

# Operations and Support Assessment

**Introduction & Preparation Guide**

**Strategies | Samples | Further Readings**



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## WELCOME!!

Congratulations!

You are taking the first step to ensure your success on the Operations and Support Assessment and ultimately in your career at Southern California Gas Company. This test is designed to give you the opportunity to make the best use of your skills. This booklet will give you information about the procedures used to select employees as well as who is qualified and likely to be successful in the job. These procedures indicate how successful you are likely to be in the job for which you will apply.

This booklet gives you some tips for preparing for the tests, as well as suggestions on how to do your best. It also includes sample items so that you can prepare for the actual test.

**Good Luck!**



## HOW TO USE THIS TEST GUIDE

This manual is divided into four sections aimed at helping you become more successful on your test.

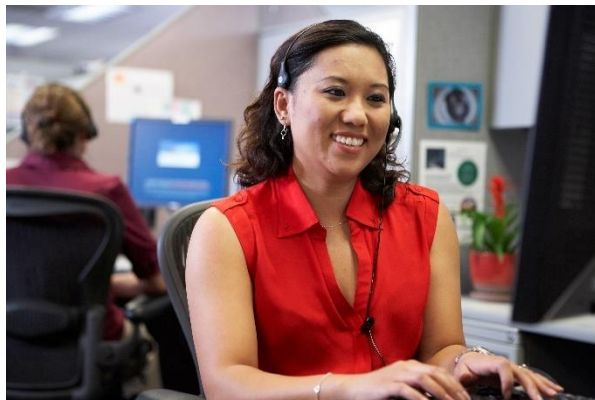
- Overview of the Operations & Support Assessment
- General test taking strategies applicable to all tests
- Guide of what to expect on the assessment including question descriptions and sample questions
- A list of test preparation resources

If you are a first-time test taker, take time to read through this entire manual and familiarize yourself with the test you will be taking.

If you are retaking a test, pay attention to the general test taking strategies, work through the sample problems, identify your weaknesses, and obtain one of the test preparation resources described at the back of this manual.

Let's get started!

## OVERVIEW



### *What is the Operations and Support Assessment?*

The Operations and Support Assessment is an assessment that assesses attributes that are important for success in Operations and Support roles at Southern California Gas Company. This assessment is not timed, but is expected to take approximately one hour to complete. Please keep in mind that this assessment is meant to measure underlying knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics that are critical to success in these roles. As such, the content within the assessment may not be identical to the situations, equipment, and tools that you will encounter in the role.

This test was also designed with the purpose to ensure that it is informative and helpful by providing you with information about the roles and responsibilities of those in Operations and Support jobs at Southern California Gas Company. The test will ask questions regarding how you handle work situations, your work style preferences, and your previous work experiences. Additionally, this test will ask questions regarding general computation skills and provide real-world scenarios to assess how you troubleshoot problems and your ability to work with customers.

## *Accommodation*

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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), if you have a disability, you have the right to request an accommodation in the hiring and testing process. If you believe that your disability requires special arrangements to take the test(s), please contact [HR-SCG-Testing@semprautilities.com](mailto:HR-SCG-Testing@semprautilities.com) prior to taking the test(s).

Note: Once you submit the assessment, you cannot retake it or receive an accommodation for 6 months.

## *Technical Requirements*

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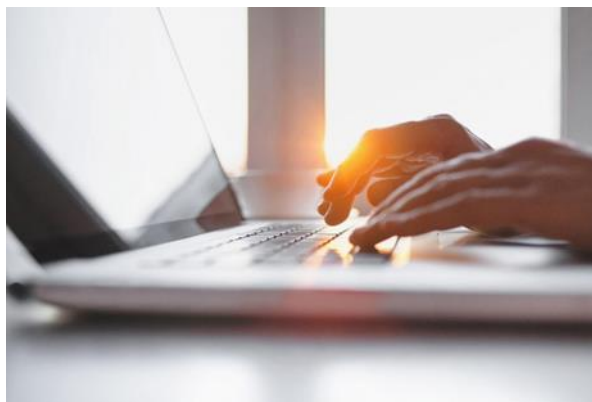
### System Requirements

- The Operations and Support can be completed on a PC, tablet, or smartphone. The realistic job preview (as discussed below) does contain audio, which will require speakers or headphones.

