before moving on to the next.
9. Develop a study plan, breaking up your focus areas into weekly exam sessions. Take all the practice questions in the study guides and the study sessions. Do not get discouraged if you score poorly on the practice questions—remember that practice makes perfect. Retake the practice tests until you are comfortable with the knowledge and the types of questions that you will encounter on the test.
10. Reading the material and answering the questions in each guide will make a big difference in understanding the questions on the test. **Just studying the answer key in each guide and not reading the material may cause you to fail the test.** To understand principal legal concepts and procedural issues, you must read the material.
11. Attend educational programs provided by TMCEC, TMCA and TCCA. Along with the knowledge that you gain, you also receive credit toward your educational requirement of the certification program for each program attended.
12. Reserve at least three to four months prior to the exam for studying. Commit to concentrated study each day for 60 to 90 days prior to the exam. Prepare a schedule of two to three hours each study period several times a week.
13. Adults do not all learn the same way. Determine how you learn best (listening, writing, reading, note-taking, working with another clerk or a combination of these methods) and organize your time accordingly.
14. Locate a book at your local library or college bookstore on general test taking strategies and apply them to your study and knowledge to improve your test taking abilities.
15. Locate someone else who is preparing for the exam and form a study group to keep you focused and to help you study. Many of the local

chapters of the TCCA have already formed these types of study groups. They are motivational and a great support in this endeavor.

16. Find a clerk who has already passed the exam for which you are studying and ask the clerk to be your mentor. Everybody in the program is willing to help other clerks working for this professional designation.
17. Remember that “false” questions usually have words like “only,” “always,” “must,” and “never.” “True” questions usually have words like “may,” “generally,” “after,” and “could.” Look to match verb tense and singular or plurals when answering multiple-choice questions.
18. Prepare sets of flashcards with legal terminology and take them with you everywhere there might be a chance you will have a few free moments to use them.
19. For Level III, you have to write a journal of your 40 hours of court observations. The best way to practice writing is to write, write, write. Practice your punctuation and sentence structure. Use *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White and/or *The Elements of Grammar* by Margaret Shertzer for reference. After a while, it becomes second nature.
20. Be aware of details, logic and reasoning when writing your journal. You will be graded in these areas. Practice by writing memorandums in your court that uses logic, analysis and reasoning. Review policy and procedures manuals for the logic behind performing certain functions in your court.
21. Get plenty of rest and exercise as you study. Do not burn yourself out.
22. Do not give up. Keep a positive attitude. Stick to your goal and see yourself as successful.
23. Get a good night’s sleep before the examination, relax and do your best! If you get discouraged, find a mentor clerk who has gone through the process successfully for encouragement and help.

Municipal Court Clerks Certification Program

Study Questions

Level III

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***Organizing Your Workspace:
A Guide to Personal Productivity (Revised Edition)****

1. What are the benefits of being organized?

2. What are the key principles of organization?

3. What causes backlogs to develop?

4. What questions should you ask to determine where a current paper processing system has broken down, causing clutter?

* Odette Pollar, *Organizing Your Workspace: A Guide to Personal Productivity (Revised Edition)*, Crisp Publications, Inc.: 1999.

5. Describe the “fear of dumping” and when you should “dump.”

6. Explain the “fear of becoming rigid and inflexible.”

7. What is the first step in getting organized, and what should be considered when making the decision?

8. When starting the organizing process, why should you start with the area farthest away from you?

9. Describe how to reduce, refer, and rearrange your bookcases.

10. What is the guiding principle when sorting?

11. How should "prime working space" on a person's desk be used?

12. How should equipment in your office be arranged?

13. What are some ergonomic arrangements that you should consider in arranging your office?

14. List the steps for arranging file drawers.

15. List common filing mistakes.

16. List the five ways files can be categorized.

17. How do you set up subject files so that it is easier to retrieve information?

18. Describe filing principles of alphabetizing and filing articles by subject.

19. List five principles to help maintain a filing system.

20. How should papers on the top of a desk be managed?

21. List tips for using calendars.

22. What are the purposes of a daily to-do list?

23. When should a master list be used?

24. How should delegated work be tracked?

25. What is the best way of handling business cards that you acquire during the course of business?

26. Explain how tickler files are helpful.

27. How do you handle miscellaneous items that do not seem to fit anywhere?

28. How should you process the "in-box?"

29. How do you keep stacks of paper from reforming?

30. List some good paper management habits.

31. Describe how to best manage incoming mail.

32. What four actions can be taken when processing a stack of reading material?

33. List reading tips to help manage getting through business publications.

34. List e-mail tips that will help properly manage e-mail.

35. How should day planners and personal organizers be used to help manage your time?

Leadership When the Heat's On (Revised Edition)*

1. What does Cox mean, "Work First on Yourself?"

2. What does Cox say is the manager's daily choice?

3. Outline the four levels of motivation described by Cox and give an example of the process needed to move a person up to the next level.

