

Career Advice

Competency based questions

Competency based interviews are becoming increasingly popular as a way to predict a candidate's future performance. Essentially a series of behavioural questions, the interviewer will ask you to describe a situation which demonstrates your abilities that will be integral to the role you're interviewing for.

Answering competency based questions.

Answers to competency based questions are very structured, so we recommend the STAR technique, describing:

- Situation
- Task required as a result
- Action you took
- Result of that action

It's all very well having a technique for answering questions but we think you'd benefit from having a deeper understanding of what is required of you, along with examples of the questions themselves.

Drawing on 20 plus years of recruitment experience, we've put together a comprehensive list of key competency questions, grouping them into five bite size areas - **Individual, Managerial, Analytical, Interpersonal and Motivational** - for easier digestion.

Individual Competencies

- Your personal attributes; your flexibility, decisiveness, tenacity, knowledge, independence, risk taking and personal integrity.
A typical question may include:
- Tell me about a time when your work or an idea was challenged.

Managerial Competencies

- Your ability to take charge of other people; leadership, empowerment, strategic thinking, corporate sensitivity, project management and managerial control.
A typical question may include:
- Tell me about a time you led a group to achieve an objective

Analytical Competencies

- Your decision making abilities; innovation, analytical skills, problem solving, practical learning and attention to detail
A typical question may include:
- Tell me about a time when you identified a new approach to a problem

Interpersonal Competencies

- Social competence. Many workplaces function on the basis of project teams and the more collaborative they are, the more likely they are to thrive.
A typical question may include:
- Describe a situation where you got people to work together

Motivational Competencies

- The things that drive you; resilience, energy, motivation, result orientation, initiative and quality focus.
A typical question may include: :
- When did you work the hardest and feel the greatest sense of achievement?

Finally

Remember, be yourself when answering competency questions; use real life examples and relate them to your experience, how you reacted or how it made you feel. These are not trick questions, they're designed to create the best match between an individual and an organisation. A little bit of preparation and you'll quickly realise that competency based interviews represent an unprecedented opportunity to describe some of your finer moments to a captive audience.

We wish you the best in all your interviews.