

How to be a good interviewer

Planning

- Prepare your interview questions in advance. Asking the same questions of each interviewee supports benchmarking, assessment and ultimately your decision making process.

Your questions should be designed to evidence the criteria you need to assess for the role in question when considering qualifications, previous experience, competencies and values. Keep in mind your organisational values, culture and objectives and how your interviewees would align with these and the people they will be working with.

- Research the candidate – review all application documentation, highlight areas for further questioning such as gaps in dates, missing qualifications and review their profiles online (if available)
- Consider your interview panel. Apart from yourself, who is attending? Does the panel allow for an objective and unbiased interview? and will it be a positive reflection of your organisation and the image/culture you wish to project?

During the Interview

- Have your questions ready and in a format where you can easily make notes and later score answers.
 - Be an active listener throughout.
 - Introduce all those present and outline the format of the interview.
 - Ask candidates to demonstrate their suitability through providing examples of what they have done and be clear on what their personal responsibility was in each situation. (Use the STAR technique where candidates provide examples by way of Situation, Task, Action, Result)
 - Ask questions regarding risk factors – what might stop this candidate from accepting your job if you offer them? Are they interviewing elsewhere? Does relocation need to be factored in and if so, are there other family members to consider? Would the candidate be open to staying with their current employer if they offered them a different role or promotion? What is important to them when considering a career move? Do they have particular future ambitions? What working environment are they seeking?
 - Remember you are an ambassador for your organisation's brand and the interview is as much for the interviewee to assess you and your company as it is for you to assess them. Provide detail on the structure of the department they will be working in, the workplace
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culture, future ambitions and objectives of the organisation. 'Sell' the opportunity – give examples of how other employees have developed and progressed within the organisation.

- Give the interviewee the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.
- Close the interview clearly by thanking the interviewee for their time and advising what the next steps will be and when they can expect to hear from you.

Post Interview

- Ensure you follow up when you say you will. Good communication is not only courteous to your interviewees but also an ongoing way to positively promote your organisation and its brand. Ensure that for those who are unsuccessful you thank them for their time and interest and notify them they have not been successful.

Suggested further reading

CIPD Selection methods (reviews candidate assessment methods as part of the recruitment process, focusing on interviews, psychometric tests and assessment centres)

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/recruitment/selection-factsheet>

Competency Based Interviews – example questions

Competence	Questions
<p>Customer Focus</p> <p>Knowing who your customers are, keeping the meeting of their needs at the forefront of the mind and taking responsibility for the service delivered to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasant and patient to customers at all times • Regularly asks customers about their needs and expectations • Regularly gives information to customers to help set expectations of what we can deliver. • Takes personal responsibility for ensuring customer problems are resolved • Understands customer’s personalities and views and thinks through what will have most impact on them. <p>Tries to get others to see things from the customers perspective</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In your current role, who are your customers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are they important? • What have you done to ensure the service you provide is what the customer wants? • Tell me about a time you went the extra mile to meet a customers needs. 2. Tell me about a time a customer approached you with a problem. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you find out what the customer needed. • What did you do to solve the problem? • How did you set the customers expectations? 3. What feedback do you collect from your customers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What changes have you introduced as a result of customer feedback?
<p>Communicating and Influencing</p> <p>The ability to communicate effectively and to influence others to act and/or commit support to one’s own goals or objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks and writes clearly, concisely and to the point • Listens effectively • Communicates enthusiastically and leaves customer feeling good about the interaction 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Tell me about a time when you communicated a piece of information to a group of individuals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you approach this? • What did you do to check the understanding of the group? 5. Tell me about a time when you convinced a colleague to participate in a work activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you ensure they fully understood their involvement in the activity?

Competency Based Interviews – example questions cont...

Competence cont...	Questions cont...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers needs and level of the audience in communication • Thinks through material in advance and structures in a logical sequence <p>Sounds people out in advance to check their views and tailors approach accordingly</p>	<p>6. Tell me about a best piece of written communication you have produced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What made this communication good? • What feedback did you receive?
<p>Teamwork</p> <p>Displaying the ability to contribute co-operatively and successfully, whether on a divisional or cross-divisional basis, in a 'process managed' company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works co-operatively with others to complete tasks • Listens to what team and colleagues have to say • Encourages and supports other team members • Communicates effectively with your team and colleagues • Behaves in a way that builds trust • Proactively identifies and uses skills and expertise of others to add value to overall results 	<p>7. Tell me about a time a colleague asked you for help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you do? • What was the outcome? • Why do you think your colleague chose to approach you? <p>8. Tell me about a successful team you were part of.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role did you play? • How did you ensure that all members of the team were working towards the same goal? <p>9. Tell me about an idea one of your colleagues had which you built upon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the idea implemented? • What was the outcome?
<p>Decision Making and Judgement</p> <p>The ability to exercise judgement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects on the pros and cons of a number of non-complex options and decides on the most appropriate using agreed criteria 	<p>10. Tell me about an important decision you have made in the last 3 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was the decision important? • Talk me through how you reached the decision you did. Was it the right decision? <p>11. Tell me about an 'on the spot' decision you had to make to satisfy a customer's needs.</p>

Competency Based Interviews – example questions cont...