4. Explain: "Leadership requires a constant balance between action and caution."

* Danny Cox with John Hoover, *Leadership When The Heat's On*, McGraw-Hill Inc., 2002.

5. Explain and give an example from your court: When the “up-pressure” collides with the “down pressure”, there is heat or friction.

6. What does Cox mean when he says that the title of leader is honorary?

7. Interpret this quote from Cox’s book: “Effective leaders look like vaudevillians more often than they look like Einstein.”

8. Interpret this quote: “Good is the enemy of best and best is the enemy of better.”

9. Why does Cox argue that leaders should seek to inspire rather than impress?

10. List 10 leadership characteristics described by Cox.

11. Cox discusses humangement and suggests five ways to help unlock the talent that resides within each employee. List the five ways.

12. What are the three recommended steps to grow as a leader?

13. Describe the concept of a “brag book”. What might a court’s brag book contain?

14. What are three techniques for enhancing motivation so that employees internalize the goals of the organization?

15. What are the three steps to setting and achieving goals?

16. List four time wasters employed by too many managers.

17. List 10 decisive ways to deal with interruptions.

18. List 10 warning signals of low morale.

19. List nine common causes for low morale.

20. List the 10 fundamentals of a high morale environment.

21. What are five ground rules for dealing keeping top achievers happy?

22. To use meetings to boost morale, Cox suggests laying out your meetings using six planning devices. Describe them.

23. Using the guidelines provided by Cox, do a self-critique of one of your meetings.

24. List 10 of the 15 practical methods recommended by Cox to help you achieve higher levels of self-fulfillment and personal/professional growth for yourself.

25. What are the three recommended steps to verifying a new idea?

26. What are the four greatest barriers to creativity?

***Applied Strategic Planning:
How to Develop a Plan that Really Works****

1. Define strategic planning.

2. How does planning to plan prepare the organization for actual strategic planning?

3. Contrast Applied Strategic Planning with Long Range Planning. What does Applied Strategic Planning emphasize?

4. Name and describe the nine phases and two continuous processes of Applied Strategic Planning.

*Leonard Goodstein, Timothy Nolan, J. William Pfeiffer, *Applied Strategic Planning: How to Develop A Plan That Really Works*, McGraw-Hill Inc.: 1993.

5. What is envisioning? When does it occur?

6. Compare and contrast different types of culture.

7. What is the CEO's role during the planning process?

8. What should be considered when selecting a planning team? What should the chosen group look like?

9. Discuss the importance of environmental monitoring. What should be monitored on a regular basis?

10. Define strategic profile. What factors are included in an organization's strategic profile?

11. What does the acronym SWOT stand for? How is SWOT related to Performance Audit?

12. What is unique about Environmental Monitoring and Application Consideration?

13. In what ways can identified gaps be reduced in a strategic business model?

14. During the implementation phase, what roles do key players fulfill?

15. How does down-board thinking apply to strategic planning?

16. What roles are consultants expected to take on? What responsibilities does each role entail?

17. What elements compose an organization's culture?

18. By drafting a mission statement, what does an organization hope to accomplish?

19. During the implementation action phase when conflicts between plans occur; what should be done? Who is ultimately responsible for resolving conflicts?

20. Discuss contingency planning. What should be included in a contingency plan?

Managing Transitions*

20. Explain the difference between *change* and *transition*.

21. What are the three phases of transition?

22. Why is it important for management to understand the *neutral zone*?

23. How do you identify who is losing what in a transition?

24. What is *overreaction* and why does it happen?

* William Bridges, *Managing Transitions*, 2nd Edition, DaCopo Press: 2003.

25. What is transition deficit?

26. What are *signs of grieving* and how might a manager deal with employees displaying the *signs*?

27. How might a manager compensate employees for the loss that occurs during change?

28. Discuss the arguments for and against communicating the change to employees.

29. Why should a manager specify what is over and what isn't over?

30. Define *neutral zone* and identify the dangers presented by the neutral zone.

31. What can management do to give structure and strength while employees are in the neutral zone?

32. What is a transition monitoring team?

33. What are some ways that management can actively encourage creativity while in the neutral zone?

34. Why is there ambivalence among employees when looking at new beginnings?

35. What are the 4 Ps of beginnings? How would a manager communicate the 4 Ps?

36. Why does giving people a significant part to play in the transition management process facilitate the new beginning?

37. List and describe the 7 stages of organizational life.

38. What is the role of transition in the organizational life cycle?

39. List and describe the laws of organizational development.

40. How does the organizational life cycle differ from the organizational renewal cycle?

41. How can forecasting help a manager be ready change?

42. Identify and define the characteristics commonly seen when a transition has not been managed effectively.

*Team Players and Teamwork**

1. Both McGregor and Likert developed characteristics regarding the effectiveness of teams. How do their characteristics differ?

