

Basic & Competency Based Interview Questions

EJC is happy to assist in your interview preparation in any way that we can, either by discussing what you want to get out of the interview beforehand or to conduct on-on-one or group training sessions.

The Basics

- Why do you think you want to work for our company?
- What do you know about our company?
- What qualifications and qualities do you have that make you feel you are suitable for this role/company?
- How do you feel you will be able to make an effective contribution here?
- What do you think determines a person's progress in a good company?
- What position in our company do you see yourself working towards?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Why do you wish to leave your current employer?
- Give examples of how you have helped increase profit and/or saved your previous employers money.
- What have you done that demonstrates initiative and leadership qualities?
- Can you get references from your previous employers?
- What roles have you enjoyed the most, the least and why?
- How do you spend your spare time? Any hobbies and sports?
- Do you have any questions you would like to ask me?

Competency Based Questions

Competency based (or behavioural) interviews are based on the premise that past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. Interviewers seek to obtain information about candidates past behaviour in certain situations. Competency based interviews are structured, with questions that relate directly to the essential criteria and competencies required for the post. Research into recruitment and selection methodology suggests that structured, competency based interviews can be one of the most reliable and accurate forms of assessment. A good recruitment and selection interview should assess candidates against each essential criteria or competency, asking questions about:

- Past behaviours and performance
- Learning from past behaviours
- Future adaptability to new post
- Knowledge and understanding of issues in relation to the post
- What should the interview focus on?
- Most interviews focus on six key areas; leadership, teamwork, conflict, motivation, creativity and technical skills related to the job spec. You should focus on those competencies that are most important for the particular role. Also consider whether there are other essential criteria such as an in-depth knowledge of a particular area or experience of working in a similar role/industry previously.

How do I ask competency-based questions?

- Competency based interview questions are slightly different to the style you may be used to. They will tend to focus on past situations and the candidate's behaviour in those situations.

Questions should start with:

- "Please give me an example of when.." or "Please describe an occasion.." etc.

Sample Questions

Leadership

- Why are you a good leader?
- What type of leadership style do you adopt?
- How would those you have led describe you?

Delegating

- Explain a mistake you have made in delegating – what were the consequences?
- In what instance would you delegate a task?
- What are the advantages of delegating?

Conflict & Pressure

- Give an example of an instance when you have had an argument with someone at work?

What was the outcome?

- How do you react if your boss asks you to do something which conflicts with your own deadlines?

Team Work

- Do you prefer to work alone or in a group?
- When you joined your last company, how did you get on with your co-workers?

Staff Motivation and Development

- What makes a good manager?
- How do you motivate staff?

Personal Motivation

- What are the three most important events in your career to date?
- What are your standards of success in your job?

Decision Making

- What is the toughest decision you have had to make while at your present company? Tell me about it. What alternatives did you consider?
- What has been the effect of your decisions on others and what was the wider impact?

What should the interviewer be looking for in the candidate's answers?

Examples and detail! – You should be looking for specific examples describing exactly how the candidate behaved in certain situations, not what the team's role as a whole was, or what they would do in a hypothetical situation. The candidate should use relevant examples from their current job, a previous role or a situation outside of work altogether. You should ask them to discuss the example in some detail. If you feel they have not given enough detail then follow with some probing questions to clarify any particular point. You should be concentrating on the outcome of the situation, whether there was anything the candidate learned from the experience and how would they react to the same scenario in the future.

For additional questions and invaluable insight on how to maximize your recruiter relationship, to build stronger organisations and develop a winning hiring strategy contact:

Helen Henderson 44 (0)1189 291 815 Or insights@elliottjamesconsulting.com