

# Preparation for a Competition

## Introduction

There are only two (2) promotional positions within the CPAA Bargaining Unit which must be filled using the “Competition Process”; those being the Postmaster position and the position of Senior Assistant, if not filled as per Clauses 11.04 (a) (i), (ii) and (iii).

This document has been developed to provide advice, outline the competition process, and identify the preparatory work required before appearing for a Competition Rating Board Interview. For obvious reasons, it is not possible to provide you with the questions and answers. Each rating board could consist of different board members and questions. We have tried to be as complete as possible in identifying the various areas you should study.

You will be tested in three (3) categories:

1. Knowledge
2. Abilities
3. Personal Suitability

You must receive a passing mark in **all three categories** in order to be considered successful in the competition. You will then be ranked in the order of the most qualified. The marks used to determine your rank are based on a combination of the ratings obtained from the Candidates Promotional Assessment Report (CPAR) and the marks you obtained from the rating board interview.

This document will provide information on:

- The Employee Information Line (EIL)
- Qualifications
- Application
- The Candidates Promotional Assessment Report (CPAR)
- Preparation for Interview
- Possible categories for Competition Questions
- The Interview
- Rating/Marking Process of Board
- Notification of Competition Results

## **Employee Information Line (EIL)**

### **1-800-394-4000**

The Employee Information Line is used to advertise opportunities for transfer and promotion for all Postmaster and Senior Assistant positions.

With the introduction of the Employee Information Line and changes to the CPAA collective agreement, CPAA employees have two opportunities to apply for a transfer. First, employees have the opportunity to submit any number of transfer requests at any time, and these requests are valid for one year from the date they are received by Canada Post Corporation. Vacancies are advertised on the Employee Information Line for two weeks. The Staffing Office must first verify whether any transfers were received for each vacancy. If none are on file, employees still have the opportunity to submit a transfer within the two week period above before the job goes to competition. If no employees requested a transfer, following a waiting period of one week to allow for the receipt of transfers, the Staffing Officer will then initiate the competition process. It is important to note that the opportunity to transfer and the opportunity to compete are advertised simultaneously on EIL.

Those applying need to have an active email address and obtain an e-recruitment system password. In addition, if you have not already created a career profile in the “My Profile” section you must also complete it before electronically applying online.

If you do not have access to the internet, you may access free public resources such as Employment Centres, Community Centres, Public Libraries, or for Service Canada Centre locations, call 1-800-O-CANADA (1-800-622-6232).

We recommend that you establish a schedule where you can monitor the job listings on the Employee Information Line. The jobs on the information line are updated every Monday, so in your planning, it is important that you call on a weekly basis. Applications and/or transfer requests will be accepted based on the postmark on the envelope.

If you compete for a position advertised on the EIL, **we recommend that you ask for a Statement of Qualifications**, you may also request that a competition poster be sent to you.

#### **IMPORTANT TO NOTE**

If Canada Post communicates through email, it is your responsibility to ensure that your email address accepts email from unknown users and that your contact information is accurate and updated as required. Remember to check your email everyday as Canada Post may invite you to attend an interview or write a test for the position applied for and will expect a quick reply from you. Failure to respond in a timely fashion (i.e. vacation) will indicate to Canada Post that you are no longer interested in being considered for the position and you may be removed from the competition process. Canada Post cannot make assumptions about your education and experience. You must clearly demonstrate in your cover letter/résumé how you meet the education and experience factors listed in the Statement of Qualifications. Failure to provide this information will result in your application being rejected. Your résumé must clearly demonstrate how you meet the requirements.

## Qualifications

The following is a **sample** of Qualifications for a Postmaster – Semi-Staff (English)

### **Minimum requirements**

Education: Successful completion of high school or provincial equivalency tests and/or business experience.

Work Experience: Demonstrated experience in business administration.  
Acceptable training and/or experience dealing with the public in a retail and/or service environment.  
Experience in making sales and cash transactions.  
Supervisory Experience Required.

Language Requirement: English essential.

