2008 Initial Exam Development Workshop

Exam Question Simplification

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Exam Question Simplification
Why is this important?

1. More words could equal more confusion
   - Questions become “tricky”
   - Applicants must demonstrate ability to wade through “fluff” instead of demonstrating knowledge of the topic
   - Questions 48, 58

Exam Question Simplification
Why is this important?

2. Unnecessary fatigue
   - Applicant wastes mental energy trying to determine what information is pertinent and what isn't
   - Question 82 (Draft, final)
3. Less distraction over irrelevant information
   - Wasted time if applicant thinks a statement in the stem is some failure requiring analysis
   - Must "start over" upon realization that information is irrelevant
   - Question 75

Exam Question Simplification
Why is this important?

4. Less chance of “teaching” in the question
   - Stem (Question 28 Draft, final)
   - Distracters (Question 93)

How does it happen?

1. When describing plant conditions in accident scenarios, may provide too much information that obscures the pertinent info
   - Original information that was part of the writers' thought process may not be needed in final version of question
   - Question 22 (Draft, final)

How does it happen?

2. We try to ensure applicants don't have to make ANY assumptions
   - We try to provide too much information so the applicant doesn't have to assume
   - Questions 45, 51
3. We tend to add more words to raise complexity of the question
   - A question does not rise on Bloom's Taxonomy Pyramid by being longer

How do you simplify?

- Don’t worry about it while creating the exam.
- After creating the “final” version, look for the following:

At “final” version….

1. Is all information in stem necessary?
   - Assume all other systems operate normally unless told otherwise
   - Is there any “fluff” in the stem?
   - Is there info that adds no value or adds confusion
2. Move repetitive info in distracters to stem
   - Questions 21 (Draft, final), 29 (Draft, final)
3. Consider “fill in the blank” formatting
   - Questions 43 (Draft, final), 81 (Draft, final), 03 (Draft, final)

At “final” version….

4. If question requires list of indications like SG levels, volts, etc, consider a table format
5. Don’t overdo your simplification efforts
   - Balance providing enough information and too much
   - Listen to your validators
6. Check your pride at the door.

Any Questions?