

**INTERESTING EXCHANGE OF E-MAILS BETWEEN A
CANDIDATE FOR THE COMPETITIVE STENOGRAPHER
EXAMINATION OF THE COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE STATE
OF MINAS GERAIS
AND PROFESSOR WALDIR CURY**

STUDENT: Regarding the CJ examination, I'm trying to fight against despair, which will probably be my biggest enemy at the moment of the exam. After all, I've been studying for this exam for practically six months. My performance has dropped in the last week and I am quite distracted when making dictations, losing more words than normal. Are there any tips to overcome these difficulties?

PROFESSOR WALDIR: Yes, there is! Take anxiety, put it in a bag and throw it in the trash, because anxiety will not do you any good; it will only hinder you. Try to turn this anxiety and desperation into what I call "positive stress" that is, make it an urge to not lose any of the words of the dictation. At the time of the dictation, think it's just one more dictation from the many ones that you have been doing. Think that the voice you're hearing, for example, is the voice of Prof. Waldir, or even your own voice. Consider also that, the vast majority of those who are there doing the exam, are not the least prepared to do a shorthand exam... but you are! Yes, you are ready!... Just think of positive things... because thinking negatively will not help you at all! If it did, it would be worthwhile going into despair!... Let others be desperate ... not you! I remember when I went to do the Alerj's competitive shorthand examination. I went with the following thought: "I'm going to get first place"

At the time of the dictation, be totally alert, looking at the pad, not to the person who will start dictating. And start writing in shorthand "ahead of the speaker," not "with the speaker" that is, write lighter and as quickly as possible everything that you're listening to and try to write the easy words faster than usual, in order to give you time to write words that are more complicated.

These are the tips I can give you.

B Regards

Prof. Waldir

STUDENT: Excellent, prof. Waldir! It was good to read the tips you gave me! I'm going to take that thought with me to the exam and get 1st place! Some friends suggested me to take a tranquilizer, in order to reduce my anxiety, heartbeat and shaking at the time of the exam. I even went to a cardiologist. What do you think? I promise that this is the last question. I know you're a very busy person.

B Regards

PROFESSOR WALDIR: I think you're making a storm in a teacup. Don't follow their advice! Having gone to a cardiologist, and thinking of taking tranquilizers seems to me as though the world is coming to an end ... What effect will this tranquilizer have on your body? And what if it makes you too relaxed and impairs your shorthand speed? I think you should do the exam believing in yourself and with true courage. Just that! And if you do not pass this exam, you'll most certainly pass the next one! You're too young to be taking tranquilizers and going to a cardiologist because of an exam.

Positive thinking, that's all you need!

Here are some more tips:

Avoid getting distracted as much as possible on the test day. Avoid talking too much to other candidates because by talking or babbling too much, or telling too many jokes and laughing a lot may contribute to your loss of concentration at the moment of the exam. It is obvious that, for instance, while standing in line, you will talk to the people around you and that may lead to an excess of talking and jokes. Try to be as reserved as possible, especially when getting close to the time of the exam, and even more when seated at the location where the test will be given. After taking your place, the only person that matters to you is yourself, and the only things that matter are your pad, pencil and your focus. The other candidates do not interest you that is, for you, they simply do not exist. And stay focused since the very beginning of the dictation. Many candidates tend to stare directly at the person who will dictate, and only when he/she begins to dictate, is when the candidate looks for the pad and starts to write in shorthand. And with that, the candidate loses a few precious seconds. The best thing to do is stare at the pad and have your pencil ready, at the spot where you will write the first word in shorthand. Therefore, you don't lose those precious seconds.

Another very important thing is to continue to be calm even when you lose one, two or three words. Let's imagine you feel you lost three words all at once. Continue writing in shorthand as if nothing had happened, because missing a word here, two or three there

will not be the decision factor for not passing the exam. Remember that you can lose up to 10%. Of course you will strive to not miss anything, but if you do, continue as if you had not. If it is a dictation of 10 minutes of 100 words per minute, you can lose up to 100 words. In general, this is the standard, unless the Public Notice says otherwise.

You have been training and memorizing the legal shorthand brief forms for six months. Who knows... you might get a good dictation, with a person who dictates well, has a good diction and develops a good pace...

So these are the tips I can offer. Moreover, try to do what the swimming champions and the marathoners do: at the time of the competition, concentrate and have faith in your victory!

Who knows... you just might come in first?!

B Regards

Prof. Waldir

STUDENT: Professor Waldir, today I did the Court of Justice's objective and practical shorthand exams. Regarding the objective exam, the content related to Law and Legislation was very extensive and the exam was very complicated. Nevertheless, God willing, I will get at least the minimum passing grade (50%). As to the shorthand exam, I think I did well. Maybe, from my point of view, this was the best competitive shorthand exam I've ever done. I was quite pleased with my performance. I may be wrong in relation to efficiency, but the impression I got after I left the exam was very positive.

I do not know how to thank you for the tips. They sure reduced my anxiety a lot before and during the exam and it made all the difference...

B Regards