### **Rated Requirements**

Knowledge: Knowledge of the geographic area of the postal region served.  
Knowledge of regulations, methods and procedures for processing mail and providing postal services.  
Knowledge of post office accounting systems.

Abilities: Ability to set priorities, resolve customer problems, train staff, and assess staff performance.  
Ability to organize, schedule and control postal services.  
Ability to collect, safeguard and account for postal revenue.  
Ability to maintain records and prepare reports.  
Ability to perform physical work such as lifting mail containers, pushing or pulling boxes, stacking and sorting mail, and standing for extended periods of time.

Personal Suitability: Effective interpersonal relationships particularly in dealing with customer complaints.  
Dependability, tact and cooperativeness.

## Application

It is essential to identify that you meet all the minimum requirements in order to be eligible.

*For example:* WORK EXPERIENCE: Demonstrated experience in business administration. Acceptable training and/or experience dealing with the public in a retail and/or service environment. Experience in making sales and cash transactions. Supervisory Experience Required. **If you do not, for example, state that you have had supervision experience, the Corporation may screen you out from the competition for not meeting the essential qualifications.** Remember that Canada Post takes into consideration your work experiences outside of the Corporation therefore, any job or voluntary service you have performed in your community will be considered.

In order that Canada Post fully considers your experience, a résumé of all achievements, voluntary or otherwise, showing community involvement, leadership qualities, supervisory capabilities, and experience should be included.

For your own records, keep a photocopy of all of the above. Email/Mail your cover letter and résumé to the addresses shown on the Employee Information Line (EIL). If sent by mail remember to send via Priority or Xpresspost (signature is recommended), so you have proof that it was sent.

Within a reasonable amount of time, you will receive notification from Canada Post Corporation that your application has been received and accepted. You will also be notified if your application was not accepted for that competition and the reasons why. In the event your application is not accepted, we recommend you immediately contact your Local Union Representative for discussion and advice.

If your application is accepted, you will be contacted again in the near future to be notified of the date and location of the interview.

## Candidate Promotional Assessment Report (CPAR)

Each candidate, within the CPAA bargaining unit, applying for a position, must have a CPAR duly completed on them by their immediate supervisor, and the supervisor's immediate superior.

The following four (4) factors will provide an assessment of your performance **in your current position**:

### Basic Requirements Factor

Acceptable training and/or experience in processing mail, providing postal service and supervision. This will address your previous work history and demonstrate your abilities in your present position. The assessment will comment on the training you have received or the training you require, and in your suitability to supervise, or lack thereof.

### Knowledge Factor

Regulations, methods, and procedures for processing mail, providing postal service, and post office financial accounting systems. The assessment must explain the rating received by addressing the demonstrated knowledge you have on the regulations, methods, procedures, and financial-cash account system.

### Abilities Factor

Organize, schedule and control postal services, to collect, safeguard and account for postal services, to set priorities, to sell postal products, resolve operating and customer problems, to train and assess staff performances, and to maintain records and prepare reports. The assessment should address your strengths and weaknesses in relation to the responsibilities of the position.

### Personal Suitability Factor

Perform effective interpersonal relationships dealing with customer complaints, your dependability, attendance, tact, and cooperativeness. The assessment will address your personal ability to handle conflict, problem solving-resolution, and conduct.

Your supervisor will give you a rating (%) for very poor, poor, fair, good, very good, or exceptional. The written assessment should reflect the rating you were given. Each section will be completed in this manner and then signed and dated by the immediate supervisor. The report will then be reviewed by the supervisor's superior for comment, date and signature. The assessment report will then be given to you to assess.

Upon receipt of your assessment, you have **three (3)** days to study it. You must make note any concerns, disagreements or lack of information in the "Employee's Comments" area of the form.

You can then discuss the contents of your assessment with your supervisor, and if you have any further comments to enter, you can do so at that time. Date and sign the report and give it back to your immediate supervisor.

The report will be forwarded to the Chairperson of the interview rating board.

