

Preparing for Competency Based Interviews

Competency based interviewing (also referred to as Situational or Behavioural interviewing) is a popular interview style and is based on the premise that past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour.

Recognised as a very good way of determining suitability to perform in a position, the interview is focussed around a group of competencies/behaviours that are required for success in the role.



What are Competencies?

A competency is an observable behaviour that demonstrates skills, learning, and experience such as: Customer Focus, Influencing & Persuading, and Decision Making

What should you expect?

Competencies are selected for the particular role you are being interviewed against. Often a competency interview can be performed without the need for a CV and typically the interviewer will have additional probing questions which are all focussed on gaining information about the competency. In short the interviewer is looking at your past experience of dealing with particular situations.

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Example Questions

Here are some example competency based questions along with the kind of follow up, probing questions an interviewer may use to gain the information they need.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

Can you tell me about a time where you had to meet a tight timescale for a customer?

What was the situation?

What were the barriers to achievement of this timescale?

What did you do to achieve it?

What was the result?

INFLUENCING & PERSUADING

Can you tell me about a time when you had to persuade a group to follow your lead?

What was the situation?

What tool did you use to persuade the group?

What was the biggest barrier?

What was the eventual result?

DECISION MAKING

On occasion we must make decisions in situations of ambiguity - can you describe a time when you have found yourself in this situation?

How did you decide on the best way forward?

Why did you make the decision?

What were the short and long term impacts of the decision?

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