

# Sample Interview Guide for Employers: Interviewing Shortlisted Candidates

You've promoted your role, qualified the long list, and now have a short list of preferred candidates. This is where the rubber really hits the road on the recruitment journey as we narrow down from our shortlist to identify the perfect candidate and future employee.

Not all interviews will be the same but there will need to be some level of consistency in the questions you plan to ask the different candidates. This will allow you to compare and contrast the candidates responses, and provide insight into how a candidate can put their skills to use in the role and respond to situations that might arise on the job.



## The Four Groups of Interview Questions

1

**Behavioural questions.**

2

**Situational questions.**

3

**Competency (or skills) questions.**

4

**Motivation questions.**



# 1

## Behavioural interview questions

### Read

The summary of the position will outline the objectives and major goals of the role. It should enable readers to understand what is expected by clearly defining the work to be performed by the individual that will fill the position. This detailed description can be utilised as the criteria for evaluating performance once the role is filled, enabling the hiring manager to identify what listed objectives the employee is exceeding or not meeting during their employment.

### Examples of behavioural questions:

- i** Tell me about a time when you faced a challenge at work. How did you handle or solve the challenge?
- ii** Tell me about a time you didn't deliver according to expectations. What did you learn for the next time?

The best responses to behavioural questions provide concrete examples to complex situations and how the individual navigated through the situation.

# 2

## Situational interview questions

### Read

Situational interview questions target specific issues and challenges that may occur in the workplace. These questions draw out a candidate's problem-solving and analytical skills. Asking situational interview questions is useful when candidates don't have experience in a particular area or the business might be moving into a new product or service area.

### Examples of situational questions:

- i** What would you do if you thought your workload was too heavy?
- ii** What would you do if a team member wasn't pulling their weight on a group project?

The best responses to situational questions provide tangible explanations that highlight specific steps that candidates could take to resolve an issue.

### 3

## Competency (skills-based) interview questions

### Read

Skills-based questions aim to uncover whether an individual's skillset matches what the organisation is looking for. These questions require candidates to discuss their existing skills as well as those they'd like to develop.

Skills-based questions usually centre on technical or professional skills that the candidate needs, but it's also important to consider soft skills.

### Examples of skills-based questions:

**i** Which of your skills do you think will be particularly relevant for this role?

**ii** What is one professional or technical skill you would most like to develop?

**iii** How have you used your skills to resolve problems in past roles?

The best responses consider both soft skills (such as adaptability and communication skills) and hard skills (skills that can be taught such as technical skills).

### 4

## Motivation interview questions

### Read

Motivation questions seek to uncover the drive and enthusiasm behind the candidate's job application. They can help to reveal the reasons for applying and whether their values align with the organisation's values.

### Examples of motivation-based questions:

**i** What are your biggest aspirations in your life – work or otherwise?

**ii** What do you enjoy most / least about your role / current company?

The best responses to these questions address internal and external motivations and the work environment in which candidates are most productive and happy.

Read here what three best questions to ask in an interview are, and what questions you should never ask.