### Technical Support

- If you need technical support, please contact the Modern Hire Help Desk at 1-877-451-1695 or [support@modernhire.com](mailto:support@modernhire.com).

## TEST TAKING STRATEGIES



### *Before You Get Started*

- Set aside approximately one hour to complete the test
- Complete in a distraction-free environment
- Have a calculator and scratch paper available
- This assessment **REQUIRES** audio, so please be sure your volume is turned on
- Be open and honest
- Note: Some screens may require scrolling
- Once you select **Next**, you will not be able to go back

### *Test Preparation and Tips*

**The following section includes tips to help you when taking the assessment.**

The purpose of this section is to provide test taking tips that can be used prior to a testing session for better performance. The overarching goal of this section is to enable you to approach a challenging situation such as a test with the confidence that you are prepared for it, with a positive perspective on how you will perform during the test, and to eliminate test taking anxiety such that it does not affect your performance.

Specifically, this section is designed to help you:

- Better manage test taking-related stressors
- Identify techniques that you can use to prepare for a test
- Identify techniques you can use during a test to stay focused



### **Before the Test**

- **Pace yourself.** If you choose to prepare for your test, review the material (books, practice problems, or study guide) in several relatively short periods rather than a few long periods. Studying in several 30-60 minute sessions allows you to absorb the material more easily than if you were to review large quantities of information at once.
- **Affirmations.** Positive affirmations are positive statements that can help you overcome self-sabotaging and negative thoughts. It helps lower stress by alleviating perceptions of threat and defensiveness by expanding self-worth through broader dispositional self-views. Before taking the test practice using affirmations such as:
  - “I am prepared for the test.”
  - “I will do well on the test.”
  - “I will be confident, focused, and calm while taking the test.”

### **When You Begin**

- **Stay positive!** The test is not designed to trick you or be unnecessarily difficult. Start with a positive attitude and do not give up. Try to remember the hints that are outlined in this booklet and don’t get discouraged if there are questions for which you don’t know the answer. If you can’t answer one, don’t let that discourage you for the next questions. No one is expected to get every answer right!
- **Read the directions and listen carefully to all test instructions.** Sometimes we assume we know what type of question we are answering, but many times test takers get answers wrong because they did not read the directions. An example of this would be the difference between mark all that apply, answer only one, and mark the one that does not belong.
- **Relax.** Feeling high amounts of stress or tension will cause you to forget what you know or think irrationally. Ways to reduce feelings of stress include preparing in advance, not talking with others who are stressed about the test immediately beforehand, making sure you understand the directions, and reviewing this guide.

### **During the Test**

- **Read each question carefully.** After reading each question, make sure you understand it clearly before answering.
- **Do not make random guesses – narrow the response options down.** Try to eliminate at least one wrong answer before guessing. If you are given four choices and randomly guess, you only have a 25% chance of guessing the right answer—or a 75% chance of guessing the WRONG answer. Further, if you can eliminate just one



wrong answer you have boosted your chances to 33%. If you can eliminate two wrong answers your chances have gone up to 50%. When all else fails and you must make guesses:

- **Be aware of key words:** “always,” “never,” “all,” or “none.” Consider these options carefully.
- **Trust your “gut”:** Usually your first reaction is right.

## THE ASSESSMENT: WHAT TO EXPECT

### *Realistic Job Preview*

The assessment will begin with a Realistic Job Preview (RJP).

In the RJP, you will see and hear a realistic description of what the Operations and Support roles are like, and the challenges and rewards of these roles. **You will not have to answer any questions during this section**, it is meant only to give you helpful information about the roles of those in Operations and Support positions.