2. What are the characteristics of an effective team?

3. How do team players play an important role in creating a clear sense of purpose?

4. How can team players enhance participation?

5. What is weighted participation?

* Glenn M. Parker, *Team Players and Teamwork*, Jossey-Bass: 1996.

6. How does a manager deal effectively with nonrelevant participation?

7. What are the four communication skills?

8. List and describe the five different methods of resolving conflict.

9. How can team players establish a climate for civilized disagreements?

10. What are the arguments against using the consensus method to resolving conflict?

11. How does a leader build trust and open lines of communication?

12. Describe the concept of shared leadership and how shared leadership facilitates effective teams?

12. What are the warning signs that indicate the potential for team difficulties?

13. Why is the discussion of style diversity important to teamwork?

14. List and describe the four effective team player styles.

15. List and describe the ineffective team player styles.

16. How can a manager deal with an ineffective team player?

17. How do the roles change for the types of team members when they become leaders?

18. What are the successful team building strategies for team leaders?

19. What are the four stages of team development?

20. Explain how each of the types function in each of the four stages of development.

21. What are the warning signs that indicate the potential for team difficulties?

22. Describe style overload and its impact on group effectiveness.

23. List and discuss the recommended strategies for developing a team-player culture.

24. Describe how to incorporate team player concepts into performance appraisals.

25. What type of organizations benefit from using incentive plans for developing a team player culture?

26. Why would a manager want to eliminate competitive rating systems?

27. What challenges might an organization encounter when adopting teamwork as a strategy for success?

*Dynamics of Diversity**

- 1. How do people differ from each other culturally? Functionally?
Historically?

- 2. What is the purpose of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity?

- 3. What is diversity management?

- 4. What causes diversity programs to fail?

* William Bridges, *Managing Transitions*, 2nd Edition, DaCopo Press: 2003.

5. How will a diversity vision statement help an organization?

6. How can a diversity vision statement be developed?

7. What is a cultural audit?

8. List some cultural audit goals that should be considered.

9. What traps should be avoided that can cause a cultural audit to fail?

10. What information should a successful cultural audit include?

11. What are the benefits of a cultural audit?

12. What questions should a manager ask before planning to do a cultural audit?

13. When forming a diversity task force, what criteria should be considered for membership?

14. What is the role of a human resource manager dealing with diversity issues?

15. What questions should diversity training answer?

16. What basic design issues should be considered when developing a course on diversity issues?

17. Why is interactive learning important to diversity training?

18. Although the focus of diversity training varies, what does it usually involve?

19. Why should diversity training include more than minorities and women to be successful?

20. In what ways does diversity training differ from other human resource issues?

21. Why is co-facilitation of a diversity training session an effective teaching approach?

22. What are the benefits of training persons who will be teaching or facilitating a diversity training?

23. Why does diversity training matter?

The Complete Guide to Performance Appraisal*

- 1. What is included in each of the five phases of the ideal performance appraisal cycle?

- 2. Why are trait-based approaches very ineffective when it comes to appraising an employee's performance?

- 3. What are the three types of information that need to be collected when gathering data on the performance of the jobholder? What does each type include?

- 4. Describe different strategies for avoiding legal challenges to appraisal systems.

*Dick Grote, *The Complete Guide to Performance Appraisals*, Amacom: 1996.

5. What roles do objectives, accountabilities, and standards fulfill? When should they be used?

6. What are the four approaches to appraisal? Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each.

7. When conducting the Writing the Review step of performance appraisal, what should managers consider?

8. What is the idea setting for appraisal discussions?

9. Describe what an appraisal meeting should entail from the perspective of the manager.

10. What should be considered when a company is preparing to design a brand new performance appraisal system? What are the four major components of creating such a system?

11. Name and explain three ways data can be gathered before development to increase the effectiveness of a new appraisal system.

12. When creating forms, how many should a company create and what should be contained within the form?

13. Give examples for each of the different types of rating schemes.

14. Why is pilot testing an effective way of testing a newly designed system?

15. When an organization does have an appeal process, what types of complaints are usually made? What is the difference between the types?