Competence cont...	Questions cont...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is empowered to make day to day decisions affecting the running of the area or the satisfying of customers own area • Makes sound judgements about whether to escalate an issue or just get on and do it • Decides who needs to be informed of which decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you decide upon the best route to take? • How did you feel about having to make the decision quickly? • What follow up action did you take? <p>12. Tell me about the last time you were faced with a decision that you had to escalate rather than just following your own course of action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who did you approach to help with the decision? • Why did you choose to escalate this decision
<p>Planning and Organising</p> <p>The ability to develop clear and logical step-by-step plans for others which set out what needs to happen, when, how and by whom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedules days activities and uses time effectively • Plans how to deal with peaks and troughs in workload during the day/week • Gets the most important work done first (even if it is not as interesting as other work) • Balances the short term request with long term priorities • Can keep track of and manage several tasks simultaneously • Puts together plans which take a number of factors into consideration and which deliver the desired end result 	<p>13. Tell me about the ways in which you plan your workload.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you deal with unforeseen circumstances? • Please give me an example, tell me exactly what you did. • How did you prioritise your workload? <p>14. Tell me about a time when you re-set a colleague or customer's expectations regarding the timeframe within which you could complete work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the outcome? <p>15. What are your favourite aspects of your job?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your least favourite aspects? • How do you discipline yourself to ensure all other aspects of your job are given equal priority? • Please give an example.

Competency Based Interviews – example questions cont...

Competence cont...	Questions cont...
<p>Preference for Action</p> <p>Grasping issues that require resolution and ensuring that appropriate effective action is taken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes advantage of opportunities as they arise • Acts quickly and decisively in a crisis • Takes action to solve identified problems • Makes timely and effective decisions • Spots and seizes short term opportunities • Identifies potential short term opportunities and acts to address them before they have an impact 	<p>16. Tell me about a problem in your current workplace which your actions resolved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the outcome? <p>17. Describe to me the last crisis you faced within your workplace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you do to deal with this situation? • What would you have done recently? <p>18. Tell me about a problem which you have identified within your department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having identified the problem how did you decide upon what actions to take? • If you had not resolved this situation what impact would it have had on the business?
<p>Business Knowledge</p> <p>Having a sound grasp of the operating environment and expected services in general in your business... (Have they done their homework?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess any research undertaken prior to interview • Demonstrates a basic understanding of the role of FD / CIO / others specific to your business. • Demonstrates good understanding of what they think they need to deliver within the role 	<p>19. What is your knowledge/understanding of [enter your Company Name]?</p> <p>20. How familiar are you with the role of an [enter the name of the role]?</p> <p>21. What do you think are the key requirements of this role?</p>
<p>Analytical Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaks straightforward problems down into smaller parts • Adopts a clear and systematic approach to analysing large volumes of information • Weighs up options using the available data • Considers situations from a number of angles • Describes a complex situation in a logical and structured manner • Identifies the key issues in ambiguous / inconsistent data 	<p>22. Tell me how you go about analysing data that is given to you</p> <p>23. Tell me about a time when you were not able to complete a task because you were given insufficient or inaccurate data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how did you deal with this? • how did you convey the situation to the person asking you to complete the task? <p>24. Tell me about a time when you had to analyse complex data and feed this back in a simple easy to understand manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how did you go about this? • how did you check the level of understanding? • what information did you leave out?

Competency Based Interviews – example questions cont...

Competence cont...	Questions cont...
<p>Change Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understands the needs for change• Is willing to embrace change• Able to see the positive effect of change• Positively identifies where / where not change is working• Able to help others through the change process	<p>25. Tell me about a time when there has been a change to the way you work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how did you react?• how did others around you react? <p>26. Tell me about a time when you you have had to give negative feedback about a change that has been implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• why did you have to do this?• did you make a suggestion for a better way? <p>27. Tell me about a time when you instigated a change in working practices / procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how did you go about this?• how did you help this change to be implemented?• what was the reaction of your colleagues and how did you react to this?