



hire*insight*

Hire Insight Behavioural Question Bank

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Accomplishment/Results Orientation

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Effectively sets and achieved realistic and organisationally aligned goals.
 - Monitors progress and assesses the quality and timeliness of outcomes
 - Develops and follows action plans, seeks feedback and modifies plans accordingly.
 - Actions/strategies which result in desired outcomes
-

Questions

What projects were accomplished in your last job? How were these accomplished? What was your involvement?

What are some of the things that you feel you have done particularly well?

Tell me about some of your achievements that were recognised by your superiors?

Tell me about your most significant accomplishment?

What were your two most important achievements (in your current role)?

Tell me about a goal that you set yourself and the steps you took to reach it.

Tell me about a time you created a strategy to achieve a longer term business objective.

Tell me about a time when obstacles made it difficult to achieve a work goal.

Can you describe a situation when you were unable to achieve a goal?

Adaptability/Flexibility

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Successful performance in varying environments
 - Positive attitude towards change
 - Willing to use new techniques and/or tackle new challenges.
 - Successfully modifies behaviour to respond to/embrace change.
 - Receptive and willing to incorporate change.
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Questions

- Can you describe a time when you had to adjust quickly to changes over which you had little control. How did the changes impact you?
- Can you think of a time when you changed your plans as a result of new information or changing priorities?
- In what ways has your current job changed since you commenced? How have you dealt with these changes? How did you feel about these changes?
- Tell me about an experience you have had dealing with major change. How did you maintain your effectiveness?
- Sometimes policies exist that we don't agree with. Tell me about the last time you disagreed with a new policy or procedure.
- Working with people from diverse background or cultures can be challenging. Tell me about a time when you were presented with a challenge adapting to a person from a different background or culture?
- Have you ever had to change your priorities to meet another person's expectations?
- Tell me about two previous supervisors with different management styles. In what ways did you modify your behaviour to respond to their style?

Attention to Detail/Quality Orientation

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Uses quality assurance techniques/methods.
 - Develops and/or uses systems to check accuracy and completeness (e.g. checklists)
 - Follows or establishes procedures.
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Interview Questions:

- Tell me about a time when you had to adjust your work schedule because you didn't have all of the resources you needed?
- In some roles it can be very easy to make errors. Tell me about some of the things you have done in your current role to keep your error rate down?
- All of us have had situations where we weren't able to complete everything on time. Tell me about the last time this happened to you.
- Tell me about the deadlines that existed for you in your last job. What did you do to ensure that things were completed on time?
- Every job has aspects that become boring or repetitive. Tell me about a boring or repetitive task that existed in your last job. What strategies did you employ to cope?
- Can you think of a situation where you had to multi-task? How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about the work you have done in your current role that required accuracy.
- Tell me about a previous boss that demanded accuracy of you. What tasks required accuracy?

Communication

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Actively listens.
 - Checks understanding.
 - Uses style, language and tone appropriate to audience.
 - Expresses ideas clearly and logically.
 - Uses appropriate structure.
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Interview Questions:

- Have you ever had to convince your co-workers to accept an idea? How did you do it? What was the result?
- Tell me about a time when you had to pay close attention to what someone was saying actively seeking to understand their message.
- Describe a situation in which you needed to use different communication styles to influence stakeholders with differing perspectives.
- Tell me about a time your communication skills were put to the test.
- Tell me about a difficult or sensitive situation that required careful communication.
- We have all experienced a situation where we knew we had to speak up about an important issue. Can you give me an example of a time when you needed to be assertive to get your point across?
- What kind of writing did you do in your last job? Can you tell me about a recent document you wrote?
- Tell me about a significant written document which you had to complete.
- Have you ever written a memo/report recommending a specific course of action only to find out that the reader didn't adopt your recommendations?