16. In addition to managers, who else has the ability to appraise performance? How are these performance appraisals typically different than those done by the individual's supervisor?

17. How should team performance appraisals be conducted?

18. What composes the job performance model? What role does the job situation play in most performance appraisals?

19. When writing objectives, what characteristics should they embody?

20. Define competencies. How should they be defined by the assessment?

21. List the types of rating errors. How does each one affect the results of an appraisal?

22. What are the two approaches that organizations use when determining when to appraise employees? Which one is the most utilized?

23. What experiences can help shape people into leaders?

24. Describe the different reward distribution systems. What criteria are used to distribute rewards?

25. What did Bretz and Milkovich conclude about the distribution of performance ratings? Name the recommendations they suggest to improve the appraisal process.

***Hiring and Firing: What Every Manager Needs to Know
(Revised Edition)****

1. Before advertising a job, what type of information should be researched?

2. What should be considered when revising a job description before an interview?

3. How does a supervisor determine qualities and skills that a prospective employee should have for a particular job?

4. What should be included in a job matrix?

* Marlene Caroselli, Ed.D, *Hiring & Firing: What Every Manager Needs to Know (Revised Edition)*, SkillPath Publications: 1993.

5. What kind of questions should be asked of each applicant?

6. What should be included on the interview form that is used to assess an applicant's skills?

7. Explain the different interview styles.

8. In general, what should a plan for conducting an interview include?

9. How can an interviewer put an applicant at ease?

10. How can stereotypical thinking of the person conducting an interview affect the interview?

11. What does Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended prohibit?

12. List unfair pre-employment inquiries that a person conducting an interview cannot ask.

13. Explain the difference between open-ended and close-ended questions.

14. How can an interview be ended on a positive, professional note?

15. What type of information and impressions should an interviewer document right after an interview?

16. Why would a company want to conduct a second interview?

17. What are some warning signs of job-related problems?

18. If a problem cannot be resolved informally, when a manager schedules a meeting with the employee, how should the meeting be conducted?

19. When conducting a counseling or disciplinary interview or session, what types of words should a supervisor avoid?

20. Why is it important for a supervisor to explain the objective of a disciplinary meeting and how are the objectives used during the meeting?

21. What can a supervisor do during a disciplinary meeting to help an emotional employee to get control of his or her emotions?

22. During a disciplinary meeting, how does a supervisor stress the positive to help the situation from becoming to negative?

23. When asking an employee for feedback during a disciplinary meeting, how should the supervisor conduct that part of the meeting?

24. After a disciplinary meeting, how is an action plan or agreement monitored?

25. What should a supervisor do at the end of a disciplinary meeting?

26. Before considering terminating an employee, what issues and information should a supervisor consider?

27. What type of records should a supervisor keep to help protect him or her from wrongful discharge lawsuits?

28. When is the best time to conduct exit interviews?

29. During an exit interview, what questions should be asked of the terminated employee?

Court Management Library Series: Trial Court Budgeting*

1. What is the relationship between resources and objectives of a court budget?

2. What is the starting point of a court budget?

3. What are the scheduled events that drive a trial court budget?

4. List the major functions in the municipal court judicial budgetary process.

* Robert W. Tobin, *Court Management Library Series: Trial Court Budgeting*, National Center for State Courts: 1996.

5. What are aggregate proposed expenditures in a line-item budget?

6. What are the disadvantages of a line-item budget?

7. What is a planning, programming, and budgeting system?

8. How can a court use a programmatic budget as a personal management tool or as a basic budgeting format?

9. What is a performance management system? A management by objective? Zero base budgeting?

10. What major budget classifications should be included in a court budget?

11. How should budget items be coded?

12. What should be included in court budgetary guidelines?

13. What are the general budgetary considerations?

14. What are contingency funds and what percent of the budget should they be?

15. In personnel budgeting, how can temporary positions be upgraded to permanent positions?

16. Generally, why is contract personnel not as expensive to use as full-time employees?

17. What is included in clerical work measures?

18. When justifying the position of a court reporter, what should be considered when doing a cost-benefit analysis for the position?

19. Generally, what contractual services should a municipal court consider?

20. How is a budget for court facility planning and design typically developed and handled?

21. What questions might arise when considering budget expenditures for equipment?

22. How does caseload affect court revenue projections?

23. What is the importance of considering police and prosecutorial policy when determining revenue projections from fines?

24. What affect does deferred and installment policies have on court revenues?

25. What is a trend analysis and what is involved in preparing it?

26. What is the formula for predicting revenues?

27. What is the purpose of conducting periodic revenue analysis?

28. List costs that would be included in a court's indirect costs.

29. Why would a court consider personnel vacancy information in budget estimations?

30. What is the reason that a court would want to consider information from past budgets when preparing a current budget?

