ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Situational Responses Test 4

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Explanations

1. Your colleagues at work are discussing the new manager. He is particular about punctuality and has just had a word with one of your friends about his being late to work. He is complaining about the new boss and you say:
✓ **D) He is within his rights to expect you here on time.**
Your friend was late, so the manager had a good reason to speak to him. **To be within your rights** means to have a fair reason to do or expect something. Not the complaint to the director, because the manager did nothing wrong.

2. You are responsible for the new equipment at work but some of your curious friends are pressing all the buttons. You are worried that they may break something. You say:
✓ **A) This isn't a toy. Please, don’t touch the equipment.**
You are worried that your friends may break the equipment, so you ask them firmly to stop. **This isn't a toy** tells them to treat it seriously, and **don't touch** is a clear request.

3. One of your fellow students is very upset because he does not understand a particular formula that the teacher has just discussed. You say:
✓ **D) Let me help you during the break.**
Your classmate is upset and needs support, so a kind offer to help is the best reply. **Let me help you** is friendly and practical. **You should try harder** would only make him feel worse.

4. There is someone standing at the corner of the street. He seems to be a stranger and in need of help. You say:
✓ **A) May I be of assistance?**
May I be of assistance? is a polite way to offer help to a stranger. **Do you have the time?** asks what time it is, so it does not offer help.

5. You have been accused of taking something that doesn't belong to you. You say:
✓ **C) You've made a mistake.**
If someone wrongly says you took something, you deny it calmly. **You've made a mistake** tells them that the accusation is wrong.

6. Your father has not gotten home from work yet. It is late and you don't want mom to get upset so you decide to check on him and say:
✓ **C) I should give dad a call at work to see when he'll get here.**
You want to check on your father, so you decide to phone him. **Give someone a call** means to phone them. **To see when he'll get here** explains why you are calling.

7. Your friend has accidentally broken your favourite vase. You don't want her to feel bad so you say:
✓ **A) It's not important. I can always replace it.**
You don't want your friend to feel bad, so you tell her the broken vase doesn't matter. **It's not important** and **I can always replace it** make her feel better. The other options blame her.

8. John has just told you an incredible story about his summer vacation. You say:
✓ **D) Your stories are so amazing that they don't seem true.**
Incredible means so surprising that it is hard to believe. The answer says the same thing in other words: the stories are **so amazing that they don't seem true**. Not **How can you tell me such a story!**, because that sounds angry, as if John is lying.

9. Tom denies breaking the window, but you know that he did it. You say:
✓ **C) Don't lie to me; I know you did it.**
You know Tom is not telling the truth, so you tell him directly. **Don't lie to me; I know you did it.** shows that you know what really happened. Not **You should continue to tell the truth**, because Tom is lying, not telling the truth.

10. Shelly is ill and won't be able to come to the class picnic. You are upset and advise her:
✓ **A) Why don't you go to the doctor I went to last week?**
The question asks you to **advise** Shelly, which means suggesting what she should do. **Why don't you…?** is a common way to give advice. Bringing flowers is kind, but it is an offer, not advice.

11. Susan is looking for her pen. It's in her pocket but she has forgotten this. You say:
✓ **A) You really are absent-minded at times.**
Absent-minded describes someone who often forgets things, for example where they put them. Susan is looking for a pen that is already in her pocket, so this remark fits her.

12. Joe is considering going to a new school next year. You are upset and say:
✓ **C) I’m going to miss you a lot.**
You are upset because your friend may leave, so you tell him how you feel. **I'm going to miss you a lot** shows you will be sad without him. **Don't you like me anymore?** is about you, not about his change of school.

13. The driver of the bus seems to be angry about something. You say:
✓ E) Is there anything I can do?
When someone seems angry or upset, a polite and caring reply is to offer help. **Is there anything I can do?** does this. The other options are rude or talk about things that never happened, such as an accident.

14. Your husband has forgotten your anniversary again and you are telling your friend how upset you feel about it. You say:
✓ E) He doesn't understand why this is important to me.
You are telling a friend why you feel upset about your own husband. **He doesn't understand why this is important to me** explains your feelings. Not **Why don't you tell your husband about it?**, because you are the wife, not your friend.

15. You are angry about your best friend's behaviour. You say:
✓ B) A person should be more considerate of others' feelings.
You are angry, so you criticise your friend's behaviour. **Considerate** means thinking about other people's feelings. Saying a person **should be more considerate** shows you are not happy with how he acted.

16. The film on TV is awful but your wife is watching it and doesn't realize that you want to change the channel. You say:
✓ B) Would you mind if we changed the station?
Would you mind if we…? is a polite way to ask permission, followed by a past form (**changed**). It tells your wife what you want without being rude. Not **I'm glad you are enjoying the movie**, because it says nothing about changing the channel.

17. You have just found out that a friend of yours lost a loved one some time ago. You say:
✓ C) I only recently heard the sad news. I am sorry.
The loss happened some time ago, but you have only just learned about it. **I only recently heard the sad news. I am sorry.** explains why you are late and offers sympathy. **Separation** would mean the end of a relationship, not a death.

18. You've just heard a funny joke and want to tell your friend the joke. You start out by saying:
✓ A) Did you hear the story about –
Did you hear the story about…? (or **Have you heard the one about…?**) is a common way to start telling a joke. The other options do not start a joke, or they say you can't remember it.

19. An old man in the neighbourhood living alone is in need of help. You are visiting other neighbours and say:
✓ C) Why don't we get together and assist him?
You are suggesting to the neighbours that you all help the old man. **Why don't we…?** is used to make a suggestion, and **assist** means help. The other options do not mention helping him.

20. The children in the apartment next to yours are making so much noise that you can't sleep. You say to their parents:
✓ E) Would you mind asking the children to make less noise?
Would you mind + -ing is a polite way to make a request: **Would you mind asking the children to make less noise?** Not **Could you ask your children to play outside?**, because you are trying to sleep, so it is probably night.

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