## Preparation for the Interview

The preparation process should start immediately following your application to compete.

Gain as much knowledge as possible about the operation, geographical area the office serves, and the position you are applying for.

Some examples could be:

- 1) Does this office handle student loans?
- 2) Does this office handle invoices i.e. Large Volume Mailers/Bill of Lading/Manifests?
- 3) Does this office have General Delivery, Lock Boxes, Rural Routes, Group Mail Boxes, Community Mail Boxes, Kiosks, Contracted Services, etc.?
- 4) Does this office have any Dependant offices i.e. Banking?
- 5) Does it process mail (call for items) for Retail Postal Outlet (RPO)?

If you are unfamiliar with any of the criteria, operations and services, particular to this office, study and learn all you can on those issues. Read Canada Post Corporation manuals and ask questions from someone you know and trust who is knowledgeable in the field.

Know how to deal with an irate customer or a personal conflict between two staff members in your office. Be familiar with and have knowledge of the “Corporate Manual System,” which covers policies and practices on:

- 1) Products and Services,
- 2) Collection and Delivery,
- 3) Processing of mail,
- 4) Operating and Accounting Procedures.

Further information may be obtained from the Postal Guide, RPS Handbook, InfoPost & Bulletins, and the CPC / CPAA collective agreement.

**Further to examples 1-5:**  
(on previous page)

Additional information can be found by consulting:

Canada Post Web site [www.canadapost.ca](http://www.canadapost.ca),

Telephone directory,

Provincial map,

Canada Post Supervisor  
for both your area and/or the area  
in which the position you are applying for is located.

# Categories for Competition Questions

## Knowledge Factor

In the area of knowledge, you could be asked questions on any of the following:

Regulations, methods and procedures for: processing mail  
providing postal products and services  
Corporate accounting system  
RPS Systems

The questions asked in this section are referenced in Corporate manuals, guides, and directives. It is not possible to list all Canada Post products and services, the following is a few of the areas that could be used for questions:

Cash Account, Work Sheet of Audit and Supporting Documents(Non Automated)

Banking

Reports: (CPAA Time report, Postal Requisitions, Postal Stores Requisitions, non-postal items, Revenue, Householder, Detail Sheet of Travel, Lock Box, "A Lists", Post Office Key Record, Inspection Records – to name a few)

Debits/Credits

Surplus Cash

Lock Box and Key

Security of Funds/Stock/Security of Office

Property Maintenance Program

Bag Service (Direct)

Priority

Priority WorldWide

Xpresspost prepaid

Xpresspost/Expedited and Regular Parcel (Domestic & USA)

Registered Mail

COD

Xpresspost International

Letter Rates (Domestic, USA, International)

Insured Mail, Indemnity (Liability coverage)

Redirection Services & Cost (COAN/hold)

Publications/Periodicals

Admail over the counter contract/non contract

Money Orders

Money Grams

Customs Postal Import

etc.

The Corporation will be assessing how knowledgeable you are in the products and services they provide and in the general operations of the post office.

## **Abilities Factor**

This category assesses your abilities to:

- Organize, schedule and control postal services
- Collect, safeguard and account for postal services
- Set priorities, resolve operating problems
- Resolve customer problems
- Train staff and assess staff performance
- Maintain records
- Prepare reports

Points to remember:

Example question:

Walk through the steps of simple purchase of stamps.

Customer requests postage.

- You must determine denomination and amount.
- Is a receipt required?
- Give customer stamps and then
- You must collect the money to complete the transaction.

All very obvious, but if you do not tell the interviewer(s) what to write down, you will not receive proper scoring.

## **Personal Suitability Factor**

This category addresses your personal suitability regarding:

- Effective interpersonal relationships, particularly in dealing with customer complaints
- Staff
- Dependability
- Tact
- Cooperativeness

## Interview

You will receive notification from the Corporation as to the date, time, and location of your interview. Be on time for your interview, and be neat and clean in your appearance. It is normal to be nervous. Be friendly, open, alert, and attentive. If you have a problem understanding any question, ask to have the question repeated, and take the time you need to answer fully. If you want to by-pass a question for the time being and come back to it later, just ask them if you can do so. All candidates, for said competition, will be asked the same questions, chosen from a CPC / CPAA approved bank of questions. All interviews will be held in the same manner. (i.e., face-to-face or in exceptional cases, by telephone.)