31. What is the relationship between performance measures and budget decisions?

32. What is involved in a budget review process?

33. What is included in a typical performance measure?

34. How are inflation costs reflected in the budget?

35. How are personnel increases justified in the budget process?

36. Define net costs.

37. What generally reflects the real costs of increased work output?

38. What is cost-per-data?

39. How are direct and indirect costs computed?

40. What is empirical data?

41. Why should a budget be monitored?

42. What is a pre-audit?

43. Why should historical data be included in monitoring reports?

44. When should revenue estimates be readjusted?

Texas Municipal Courts: Financial Management Handbook*

1. Which basic items are included in a budget?

2. Where are the laws governing budgets for cities and home-rule charter provisions located?

3. Why is it important to know the usage restrictions of municipal court revenues?

4. List and explain the various approaches for estimating revenues.

* Rene Henry, *Texas Municipal Courts Financial Management Handbook*, Texas Court Clerks Association: 2007.

5. How do municipal courts benefit from developing a budget?

6. What items should be included on a statement of budget and departmental requests?

7. Explain how to increase the likelihood for receiving requested funds and improving budget preparations?

8. Define costs. Why are governmental agencies not concerned with keeping up with costs? Compare and contrast direct and indirect cost. Give examples.

9. How are internal controls utilized within the budgeting process? List and explain internal control components.

10. What elements need consideration when developing a municipal court control environment?

11. What is a change fund? How is a change funds created, maintained, and controlled?

12. What procedures are used to create a sound over-the-counter method of receiving payments?

13. As a cashier opens and closes each day, what things should he/she do to ensure transactions are performed properly?

14. In processing mail, lock box and electronic receipts, how do mail cashiers, receipts cashier, and the accounting department work together?

15. What basic procedures ensure that installment payments are made to the court on time?

16. Why is the receipts journal a valuable tool to the municipal court?

17. When should reviews of journal receipts occur in a municipal court?

18. What is a chart of accounts? What is the importance of the code numbers on in chart accounts? What common codes are used in your court?

19. What steps are taken to reconcile court bank accounts? How frequent should court bank accounts be reconciled? Who is responsible for reconciling accounts?

20. What are jail time and community service credits? How should these two items be recorded?

21. Why should monitoring of court budgets occur monthly? Which items should be reviewed when monitoring the budget?

22. What is an audit? In an audit, what specific objectives are reviewed? Who can perform a municipal court audit?

23. Why is it important to perform an internal and external audit?

24. In reference to municipal court property, when should physical observation occur? What steps should be taken to ensure an accurate account of court property?

25. Where in the local government codes are judicial support fees and judicial reimbursement fees explained? Which offenses are included and excluded from paying the fee?

26. When checking receipts, what information should be observed and recorded? Which items are verified for accuracy when checking general and hardcopy receipts?

27. What affect does deferred and installment policies have on court revenues?

28. Where in the local government code are consolidated court costs (CCC) explained? How much is charged per conviction? Which offenses are included and excluded in CCCs?

29. According to time payment fees, how much is retained locally? What offenses are excluded from paying this fee?

30. What percentage of the failure to appear fees collected by municipal courts are remitted to the state? What is the purpose of collecting this fee?

31. How should municipal courts distribute the remaining monies collected from failure to appear fees?

32. What is the fee for restitution installments? What percentage of the fee is retained locally? What is the purpose of the fee?

33. What percentage of the fees for services of peace officers are remitted to the state? How much is retained by the city?

34. Which state fines are required to remit 50% of collected monies to the state? When must reports and remittance occur for these fines?

35. Which offenses contribute to the municipal court building security fees?

36. How are monies collected for the municipal court technology fee utilized? If a balance remains at the end of the fiscal year, how can the municipal court spend the excess money?

37. What services do peace officers receive payment? How much do peace officers receive for each service?

38. Which fees are found in the Transportation Code, Section 502.404 and 407?

39. Which offenses are excluded from paying the driving with defective equipment fee?

40. If fees collected have no specific way to be used, where are the fees collected remitted?

41. Why must a charge be dismissed for driving with an expired inspection certificate? What fees must the defendant pay?

42. Why would costs vary for jury trial failure to appear fees/costs? How must the money collected be used?

43. What is the application cost for expungenments? How should the money collected be utilized?

44. Why are court costs and fees charts prepared every two years? List the basic abbreviations and their meanings.

45. List and describe the two types of bond forfeitures.

47. When should excess highway fines and Texas excess motor carrier fines be reported? To whom should the fines be reported?

