SSB Interview Day 1 – Complete Guide to Screening Test (OIR and PPDT)

The first day of the SSB Interview process, commonly known as the **Screening Test**, is one of the most crucial stages of the selection process for entries like NDA, CDS, AFCAT, and other officer-level recruitment. This stage filters out unsuitable candidates and allows only the most promising individuals to proceed to the next four days of testing.

This comprehensive guide explains the **structure, components, preparation tips**, and **importance** of the Day 1 Screening Test in the SSB Interview.

Purpose of the SSB Screening Test

The primary objective of the Screening Test is to assess a candidate's basic officer-like qualities (OLQs), communication skills, reasoning ability, and ability to function in a group. It serves as the first level of filtration, and only those who clear this round are retained for the full five-day SSB assessment.

Two Main Components of the Screening Test

Officer Intelligence Rating (OIR) Test

The OIR Test evaluates a candidate's logical and analytical reasoning. It is divided into two sections — verbal and non-verbal reasoning.

Format:

- Two booklets with multiple-choice questions.

- Each section has 40 to 50 questions.

- Time duration: Approximately 17 to 25 minutes per set.

Verbal Reasoning Topics:

- Analogies

- Coding and decoding

- Series completion

- Sentence formation

- Blood relations

- Direction sense

- Arithmetic puzzles

Non-Verbal Reasoning Topics:

- Pattern recognition

- Series of images

- Odd one out

- Embedded figures

- Paper folding and cutting

- Mirror and water images

Scoring: Candidates receive an internal grade (from 1 to 5) based on their accuracy and speed. While exact scores are not revealed, a good OIR grade (1 or 2) significantly improves the chances of getting screened in.

Picture Perception and Discussion Test (PPDT)

The PPDT is designed to test a candidate's perception, imagination, decision-making ability, story-telling skill, and group behavior.

This test has three key stages:

1. Picture Perception: A blurred picture is shown for 30 seconds. Candidates are required to observe it carefully and mentally form a story around what they see.

2. Story Writing: Candidates are given 4 minutes to write a story that includes:

- Number of characters

- Gender, age, and mood of the main character

- What led to the situation

- What is happening currently

- What will happen next

3. Group Discussion: After writing, candidates form groups of 12 to 15 and individually

narrate their stories. This is followed by a group discussion where candidates attempt to arrive at a common story.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Clarity and structure of the story

- Realism and logical progression

- Confidence during narration

- Listening and leadership skills

- Ability to cooperate with group members

How to Prepare for Day 1 of the SSB Interview

Tips for OIR Test Preparation

- Practice verbal and non-verbal reasoning questions from standard sources.

- Improve speed and accuracy through timed mock tests.

- Focus on understanding question patterns and solving techniques.

- Use books like RS Aggarwal's Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning for thorough practice.

Tips for PPDT Preparation

- Regularly practice writing short and structured stories based on images.

- Observe your surroundings to generate realistic story ideas.

- Work on storytelling skills to enhance fluency and clarity during narration.

- Participate in mock group discussions to build confidence and improve teamwork.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Writing overly dramatic or unrealistic stories during PPDT.

- Interrupting others or being overly aggressive in the group discussion.

- Speaking too softly or without clarity during narration.

- Overthinking the image and losing time during story writing.

- Neglecting OIR test preparation due to overconfidence.

Expert Recommendations

- Always keep your PPDT story positive and logically structured.

- Follow a clear format: what led to the situation, what is happening now, and what will happen next.

- Be respectful but assertive during discussions.

- Display officer-like qualities such as cooperation, initiative, and confidence.

- Maintain good body language and eye contact throughout.

Conclusion

The Day 1 Screening Test of the SSB Interview is a high-stakes stage that determines whether a candidate proceeds further in the selection process. Success in this stage depends on a balanced combination of **mental aptitude, creativity, communication skills, and group dynamics**.

With the right preparation and mindset, you can successfully clear the screening round and move one step closer to your dream of becoming an officer in the Indian Armed Forces.

Join Victor Growth's SSB Interview Coaching Program

Our expert-guided training includes OIR practice sessions, PPDT story writing and group discussion drills, personalized feedback, and structured mock sessions tailored for NDA, CDS, and AFCAT aspirants.
Batch starts May 5. Enroll today and begin your journey with confidence.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the purpose of the Screening Test in SSB?
The Screening Test evaluates a candidate's basic reasoning ability and personality traits to shortlist deserving candidates for further rounds of the SSB Interview.

2. What is a good OIR grade for getting screened in?
A Grade 1 or Grade 2 in the OIR test is considered ideal and greatly improves the chances of selection.

3. How can I improve my PPDT performance?
Practice writing logical and structured stories, improve your narration skills, and engage

in group discussions to build confidence and teamwork.

4. Is the Screening Test the same for NDA, CDS, and AFCAT?
Yes, the structure of the Screening Test is similar for all entries, including NDA, CDS, AFCAT, and direct SSB calls.

5. Can I use Hindi in the PPDT narration or discussion?
While Hindi is allowed, it is recommended to use English to reflect officer-level communication skills, especially in the group discussion.

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