When responding to the Board, speak clearly, calmly and try to make eye contact with the person who asked you the question. They are writing down your responses.

When responding to a question, which may entail several different steps, try to imagine in your mind, each detailed step you would take, and relate to the board each step you are envisioning in your mind. Don't take it for granted that the board knows that you know how to do the task from start to finish as they will only record and rate you on what you have said.

A rating board will consist of at least two (2) members, to a maximum of three (3). Where feasible, it is recommended that the board consist of a person from staffing, a person from management such as your Local Area Manager or their designate and a **CPAA member** with an equivalent or higher classification level than the position for which the interview is being conducted.

Part of the interview process can be oral and part can be written. That decision rests solely with the board.

Showing confidence in yourself and your capabilities goes a long way with personal impressions.

## **Points to remember:**

Example question:  
Walk through the steps  
of simple purchase of stamps.

Customer requests postage.  
You must determine denomination and amount.

Is a receipt required?  
Give customer stamps and then  
you must collect the money  
to complete the transaction.

All very obvious, but if you do not tell the interviewer(s)  
what to write down,  
you will not receive proper scoring.

## Rating/Marking Process of Board

All candidates, in order to be considered qualified or receive a passing mark, must obtain 60% of the allocated points, in each of the factors listed below.

**N.B.** To be consistent, the following weighting will apply:

i.e.: Knowledge 20%, Abilities 40%, Personal Suitability 40% = 100%

### **Knowledge Factor**

20% of total test marks plus 10% of maximum points allotted to knowledge factor from your Candidate Promotional Assessment Report. Overall results must equal 60% to be considered qualified or receive passing mark.

### **Abilities Factor**

40% of total test marks plus 30% of maximum points allocated to abilities factor from your Candidate Promotional Assessment Report. Overall results must equal 60% to be considered qualified or receive passing mark.

### **Personal Suitability Factor**

40% of total test marks plus 70% of maximum points allocated to Personal Suitability Factor from your Candidate Promotional Assessment Report. Overall results must equal 60% to be considered qualified or receive passing mark.

## Notification of Competition Results

The Corporation will advise you by letter of the results within thirty (30) days of the competition as per Clause 11.06 (e).

Do not be disappointed in yourself if you were not the person selected, rather, find out where you were weak and improve in that area.

Any candidate in the competition may contact their immediate supervisor and request a Post Board Interview. This must be done within 25 days of being notified of the competition results to ensure meeting the time frames for filing of possible grievance.

At the post board interview, you will be given access to your answers recorded by the members of the board. You will also have access to the “expected or correct answers”. You will be able to discuss fully any concerns or disputes in marks allotted you.

You may discuss the questions asked, your answers, the expected answers, and the marks given to you. You may make notes of your interview on where you fell short, however, you will not be allowed to write down the questions and answers. Should you feel that you were not fairly assessed, contact your local Branch Union Representatives and discuss it with them. They will be able to advise you of what, if any, further action should be taken or considered.

It is very important to know that the Corporation can request a financial security check on any potential employee. The Corporation has the legal right to do so, however, they must receive your consent to authorize this review. The outcome of the financial review can, and has been, a determining factor for some appointments. If you receive an unfavorable review, for example a recent bankruptcy, the Corporation may consider you a financial risk, and has the right to refuse to appoint you to the position even if you did exceedingly well in the competition process.

In conclusion, we hope that this document has helped you to be totally prepared for the challenge of a possible new career with the Corporation, and has given you the confidence to accomplish anything you set your mind to.

The Union, through your local Branch Representatives, is available to assist you in any way possible and extend to you sincere best wishes in your endeavors.