Customer Service Orientation

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Acknowledge customer.
 - Actively listens and seeks information from customer, displays empathy.
 - Identifies customer's need and checks for understanding.
 - Meets or surpasses the customer's need.
 - Confirms satisfaction.
 - Takes responsibility for actions.
 - Assesses level of customer satisfaction.
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Interview Questions:

- Describe the most rewarding experience you have had dealing with customers?
- In what ways do you interact differently with customers at hectic times? Can you give an example when you have done this?
- Tell me about a time when you had to handle an unreasonable request from a customer. What did you do?
- We have all dealt with difficult customers. Can you describe a situation where a customer tested your patience?
- What experiences have you had in dealing with difficult customers? Can you give an example?
- Have you ever had to deal with irate customers? Can you give an example and explain how you reacted?
- What are some of your strategies for dealing with difficult people? Can you describe a situation where these were tested?
- Describe the normal kinds of customer dissatisfaction associated with your last job? Can you give me an example? How did you respond/feel/cope?
- In some cases we may do everything possible to satisfy a customer yet they still complain about how they were treated. Tell me about the last customer who complained about the service you provided.
- In your previous position, how did you know if your internal/external customers were satisfied?

Decision Making, Problem Solving and Judgement

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Undertakes appropriate research and investigation.
 - Draws on experiences of self and others.
 - Applies common sense.
 - Considers alternative options.
 - Is decisive.
 - Able to solve complex problems.
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Interview Questions:

- Describe a situation where you had to make a difficult decision and explain it to other people.
- Tell me about a time when you took a risk.
- Give me an example of a time when you needed to quickly make a decision.
- Describe a recent unpopular decision you made. What was the result?
- Describe a time when you were faced with a decision that had many options from which to choose. How did you determine which one to take?
- Describe a time when you really had to think about a problem before generating a solution.
- In the past have you preferred to be closely supervised and given good direction, or work out the solutions for yourself?
- Thinking about your last role, discuss the types of problems you were required to solve on a day-to-day basis?
- Have you ever experienced a situation in which all the evidence suggested that you should pursue one course of action, but your 'gut-feel' suggested another?
- Tell me about a time when you applied a creative solution to a problem.
- Have you ever supported some else's idea that had a low probability of success? Why did you do so? What happened?

Goals Values and Motivations

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Goal oriented, sets achievable goals
 - Clear career direction.
 - Personal values align with those of organisation.
 - Interests align with role
 - Self awareness.
 - Recognises own motivators and de-motivators.
 - Self motivated.
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Interview Questions:

- What type of work really interests you?
- If there was one thing you could change about your last job, what would it be? Why?
- What was missing from your last job that you'd like to see in this one?
- Describe your most rewarding experience.
- What aspects of your last job were most frustrating?
- Which of your previous jobs have you found most interesting? Why?
- What did you like most/least about your previous job?
- What motivates you?
- If you could create the perfect job for yourself, what would it be?
- Why are you looking to leave your current job?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate employers?
- What kind of supervisor do you best work for?
- What do you expect from your boss?
- What kind of work environment do you prefer?
- Would you consider returning to your former employer? Why/why not?

- What did you like most/least about your last supervisor?
- What is your timetable for achieving your current career goals?
- Give me an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty?
- What qualities do you respect and value in people you work with? Why are these qualities important to you?
- What qualities don't you like to see in people you work with?
- Give an example of a policy you conformed to with which you did not agree.

Initiative and Innovation

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Self-starting.
 - Proactive.
 - Generate creative solutions.
 - Uses different/novel approaches to resolve issues/develop opportunities.
 - Generates ideas for improvement.
 - Takes productive action without being asked.
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Interview Questions:

- Describe something you have done which improved the performance of your work unit.
- Tell me about a time you identified a new, unusual or different approach to addressing a problem or task.
- What techniques did you learn to make your last job easier, or to make yourself more effective?
- Describe some projects or ideas (not necessarily your own), that were introduced or implemented, because of your efforts.
- Tell me about a time you identified a problem and took corrective action to fix it.
- Give some examples of projects/tasks you initiated.
- Tell me about a time when you improved the way things were typically done on the job.
- Tell me about a problem you solved where conventional/normal solutions would not work.
- Can you describe a time when you identified a problem but realised that it was not worth the effort involved to fix it?
- In what ways did you perform differently from your peers in your last job?