Protecting Court: A Practitioner's Guide to Court Security*

1. Identify the types of perpetrators who plan violent courtroom attacks.

2. What is the best definition of court security?

3. What does a good interior security list entail?

4. Describe what natural surveillance is.

* Lt. Jimmie H. Barrett Jr., *Protecting Court: A Practitioners Guide to Court Security*, Mill City Press: 2009.

5. What is the importance of a role call?

6. Why should court security officers wear “hard” uniforms?

7. What are the most important areas of a courthouse to sweep each day?

8. Explain why or when your secondary should or should not be armed.

9. What is a courthouse security committee?

10. What is a courthouse control center?

11. What are some ways to mitigate the boredom of watching security cameras, thus putting your court at risk?

12. What items should be prohibited from your courthouse?

13. Discuss the role metal detectors play in court security.

14. How does enforcing contempt of court affect the authority of the court?

15. Explain the various options a person has after setting off a magnetometer.

16. What is the ideal set-up for a screening station?

17. Discuss the procedures of an evacuation and which groups need to be separated.

18. What are COOP plans and how do they help in emergency situations?

19. What factors influence the size of courtroom security staff?

20. How should prisoners in public areas be handled?

21. What are the Ten Golden Rules and what do they refer to?

22. How do the Dietz Ten relate to identifying at risks individuals?

How Full Is Your Bucket*

- 1. According to the Gallup survey, how do employees respond to regular recognition and praise?

- 2. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, what is the number one reason that employees leave their jobs?

- 3. Describe the characteristics of an actively disengaged employee?

- 4. Why might employers be careful when instituting an *employee of the month* program?

* Tom Rath and Donald Clifton, Ph.D., *How Full Is Your Bucket*, Gallup Press: 2004.

5. What have recent discoveries said about the effect of emotions on a person's health?

6. Discuss the *magic ratio* of interactions.

7. How does an employer make recognition appreciated and effective?
Why?

8. List and describe the strategies for increasing positive emotions.

9. Why reverse the golden rule?

***Caseflow Management:
The Heart of Court Management in the New Millennium****

BASIC CASEFLOW MANAGEMENT METHOD

1. What does early court intervention involve?

2. What are the objectives of early court intervention?

3. What does continuous control mean?

4. How long should court control the progress of the case?

*David Steelman, John Goerd, and James McMillan, *Caseflow Management: The Heart of Court Management in the New Millennium*, National Center for State Courts: 2004.

DIFFERENTIATED CASE MANAGEMENT

5. What is differentiated case management?

6. What does the operation of a differentiated case management system depend on?

MEANINGFUL PRETRAIL COURT EVENTS AND REALISTIC PRETRAIL SCHEDULES

7. What events or elements should characterize the management of pretrials?

FIRM AND CREDIBLE TRIAL DATES

8. Why is the expectation that a trial will occur when scheduled important?

9. Why does trial-date certainty have a positive effect on a court's juror costs?

10. Why should courts seek opportunities to dispose of cases before they are put on the court's trial list?

11. What is the most effective way of avoiding overbooking cases for trial or down time at trial?

12. Why is a continuance policy important to ensure creditable trial dates?

13. What are the five steps involved in trial management?

14. What are some reasons why a trial might not start on time?

15. What are the two elements that have an impact on trial times?

16. What are some lessons that help a court to deal with the media?

17. What are some of the security issues when a trial is being conducted?

18. In order to monitor the firmness and credibility of a court's nonjury trial dates, what should a court case management information system provide?

MANAGEMENT OF COURT EVENTS AFTER INITIAL DISPOSITION

19. Why should cases be monitored in post disposition status?

20. What principles should be followed in post disposition management?

21. What techniques improve case disposition in rural courts?

CIVIL, CRIMINAL, AND TRAFFIC

22. What are the caseflow management factors that help shorten civil case processing times?

CRIMINAL CASES

23. For successful caseflow management to speedily process cases, whose commitment is required?

24. How does a court set the tone for criminal case processing?

25. How does the court ensure that dates are assigned to every event in the case?

26. How does a “plea cutoff date policy” help manage plea negotiations?

27. How does pretrial case events help courts dispose of cases more effectively?

28. What is the purpose of drug court programs?

29. What does accessibility and efficiency promote in the court?

30. In traffic cases, why is scheduling of trial important to the purposes of caseflow management?

31. Why should courts insure that fines and fees are collected?

FAMILY AND PROBATE CASES

32. In juvenile delinquency cases, what are some techniques that will help courts to more effectively manage caseflow?

33. What are 10 essential elements for effective intervention in domestic violence cases?

BASIC MANAGEMENT CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

34. What are the four underlying court management features that provide the foundation for effective caseflow management programs?

