



## Competency Based Interview Questions

*A useful summary of questions for when conducting behavioural-based interviews.*

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## Competency Based Interview Questions

This tool is helpful for those who are conducting a behavioural-based interview. A few critical competencies should be chosen and the same questions asked of each candidate. Note that for each competency, different questions are provided that tap into different levels of the competencies. In general one question should be asked for each competency. Probing for behaviours that demonstrate the competencies should be used to get a full picture of the candidates' past behaviours. Probing typically includes asking what the candidate did, said, felt and thought and the outcomes of the event. The behaviours that they recount should be compared with the behaviours listed in the competency profile for the role and used to determine at which level of those critical competencies a candidate is operating.

### 1. Core Competencies

#### Adaptability

- Tell me about a time when you changed your priorities to meet others' expectations.
- Describe a time when you altered your own behaviour to fit the situation.
- Tell me about a time when you had to change your point of view or your plans to take into account new information or changing priorities.

#### Client Focus

- Give an example of how you provided service to a client/stakeholder beyond their expectations. How did you identify the need? How did you respond?
- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a client/stakeholder service issue.
- Describe a situation in which you acted as an advocate within your organization for stakeholders' needs where there was some organisational resistance to be overcome.

#### Communication

- Describe a situation you were involved in that required a multi-dimensional communication strategy.
- Give an example of a difficult or sensitive situation that required extensive communication?
- Tell me about a time when you really had to pay attention to what someone else was saying, actively seeking to understand their message.

#### Organisational Awareness

- Describe the culture of your organisation and give an example of how you work within this culture to achieve a goal.
- Describe the things you consider and the steps you take in assessing the viability of a new idea or initiative.
- Tell me about a time when you used your knowledge of the organisation to get what you needed.

#### Problem Solving and Judgment

- Tell me about a time when you had to identify the underlying causes to a problem.
- Describe a time when you had to analyse a problem and generate a solution.
- Tell me about a situation where you had to solve a problem or make a decision that required careful thought. What did you do?

## **Results Orientation**

- Tell me about a time when you set and achieved a goal.
- Tell me about a time when you improved the way things were typically done on the job.
- Describe something you have done to improve the performance of your work unit.
- Describe something you have done to maximise or improve the use of resources beyond your own work unit to achieve improved results.

## **Teamwork**

- Tell me about a time when you worked successfully as a member of a team.
- Describe a situation where you were successful in getting people to work together effectively.
- Describe a situation in which you were a member (not a leader) of a team, and a conflict arose within the team. What did you do?

## **2. Role Specific Competencies**

### **Developing Others**

- Tell me about a time when you coached someone to help them improve their skills or job performance. What did you do?
- Describe a time when you provided feedback to someone about their performance.
- Give me an example of a time when you recognised that a member of your team had a performance difficulty/deficiency. What did you do?

### **Innovation**

- Describe something you have done that was new and different for your organisation that improved performance and/or productivity.
- Tell me about a time when you identified a new, unusual or different approach for addressing a problem or task.
- Tell me about a recent problem in which old solutions wouldn't work. How did you solve the problem?

### **Impact and Influence**

- Describe a recent situation in which you convinced an individual or a group to do something.
- Describe a time when you went through a series of steps to influence an individual or a group on an important issue.
- Describe a situation in which you needed to influence different stakeholders with differing perspectives.

### **Leadership**

- Tell me about a time when you had to lead a group to achieve an objective.
- Describe a situation where you had to ensure that your "actions spoke louder than your words" to a team.
- Describe a situation where you inspired others to meet a common goal.

## **Relationship Building**

- Describe a situation in which you developed an effective win/win relationship with a stakeholder or client. How did you go about building the relationship?
- Tell me about a time when you relied on a contact in your network to help you with a work related task or problem.
- Give me an example of a time when you deliberately attempted to build rapport with a co-worker or customer.

## **Resource Management**

- Describe a situation in which you took a creative approach to resourcing to achieve a goal.
- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a particular resource management issue regarding people, materials, or assets.
- Describe the options you would consider to resource a project or goal if you did not have the available resources within your own span of control.
- Describe a situation in which you established a partnership with another organization or stakeholder to achieve a mutual goal. What steps did you take to ensure the partnership was effective?

## **Self-Management**

- Describe the level of stress in your job and what you do to manage it.
- Describe a time when you were in a high pressure situation.
- Describe a time when things didn't turn out as you had planned and you had to analyze the situation to address the issue.

## **Strategic Thinking**

- Describe a challenge or opportunity you identified based on your industry knowledge and how you developed a strategy to respond to it.
- Describe a time you created a strategy to achieve a longer term business objective.
- Describe a time when you used your business knowledge to understand a specific business situation.



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