### *Explanations and Sample Questions*

#### Handle Work Challenges

In this part of the assessment, you will be presented with a variety of situations that you may encounter on the job. You will be asked to read each scenario and all possible response options, then select the responses most and least like how you would react to the situation.

**Sample Item:** *You are having computer and internet problems while trying to do your work. You have contacted IT and they are working to solve the problem, but you are still falling behind on your work tasks for the day because of these issues.*

*Which statement is most like how you would respond?*

- *Realize these issues are out of your control and work to get as much done as you can.*
- *Ask your coworkers if they can pick up some of your workload today in hopes of making sure everything gets done.*

- *Email your supervisor explaining the situation and let them know that your work might be delayed.*


*Which statement is least like how you would respond?*

- *Realize these issues are out of your control and work to get as much done as you can.*
- *Ask your coworkers if they can pick up some of your workload today in hopes of making sure everything gets done.*
- *Email your supervisor explaining the situation and let them know that your work might be delayed.*

## Work with Customer Information

In this exercise, you'll listen to a series of calls and pay attention to different tasks at the same time. These tasks represent the experience of splitting your attention and may not be identical to what you'll do on the job.

### Sample Item:

Sample Item
 <p>Audio:</p> <p><i>Caller: "Hi, my name is Carol Walker and I am calling in regard to my account. My Account number is 9749-3749-2921. Oh, wait I think I said those last digits wrong. It should be 9749-3749-2129."</i></p> <p><i>Rep: "Thanks for that information, can I just have you verify your address and phone number on file for me, Carol?"</i></p> <p><i>Caller: "Yes. My address is 3432 Wilson Drive in Fort Collins, Colorado 80522 and my phone number is 702-543-8754"</i></p> <p><i>Rep: "Thank you very much. What can I help you with today?"</i></p> <p>-----</p>

*After you listen to the audio recording, you will be asked to respond to questions related to what you heard. These questions will require you to identify and verify correct information based on the transcription.*

### VERIFY INFORMATION

NAME

Carol Walker



ACCOUNT NUMBER

9749-3749-2921



ADDRESS

3432 Wilson Drive. Fort Collins, Colorado 80522



## Coordinate Work

An important part of this role is the ability to use information to solve problems and make decisions. In this part of the assessment, you will use the information presented to you to answer questions having to do with the coordination of schedules and work order completion. You will need to work quickly and accurately during this exercise – the less time you take, the better.

### Sample Item:

*In the following questions about Week 1 schedules, you will see two tables with information for you to reference. The first table includes four Work Orders and the days and times that those Work Orders are to be scheduled. The second table includes your four available crews and the days and shifts in which each crew is scheduled to work. Use the information in these two tables to answer the questions.*

**Which crew would be best to assign to Work Order 1?**

*Note: Each Work Order needs to have an assigned crew, and each crew can only be assigned to one Work Order. Make sure you will have coverage for all Work Orders.*

Work Orders		
Work Order	Time	Day
1	6am-8:30am	Tu
2	10pm-1am	Tu
3	2am-7am	M
4	7:30pm-12am	M

Crew Schedule		
Group	Days	Shift
Crew 1	M, Tu, W, Th, F	9pm-9am
Crew 2	Sat, M, Tu, Th	1am-7am
Crew 3	Sat, M, Tu, W	6pm-1:30am
Crew 4	M, Tu, W, Th, F	12am-9am

- Crew 1
  - Crew 2
  - Crew 3
  - Crew 4
- 

## Work with Numbers

In this exercise, you'll solve math problems similar to the ones you may encounter in the role. You may want to use a calculator or scratch paper for this exercise. You will need to work quickly and accurately during this exercise – the less time you take, the better.