Interpersonal Skills

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Actively listens.
 - Effectively manages the emotions of self and others
 - Builds rapport
 - Develops productive networks
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Interview Questions:

- Tell me about a time when you deliberately attempted to build rapport with a client or colleague?
- Sometimes there is just no room for compromise on an important matter. When was the last time you made a non-negotiable demand of someone?
- Can you tell me about a time when you had to reach a compromise or guide others to a compromise?
- Tell me about the last time you saw your co-workers disagreeing? What did you do?
- Describe a time when you relied on a contact to assist you with a work-related task or problem.
- Tell me about the most difficult or frustrating person that you've ever had to work with. What did you do to work with them?
- Have you ever had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with? What made them difficult? How did you handle them?
- Have you ever had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with? How did you handle the situation?
- Have you ever disagreed with your supervisor about your performance? How did you handle the situation?
- We have all dealt with people who were less cooperative than we would like, but whose involvement was needed to get a job done. Tell me about a time when an important outcome required the involvement of a difficult person.

Leadership

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Uses appropriate interpersonal styles and methods to inspire and guide individuals toward goal achievement.
 - Recognises own natural leadership style.
 - Capable of adapting style.
 - Motivates action in others.
 - Coaches.
 - Facilitates change.
 - Manages upward effectively.
 - Persuasive and skilled negotiator.
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Interview Questions:

- Have you ever needed to change the goals of your team to align them with the overall goals of the organisation? How did you go about it?
- Can you describe a situation when you had to get your staff to implement a policy or decision that did not agree with?
- Tell me about a time you had difficulty getting others to accept an idea? What was your approach? Did it work?
- What is the toughest group that you have had to gain cooperation from? What did you do?
- Could you describe a decision you made recently that was initially unpopular with your staff? How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you encountered resistance to changes you needed to make.
- Every organisation has some impediment to efficiency. Tell me about one that exists in your work unit?
- Tell me about a time when you had to lead a group to achieve a specific outcome.
- Can you give an example of a time when you had to ensure that your “actions spoke louder than your words” to a team.
- Tell me about a time when your actions inspired others to work towards achieving a common goal.

- Tell me about a time when you demonstrated your leadership qualities.
- Have you ever had to dismiss someone? Why? How did you go about it? Under what circumstances do you think it is appropriate to dismiss someone?
- Describe a time you had to convince management that you made the right decision?
- Tell me about a time it was difficult to convince superiors about a change you wanted to make?
- Give an example of a time when you fostered motivation in your employees.
- Tell me about two of your direct reports/team members who are most different from one another. How do you change your leadership to suit?
- Tell me about a time your coaching or mentoring helped a staff member improve their performance?
- In your experience, what is the most successful way to lead and motivate subordinates? Can you give an example?
- Have you ever led a group in which some of the members did not work well together? What did you do?

Planning and Organisation

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Plans and prepares for future events.
 - Formulates a clear and structured plan.
 - Effectively coordinates priorities, tasks and resources to achieve work outcomes.
 - Established realistic milestones, reviews progress and adjusts accordingly.
 - Effectively manages resources (human, financial, physical) and time.
 - Is flexible and is adaptable to changing circumstances.
-

Interview Questions:

- Tell me how you determined your priorities in your last job
- In your current role how do you schedule your time on an unusually hectic day?
- How do you determine priorities when scheduling your time? Can you give a recent example?
- Tell me how you organised your work in your last position?
- We all have periods that are extremely busy as well as times that are less so. In your current role, what do you do to smooth the peaks and troughs in your workload?
- Describe a time when you had several deadlines falling at the same time. How did you organise your time to get them all done?
- Tell me about a time when a project you were coordinating stalled. What happened? How did you get things back on track?
- We have all had to reschedule our projects or plans because of unforeseen circumstances. Tell me about a time this happened to you.
- Explain what you did to prepare for this interview.

