

**Question 1:**

You are a rookie firefighter. Your Captain tells you that it is your responsibility to clean the bathrooms every shift. You know that this is not the normal clean up rotation.

What would you do and why?

Answer:

If my captain tells me to clean the bathroom, I will do just that. I know that I will have a housework detail. It does not matter what I am assigned to clean. I will clean it with a smile on my face. When I have completed my work, I will look around for another detail that needs to be done. When I am finished, I will check with my fellow firefighters and see if they need help with their chores.

Many people work for years trying to get a job in the fire service, a goal I'm happy to have reached. I am not going to make an issue out of cleaning the bathrooms. I don't see this as a problem. Every occupation has tasks that are less than desirable. In the fire service, cleaning the bathrooms is one of them. I am confident that there will be things that I will encounter that will be much more trying than this. This is truly not an issue for me.

Reasoning:

Many candidates will address the situation by approaching the captain and telling him that it is unfair that they have to clean the bathrooms each shift. I promise you that in the captain's mind this would be a complete non-issue. If you go to him or her and explain that you feel that it is unfair, you will be viewed as a whiner. My suggestion is to keep your head down and do your job.

Getting a job in the fire service is extremely competitive. If something like cleaning the bathrooms is going to be an issue, you may want to think about a different career.

For whatever reason, your captain has asked you to clean the bathroom each shift. The question suggests that this is out of the normal rotation. If you are assigned the same detail every shift, it stands to reason that the other firefighter, or engineer is also following the same regimen. In the big scheme of things, it is your responsibility to get along. Don't get hung up on your cleaning detail is.

Whatever the issue, remember that you are the rookie firefighter. You should expect to do more than your fair share. You will be assigned not only the least desirable details but also more of them than the rest of the crew. There are chores that need to be completed around the station. It is only fitting that the new firefighter be given these duties.

Doing the bulk of the work around the station is part of the initiation process. The other firefighters did more than their share during their probationary period. Why should you be any different? It is part of earning your reputation. Put your head down, get to work, and do your job with a smile on your face!



Question 2:
You are a rookie firefighter who is assigned to vacuuming the dormitory. As you are performing your duties, you notice a bottle of alcohol under the engineer's bed. You know that alcohol is strictly forbidden on fire department premises.

What would you do and why?

Answer:

The first thing I would do is gather facts. Since alcohol on the premises is such a violation of our policy, my first thought would be that this is some kind of test.

I would approach the engineer and ask him about the bottle under his bed. Keeping in mind that there are three different shifts that use the bed, I would keep an open mind since that the bottle may have been left by one of the members on the other shift.

My response would be dictated by the engineer's reactions. If he tells me he knows nothing about the bottle, I would take it to the captain myself. I would expect the captain to launch his own investigation. At this point, I would feel that I have handled the situation to the best of my ability.

If the engineer is evasive or tells me to mind my own business, I will make it clear that the captain needs to be made aware of the bottle of alcohol under his bed. This would be uncomfortable for me but I would not be willing to let it pass without taking the proper action. My objective would be to let the engineer know the value of bringing this violation to the captain's attention.

I know it will make the engineer look better in the eyes of the captain if he comes forward with the information on his own. If he is unwilling to come forward, I have no alternative but to tell the captain myself. Lastly, doing so will make it much easier on my relationships with my fellow firefighters.

The engineer says he is sorry and tells you that he will take the bottle out to his truck.

What would you do and why?

I would once again explain to the engineer that the captain needs to be informed. The issue of having a bottle of alcohol is such a violation of the policies and procedures that I would be unwilling to jeopardize my job or compromise the fire department by remaining silent. I would make another attempt to try to convince him to go to the captain. If he were unwilling to do so, I would tell the captain myself.

The engineer tells you that he had a small drink this morning and he is sorry he made a mistake. He reminds you that he has known you for a long time, even before you came on the fire department. He has helped you get through your first two probationary exams.

What would you do and why?

I would thank him for his help thus far in my career. I would then redirect him to the issue at hand. It has now become apparent that he has been drinking on duty. This is even more serious than just having a bottle of alcohol on the premises. The captain must be notified immediately and the company must be put out of service. There is no way I would allow this engineer to drive.

The engineer says that he is not feeling well. His solution is to tell the captain that he wants to go home sick.

What would you do and why?

This would not be an acceptable solution. I would tell him that I am not willing to go along with his plan or be a party to a cover up. In addition to his drinking on duty, he is would be making matters worse by getting into his car and driving home. There is just no way I would allow that to happen.

The engineer agrees to go to the captain but says that the captain is in a meeting with the battalion chief. He wants to wait until he is finished with his meeting. How would this affect your actions?

I would tell him that this was important enough to interrupt the meeting immediately. If he is more comfortable with me accompanying him, I will do so. I would make sure this issue was taken care of immediately.

Reasoning:

Initially the question dealt solely with a bottle of alcohol under the engineer's bed. It is important for a candidate not to assume it belongs to a particular member just because it is under his or her bed. It is significant to note that there are several other firefighters that use the same bed, one on each of the other shifts. Since there are a total of three firefighters that use the bed, there is a $2/3$ chance that it belongs to one of the other firefighters.

The first step is to approach the individual and gather facts. If you approach the engineer and he tells you that he doesn't know anything about the bottle, you can then take it to the captain and wash your hands of the situation. He or she will launch an investigation and you are out of the loop.

If, on the other hand, the engineer becomes evasive, tells you to mind your own business, or owns up to it you now have to take appropriate action.