35. How can a leader motivate others to invest in a caseflow management program?

36. Why is it important that the presiding judge and court clerk work together in the caseflow management process?

COMMITMENT TO A SHARED VISION

37. Why is vision a critical aspect of caseflow management?

38. What are the five performance areas defined by the National Center for State Courts and the bureau of Justice Assistance?

39. Why is judicial commitment important to caseflow management?

40. List ways in which courts can involve court staff members in caseflow management?

41. How can the court promote improvement through active communications?

42. Who should the court communicate with to improve caseflow management?

43. Who should be part of a caseflow management committee?

A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

44. When should courts provide education on caseflow management?

45. Why is it important to educate and train staff on caseload management improvement programs?

GOALS, MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

46. What should case processing time standards or guidelines reflect?

47. What other issues does time standards serve?

48. What are immediate case events time standards?

49. What are overall time standards?

ESTABLISHING OTHER CASEFLOW MANAGEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

50. What are the two goals regarding pending inventory of court cases?

51. What affect do continuances have on casflow management?

52. How can a casflow management plan be consistent with standards for equality, fairness and integrity?

53. What should the court regularly measure?

54. What type of information does a report on pending case load provide?

55. What type of information should a report of age of case disposition provide?

56. What type of information does a report on monthly and annual aggregate data provide?

57. What type of information should a report on open cases provide?

58. What is the CTE Index?

CREATING ACCOUNTABILITY

59. What is the definition of “accountability?”

60. How does a court achieve accountability?

61. Within the court itself, what does accountability have to do with?

62. What are three external accountability goals?

63. What factors can affect how courts count cases?

64. How is a pending case defined?

65. Why is it important to determine which data to record and report?

66. When are caseload management reports the most useful?

67. What is the most important goal of courts?

68. Why is date on individual cases important?

69. How can courts use reports on the number of cases filed by category?

70. How is the clearance ratio measured?

71. Why is a report of the number of pending cases crucial?

72. What is the backlog index?

73. What is the most direct means to monitor a court's performance related to its case-processing time goals?

74. What factors are important to collecting data on continuances?

75. What are some factors that limit the ability to compare individual judges' statistics on caseload?

76. Generally, what does an overall court management information system contain?

77. Why is the “person module” the most complex module of a court’s automated case management information system?

78. Why is time a court’s most critical resource?

79. Why should the court financial function in the computer system be defined in a global manner?

80. List some other technologies that might reduce costs and delay?

81. What is the individual calendar system?

82. What is the master calendar system?

83. What is the team calendar system?

84. What is the case assignment system?

85. How does the structure of the court's work week affect the structure of the court's calendar?

86. How do *pro se* defendants affect case processing?

87. What are some strategies for managing *pro se* defendants?

88. What are some strategies that can be used to deal with the complex consequences of change?

89. Why is it important to pay attention to detail when forming a strategic plan for a caseflow management improvement plan?

90. How does a court gather information for a general caseflow management review when planning for a caseflow management improvement plan?

91. How does a court analyze its pending inventory?

92. What does a cost-benefit analysis involve?

93. How does a court assess nonfinancial costs against benefits in a “forcefield analysis”?

94. How does a court build support for the change process?

95. How does a court overcome resistance to change?

96. What does it mean to “own” the change process?

97. How does a manager align staff members’ work with the new directions?

98. Why is it important that court staff and others to model the desired new behavior?

99. Why is it important to reward staff who act in support of changes?

100. What is the purpose the evaluation of the improvement program?

101. What should a caseflow management plan include?

102. What is the second stage of implementing a caseload management program?

103. During the course of implementing a caseload management program, why is it important to monitor the implementation?

104. What is the real test of success of a caseload management program?

105. How does a court achieve consensus on the benefits of and the continuing success of a caseload management improvement program?

106. Why do some courts continue to have backlogs after implementing a caseflow management improvement program?

107. What factors affect a judge's commitment to ensuring timely disposition of cases?

108. What is the importance of continuity of leadership in the success of a caseflow management improvement program?

109. Why is effective allocation of resources important to a caseflow management improvement program?

110. Why should courts be learning organizations?

*Skills for New Managers**

- 1. What are some advantages of creating a “Management Credo” or set of beliefs?

- 2. List two examples of utilizing your employees’ talents without making them feel used.

- 3. Why is it counterproductive to not instill trust in your employees?

- 4. List six situations when you have more to gain by backing down than being a stubborn fighter as a manager.