Pressure Tolerance/Energy/Resilience

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Maintains performance under pressure.
 - Manages stress.
 - Identifies ways to reduce work stressors.
 - Uses appropriate coping techniques.
 - Maintains energy levels.
 - Handles criticism and/or disappointment.
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Interview Questions:

- Tell me about the level of stress in your current job. What things do you do to manage it?
- Describe a recent time when you were under a great deal of pressure. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you had to maintain a high work rate for an extended period. What did you do to remain motivated and productive?
- Tell me about the types of pressures you experience in your current job? What do you do to cope?
- What things tend to fluster you when a deadline is near?
- Describe a time when you were under pressure to make a decision. How did you react? How did you feel?
- What activities in your current role require the most energy/effort? What do you do to maintain your effectiveness?
- We don't only receive positive feedback from superiors. Can you tell me about the last time you received negative feedback from your supervisor? How did this make you feel? How did you respond?
- Every job has some disappointments. What was the biggest disappointment in your last job? How did this make you feel? How did you cope?

Supervising and Developing Others

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Delegates effectively.
 - Effectively coordinates team.
 - Provides feedback.
 - Motivates, coaches and mentors.
 - Accurately identifies development needs and training opportunities.
 - Develops skills in others to improve performance and prepare for future roles.
 - Effectively manages poor performance.
 - Effectively manages conflicts and grievances.
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Interview Questions:

- Tell me about an important task that you have delegates. What did you do to ensure its success?
- Tell me about a time a staff member was reluctant to accept a delegated task. What did you do?
- At times it can be difficult to determine the best person to delegate a task to. Tell me about a time when you delegated a project to the wrong person.
- Can you tell me about a time when you didn't want to delegate but had to?
- When recruiting staff to work for you what do you look for? What steps do you take?
- In your experience what have you found to be the most difficult tasks associated with being a manager?
- It can be easy to forget to provide outstanding achievers with ongoing developmental feedback. Tell me about your best performer. How often did you discuss their performance and provide them with feedback. How did this compare with the way you coached your other team members?
- Tell me about the last time you formally appraised a direct report's performance. How did you prepare? Did they agree with your assessment? How did you feel about your development plan?
- Tell me about a time when your coaching helped someone improve their skills or job performance.
- Tell me about a time you had to increase motivation in those you supervised.

- Tell me about some thing you have done recently to empower your team? How successful have they been? What do your plan to do next?
- Have you ever managed a staff member with a performance difficulty/deficiency? What did you do? What was the outcome?
- Have you ever modified a job to suit the skills, abilities or motivations of the incumbent? Tell me about a time you did this?
- What were the main training and development needs of those in your team? How did you identify and address those needs?
- Tell me about one of your direct reports. What are their long term goals? What are their strengths and weaknesses? In what ways have you helped them achieve their goals?
- Tell me about a time when one of your staff would not so what you asked.
- Tell me about a time when you had to discipline or counsel one of your staff? What steps did you take? How did you feel? What was the outcome?
- Have you ever had to dismiss anyone? Why? What steps did you take? How did you feel?
- Have you ever handled an employee grievance that resulted in better working relationships? What did you do?
- Have you ever experienced a grievance that did not result in a better working relationship? What happened? What could you have done differently?

Teamwork/Working with Others

Key Behaviours to look for:

- Actively encourages a supportive team culture.
 - Encourages the free exchange of information and ideas.
 - Encourages open, honest, constructive feedback.
 - Performs own team duties responsibly and effectively.
 - Builds trust
 - Actively listens.
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Interview Questions:

- Tell me about the things that you have done in your current role to improve the team environment?
- Tell me about the types of teams you've been involved with. What were your roles?
- Tell me about a team experience you found rewarding.
- Tell me about a team experience you found disappointing.
- How often do you meet with the other members of your work unit as a group? Tell me about your most recent meeting. What was your role?
- Thinking about your recent roles, what things have you enjoyed most when working with others? What have you liked least?
- Think about a recent team project you were involved with. What were some of the pros and cons of teamwork?
- Tell me about a time you asked your colleagues for their input on a problem you needed to solve.
- We have all been in meetings where someone has suggested a new work practice. Tell me about a time that a peer suggested a new idea that resulted in more work for more of your team. What did you do?
- Getting other to accept our ideas can be difficult. Tell me about a time when other members of your team disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time in which you were a member (not a leader) of a team, and a conflict arose with the team. What did you do?

- We have all been in meetings where no one volunteers to talk or take actions. Tell me about a time this happened to you. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time a colleague (who did not report to you) was not completing their share of the work. What did you do?
- We have all worked with people who waste our time. Tell me about a team mate who wasted your time?