### **Sample Item:**

*You need to update a customer of the arrival time of the crew that is headed to their location. The customer is 20 miles away. Your crew's travel time is averaging 40 miles per hour. How long will it take your crew to arrive at the customer's location?*

- 20 minutes
  - 30 minutes
  - 40 minutes
  - 50 minutes
- 

## What Drives You

In this exercise, you will help us understand what kind of work environment motivates and inspires you. For each pair of statements in this exercise, decide which describes the type of job or work environment you prefer.

### **Sample Item:** *I prefer a job where...*

- The company I work for is extremely well known.
- Safety protocols are strongly enforced

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## Tell Us Your Story

We value the wide variety of backgrounds our associates bring to their work, and this section will ask how your background has shaped who you are. If you do not have previous work experience, you can think of your academic and extracurricular experiences. It is important to be open and honest.

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### **Sample Item:**

*In the last year, how many times have you been tardy for work?*

- *Never*
- *1-2 times*
- *3-4 times*
- *5-7 times*
- *8-10 times*
- *11-15 times*
- *More than 15 times*
- *Unapplicable - I did not work in the last year*

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## Describe Your Approach

Everyone brings a unique approach to their work. This exercise will ask about your style at work. For each pair of work style statements, you will decide which one describes you best. When responding to these questions, think of work situations rather than your personal life.

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### **Sample Item:**

You will be asked to select the statement that describes you more, and then select whether that statement is somewhat or most like you.

Inconveniences at work often frustrate me.    OR    I can easily adapt to a change in workflow.

Most

Somewhat

Somewhat

Most

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## FURTHER RESOURCES: Test Taking Strategies

Below you will find some test taking strategies for various competencies or skills that may be particularly relevant to the job in which you are applying as well as for this assessment. These resources are listed to help you develop your current skills.

Please note that SoCalGas® is in no way affiliated with any of these resources, they are only listed for your convenience.

### Generalized Knowledge

Competencies and skills that fall under the category Generalized Knowledge that may be particularly useful for the job in which you are applying include knowledge of:

- Administrative and clerical procedures
- Customer service
- Computers and electronics
- Mathematics
- Business and management principles

Resources to help you further develop skills in these areas:

- **Customer Service:** *20 Tips to Improve Your Customer Service Skills: For Representatives and Managers*: An article from Qualtrics detailing tips for great customer service.
  - **Web address:** <https://www.qualtrics.com/experience-management/customer/service-tips-skills/>
- **Free Math Help:** Includes free lessons covering algebra, calculus, geometry, and statistics/
  - Web address: <https://www.freemathhelp.com/>
- **Leadership Development:** Ted Talk: “What it Takes to be a Great Leader”, *Roselinde Torres*
  - Web address: [https://www.ted.com/talks/roselinde\\_torres\\_what\\_it\\_takes\\_to\\_be\\_a\\_great\\_leader](https://www.ted.com/talks/roselinde_torres_what_it_takes_to_be_a_great_leader)
- **Computer Skills:** GCF Global: Includes free tutorials for individuals who want to learn more about technology and computers. Lessons include tutorials in Excel, PowerPoint, Word, along with Internet Safety. Also includes other topics such as resume writing, interviewing skills, and job networking.
  - **Web address:** <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/>



## Interacting and Communicating with Others

Competencies and skills that fall under the category Interacting and Communicating with Others that may be particularly useful for the job in which you are applying include the ability to:

- Be an active listener
- Effectively communicate with others
- Be socially aware
- Communicate effectively through writing

Resources to help you further develop skills in these areas:

- **Becoming a better listener:** Ted Talk: “5 Ways to Listen Better”, *Julian Treasure*
  - Web address: [https://www.ted.com/talks/julian\\_treasure\\_5\\_ways\\_to\\_listen\\_better?referrer=playlist-listen\\_up](https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_5_ways_to_listen_better?referrer=playlist-listen_up)
- **Communicating Effectively:** Book: *How to Talk to Anyone: 92 Little Tricks for Big Success in Relationships*, Leli Lowndes
- **Communicating Effectively:** Ted Talk, “10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation”, *Celeste Headlee*
  - Web Address: [https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste\\_headlee\\_10\\_ways\\_to\\_have\\_a\\_better\\_conversation/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste_headlee_10_ways_to_have_a_better_conversation/transcript)
- **Writing Effectively:** Purdue Online Writing Lab: Includes short reading lessons on topics including grammar, punctuation, sentence clarity, and effective transitions.
  - Web address: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)

