Judgment & Comprehension in Nursing Situations Subtest

How to Take the PSB Exam
Purpose of this subtest:

- This test was designed by psychologists to identify someone who will make appropriate decisions in the nursing role
  - Because a nurse often finds himself/herself working with others, the test is looking for individuals who can maintain composure even in emotional and stressful situations
  - The test is also looking to identify independent problem solvers
  - Do you know when to solve a problem alone and when to seek help from a supervisor?
What if I Have NO Nursing Experience?

- You can still pass and even perform well on this test without nursing experience
- Remember: This test is meant to identify who will be a good candidate for nursing school!
- If you want to pass this subtest, you should:
  - Study some nursing content
  - Learn test-taking skills and strategies
  - Practice sample questions
  - Keep a positive mental attitude😊
Passing PSB: Task #1

- Study nursing content, such as:
  - Nursing roles, job description, and licensure
  - Common hazards of this occupation
  - Essential qualities of a nurse
  - Legal and ethical expectations

- Where can I find this info?
  - A Nursing Foundations/Fundamentals/Transitions textbook
  - Nursing sites
Passing PSB: Task #2

- Learn Test-Taking Skills & Strategies
  - Learn the testing format
  - Learn general test-taking strategies
  - Learn the common Judgment question categories
Testing Format

- 50 multiple-choice questions
- 30 minute limit
- Can scroll among all questions at any time during the test
- One point for each correct response
- No penalty for incorrect responses
  - Answer all questions!
  - Make educated guesses
General Test-Taking Skills

- Read each question thoroughly!
- Think of an answer before you read the choices
- Always read ALL of the responses before choosing
- Work from easy to hard:
  - If you know the answer, select it and move on
  - If you are unsure, skip the question and return to it later
General Test-Taking Skills

- **Use process of elimination:**
  - Eliminate any choice(s) that are obviously wrong
- **When choosing between the remaining choices:**
  - The nurse can usually **act first**, before getting a supervisor
    - Usually the **simplest response is best!**
  - Consider **beneficence** vs. **nonmaleficence**
  - Consider **connotative meaning**
  - **Never use force:** verbal or physical
  - **Avoid** any response that implies **emotion**
If you finish, you can go back and review your responses

- NEVER change a response unless you know for sure that you are mistaken
- Research tells us that 3 out of 4 times, your initial response is correct!
Final Thoughts:

- Practice, practice, practice! Study, study, study!
- Get plenty of rest the night before the test
- Avoid excessive caffeine
- Use relaxation before and during test
- Think positively!
  - Research tells us that positive mental attitude improves performance!
- Preparation is the key to relieving anxiety and performing well😊
Resources:

- Any introductory (Fundamentals, Foundations, or Transitions) Nursing textbook
- A PSB Preparation book (the following has the most information on the Judgment subtest):
Most of the test questions can be placed into a category. If you can identify the category, you will know what type of response you are looking for.
Q#1: A patient, coworker, or visitor offends you, hits on you, is rude to you, or tells you how to do your job.

Response: You will ignore the problem.

- Most of the time, the offense is not volitional. In either case, the outcome is inconsequential.
- Never react with emotion!
- Instead, ignore the person or “be tolerant”
Q#2: There is a problem that needs some attention.
Response: The nurse can usually attempt a solution before seeking help from a supervisor.

- The simplest solutions are typically the best!
- Avoid marking a response in order to save money or time; you are NEVER too busy!
- Never rely on another person!
  - NEVER GET HOUSEKEEPING, AIDES, OR COWORKERS TO DO SOMETHING FOR YOU!!!
- Think of nonmaleficence vs. beneficence
Q#3: The nurse has attempted to solve a problem, but it didn’t work!

Response: Seek guidance from a supervisor

Avoid going to hospital security or other authority before getting your supervisor
Q#4: The nurse has been negligent or made an error, e.g., given a patient the wrong medication or caused a patient fall

Response: The nurse, in these situations, must always find a supervisor or file an incident report

- The test-designers want to see if you know you’ve made a mistake and if you will honestly inform authority
- Do not do something that may put the patient at further risk, like moving him or giving more medication
- Do not fall for other tempting responses!
Q#5: The nurse is seeking employment.

Response: The nurse should be courteous, yet persistent.

- If given the option: make an appointment to come back when the director is available
- Avoid responses that imply that the nurse is being dishonest or pushy in order to get an interview
  - Never name drop; never follow the person; never demand or show up and wait
- Avoid responses that imply that the nurse is giving up and making a rash decision based on emotion, e.g., seeking employment elsewhere or waiting for the secretary to call you
Q#6: There is a patient safety issue.

Response: The nurse should always take the opportunity to educate the patient.

- The nurse cannot ignore a dangerous situation.
- If we are denying the patient something, we want to provide explanation.
- Explain, even to a visitor, why smoking is dangerous to a patient on oxygen.
- Avoid judgment statements.
Q#7: A patient asks for information that the nurse cannot give; wants to discuss something difficult; asks for advice; etc.

Response: The nurse will *at least acknowledge the patient*
- **Avoid** changing the subject
- **Avoid** leaving the room
- **Avoid** giving advice
  - We offer objective and comprehensive education
- **Avoid** minimizing patient’s feelings and judging
Q#8: You have conflict with authority (supervisor, nurse manager, etc)

Response: You must use compromise/collaboration in order to resolve this type of issue

- Discuss any negative performance evaluations with him/her
  - If a supervisor says that you are not doing your job, ask for suggestions for improvement
- Do not show emotion
- Always address this issue; CANNOT IGNORE
- Never speak badly of someone else
Q#9: You are administering medication

Response: **ONLY** if the response explicitly states that you have physician consent!

- Test designers view this as general knowledge: nurses cannot prescribe medication
- “I will get you some medication/ Tylenol/ Aspirin” is wrong!
- “I will see what your physician will prescribe/has ordered” is correct!
Diagnosing Questions #10

Q#10: You are asked to give patient education

Response: **YOU** must give the patient the information **VERBALLY**

- You cannot rely solely on brochures, pamphlets, or videos
- You cannot rely on a family member to educate the patient
- You must educate the patient about any procedure that you are going to perform BEFORE you do it
  - What it is; why it is being done
  - Honestly answer questions about pain/discomfort but offer reassurance that you are there to help
Q#11: You are asked about treatments/diagnoses that you know nothing about!

Response: Use your everyday experience and process of elimination.
Q#12: The most important quality of a nurse

Most important qualities (look for these 1st):
- Integrity, reliability, honesty, credibility, knowledge

Second most important qualities (if none of the above are present, look for these):
- Leadership, adaptability

  - Passion, friendliness, charisma are not as important as these characteristics