- 5. Why is consistency important in your role as a manager?

*Morey Stettner, *Skills for New Managers*, McGraw-Hill Companies: 200.

6. What are three ways to probe for feedback regarding your new role as a manager?

7. List and briefly explain the three steps of listening.

8. What are some examples of body language that would indicate an individual is disinterested in the conversation?

9. What are three examples of behaviors that indicate you are a “nervous Nellie?”

10. When trying to persuade an employee, what are some good rules to follow during a conversation?

11. What are three basic rules of effective motivation?

12. Explain why knowledge is the best motivator.

13. When providing criticisms, why is it more important to focus on performance and not personality?

14. Explain the difference between descriptions and inferences in regards to providing employees with criticism.

15. List and briefly explain the six-steps that help a manager discipline warring employees.

16. Why is it unwise to turn a disciplinary message into a personal attack against an employee?

17. Why is it important for a manager to set aside their “optimal hour” for uninterrupted work?

18. What are five ways to showcase your organizational skills?

19. What are five rookie mistakes managers make when trying to delegate?

20. Why is it important to delegate tasks?

21. What kind of behaviors should be avoided when speaking with your boss about your performance or your employees' performance?

22. Describe the advantages of underpromising and overdelivering.

23. What are three ways to positively network within your organization or company?

24. Why is it important to never turn your networking chats into gripe sessions?

***Manager's Toolkit: The 13 Skills Managers
Need to Succeed****

1. What are characteristics of effective goals?

2. What should a job description include?

3. What are desirable qualities in a candidate's resume when looking for a new hire?

4. What are some advantages of high-turnover in an organization?

*Harvard Business Essentials, *Manager's Toolkit: the 13 Skills Managers Need to Succeed*, Harvard Business School: 2004.

5. List motivations many employees have for staying within an organization.

6. List reasons why some organizations may have high-turnover.

7. What are ways to redesign positions to encourage retention?

8. Describe the “warning signs” that indicate a manager’s delegation skills need re-sharpening.

9. Explain ‘control’, ‘monitoring’, and ‘feedback’ when ensuring a delegated task is being completed properly and on time.

10. What are the three steps suggested to use goals as a time-management tool?

11. Why is it important to say “no” every once in a while?

12. List six characteristics every team must have to be successful.

13. When selecting team members, what type of skills are desirable?

14. What is a team leader’s role?

15. Briefly describe the eight steps to effective appraisal.

16. List the advantages of coaching a subordinate.

17. What is a "C" performer?

18. What are examples of statements NOT to say in a dismissal conversation?

19. Why is communication in times of crisis the strongest tool at the manager's disposal?

20. Why is it important to conduct a crisis review as soon as possible after a crisis?

21. What are some advantages of having a mentor?

22. What are some characteristics of effective leaders?

23. Why must leaders be agents for change?

24. How can an organization be change-ready?

25. List the steps for formulating strategy.

26. List and briefly describe the functions of budgeting.

27. List and briefly describe the types of budgets.

28. Explain top-down versus explanatory budgeting.

*The Five Levels of Leadership**

1. What are the 5 Levels of Leadership ranked in order? Give a brief description of each.

2. What are the three key values the author encourages leaders to reflect on?

3. What are some of the ways a Level 1 leaders can move up to a Level 2 leader?

4. Explain some advantages and disadvantages of positional leadership?

*John C. Maxwell, *The Five Levels of Leadership*, Center Street: 2011.

5. In what ways can a Level 2 leader make the workplace more enjoyable for people?

6. Explain the change in relationship between people and leaders that take place from the Position level to the Permission level.

7. What are the downsides of the Permission level?

8. What are some ways to win people's permission?

9. What are the 5 Levels of Leadership ranked in order? Give a brief description of each.

10. Outside relationships, what else must a leader develop to move from the Level 2 to Level 3 leadership?

11. What are the advantages of the Production Level?

12. What are the disadvantages of the Production Level?

13. How do Level 3 leaders help others cast a vision of success?

14. What does the author believe is the key to being productive and why?

15. Explain the Pareto Principle.

16. What is an organization's more appreciable asset? Why?

17. What are some ways a Level 3 leader can grow into a Level 4 leader?

18. Many leaders don't want to share responsibilities because they don't want to give up any of their power. However, what are the greatest benefits of leaders sharing their responsibilities?

19. If a leader wants the best for their organization, what is the most important thing they invest in and develop? Why?

20. What is the difference between producers and developers?

21. What types of people should leaders strive to recruit?

22. How can a leader being on the pinnacle be dangerous? What mind-set should a leader strive to maintain?

23. List the four primary causes of breakdowns during people development.