## Self-Management Skills

Competencies and skills that fall under the category Self-Management Skills that may be particularly useful for the job in which you are applying include the ability to:

- Assess performance to make improvements
- Manage time effectively

Resources to help you further develop your skills in these areas:

- **Time Management:** *Fundamentals of Time and Task Management:* an article from the Center for Academic and Personal Development at Harvard University on how to better manage time.
  - Web address: [https://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/complit/files/fundamentals\\_of\\_time\\_and\\_task\\_management.pdf](https://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/complit/files/fundamentals_of_time_and_task_management.pdf)
- **Time Management:** *Time Management: 10 Strategies for Better Time Management:* an article from University of Georgia, Extension

- Web address:  
<https://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.html?number=C1042>

## Thinking Skills

Competencies and skills that fall under the category Thinking Skills that may be particularly useful for the job in which you are applying include skills such as:

- Reading Comprehension
- Critical Thinking
- Inductive and Deductive Reasoning
- Number Facility
- Problem Sensitivity
- Selective Attention

Resources to help you further develop your skills in these areas:

- **Reading Comprehension:** ACT reading comprehension sample test questions with answers and explanations
  - Web address: <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-preparation/reading-practice-test-questions.html?page=0&chapter=1>
- **Critical Thinking:** Ted Talk, 5 Tips to Improve Your Critical Thinking, *Samantha Agoos*
  - Web address: [https://www.ted.com/talks/samantha\\_agoos\\_5\\_tips\\_to\\_improve\\_your\\_critical\\_thinking](https://www.ted.com/talks/samantha_agoos_5_tips_to_improve_your_critical_thinking)
- **Inductive and Deductive Reasoning:** Practice logic puzzles, games such as Sudoku, and pattern puzzles.
- **Selective Attention:** *4 Simple Exercises to Strengthen Your Attention and Reduce Distractibility* by Rebekah Barnett, 2018 for TED.
  - Web address: <https://ideas.ted.com/4-simple-exercises-to-strengthen-your-attention-and-reduce-distractibility/>

## Work Styles

Competencies and skills that fall under the category Thinking Skills that may be particularly useful for the job in which you are applying include skills such as:

- Attention to detail
- Dependability
- Integrity
- Cooperation
- Self-Control
- Independence

- Stress Tolerance
- Persistence
- Adaptability/Flexibility
- Analytical thinking

Resources to help you further your skills in these areas:

- **Attention to Detail:** *6 Tips and 4 Exercises to Improve Your Attention to Details:* An article from New Health Advisor providing tips and methods to improve this attention to detail.
  - Web address: <https://www.newhealthadvisor.org/how-to-improve-attention-to-detail.html>
- **Integrity:** *How to Achieve Integrity in the Workplace*, Hallie Crawford for U.S. News: An article about how to show integrity in the workplace and why it is important
  - Web Address: <https://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/articles/how-to-achieve-integrity-in-the-workplace>
- **Stress Tolerance:** *Best Ways to Manage Stress:* An article from Harvard Health Publishing, Harvard Medical School explaining the stress response, how to recognize it, and how to manage it.
  - Web address: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/best-ways-to-manage-stress>
- **Adaptability/Flexibility:** *4 Ways to Boost Your Adaptability Skills*, Anne Converse Willkomm: An article from Drexel University explaining what adaptability is, why it's beneficial, and some ways to improve one's ability to be adaptable.
  - Web address: <https://drexel.edu/goodwin/professional-studies-blog/overview/2019/September/4-ways-to-boost-your-adaptability-skills/>