

Competency Based Questions

Planning and organising

(Prioritises; sets stretching but realistic targets and deadlines; plans ahead and has a structured approach to the work)

- Describe a project you have managed/been responsible for:
 - How did you plan your time? (And others' time?)
 - How did you deal with obstacles?
- Have you ever managed a project that you knew would run over the timescale?
 - What did you do?
 - What could you do differently next time?
- In your current job, how do you schedule your time and set priorities?
- How did you prepare for this interview?
- When was the last time that you had to take on extra work at short notice?
- How do you manage your own time and objectives?
- When was the last time that you had to work to a particularly tight deadline?
- How do you determine your priorities?
- How do you monitor the progress of projects or tasks?

Team skills

(The ability to work with other people constructively to improve the effectiveness of the team)

- How do you galvanise your team into action?
- When has your own self-motivation rubbed off on others with whom you work?
- Describe an occasion when you chose not to work as part of a team
- Have you ever had to work in a team where you felt other members of the team were lacking in commitment/ability?
- When has a colleague let you down and how did you react?
- Tell me about the last time that you had to work as part of a team to achieve a specific outcome.
- Whilst part of team has there ever been a time where you witnessed conflict?
- Describe a time when a colleague or friend has annoyed you.
- Have you ever had to modify your approach to take account of someone else's views?
- Can you recall a time where you have needed to offer constructive feedback to a friend or colleague?

Professional knowledge and judgement

(Has an extensive knowledge of his/her own field or department; understands the business and uses this to provide credible advice)

- What examples are there during the past 3-6 months where you have made an important decision that turned out to be correct?
- Have you made any poor decisions in the past 6 months?
- Tell me about it/them?
- How do you gather information on clients?
- How have you used that information to influence a client or candidate?
- When did a client last ask you for advice (other than re a live assignment)?

Leadership

(Takes control of situations and events; recognizes and rewards others performance; motivates; coaches and develops others)

- When was the last time you disciplined a member of staff?
 - How did you handle the situation?
 - What was the outcome?
- Describe a time when you have set goals for an individual or for your team
 - How did you go about it?
 - Were they achieved?
- Tell me about a sensitive or difficult staffing issues you have dealt with
 - What did you find most difficult about it?
 - Why was this so?
 - What was the outcome?
- How have you introduced change to your team?
- How do you ensure your team gets feedback on its performance?
- Describe a situation in which you coached a team member

Confidence

- Tell me about a time when your work was criticised?
 - What was your reaction?
- Can you tell us about a time when you made a particularly good decision?
 - What was the situation?
 - What decision did you make and how did you make it?
 - How did others respond?
 - How did you determine that it was a particularly good decision?

Communication skills

- Please describe the ways in which you ensure that your audience has appropriately received a message you are communicating and give examples of how you would deliver that same message to different people.
- Can you tell me about a time when you have had difficulty in communicating with someone and how you overcame those difficulties?
- Can you tell us about a time when you exceeded a customer's expectations?
 - What were their expectations?
 - How did you determine their expectations?
 - How did you exceed them and why?
 - How did they respond?

Influencing skills

- Tell me about a time when you disagreed with a superior.
 - How did you handle the situation?
- Can you tell us about a time when you dealt with conflict in a team?
 - Who was involved in the conflict?
 - What was the extent of the conflict and how was it caused?
 - How did you determine the cause of the conflict?
 - What did you do?
 - How did others respond?
 - What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you were asked to do something with which you disagreed.
 - How did you handle it?

Motivation

- What is the greatest challenge or obstacle to success that you have faced at work and how did you overcome it?
 - What effect did this have on your longer-term motivation levels?
- Can you tell us about a time when you personally developed a new skill?
 - How did you identify that you needed the new skill?
 - How did you go about obtaining the new skill?
 - What obstacles did you encounter?
 - What was the outcome?

Drive for results

- Talk me through a time when you have had to work towards a challenging, ambitious objective.
- Has there ever been a time where you have had to work harder and longer to ensure that a time deadline was met?
- When was the last time that you were called upon to do more than would normally be expected of you?
- What do you like least about your current role?
- What do you feel is the greatest challenge in your current role?

Sales ability / persuasiveness

- Can you give an example of a time that you have sold an idea, concept or product by identifying a particular need, issue or concern in the mind of the person you are selling to?
- Can you talk me through the last occasion on which you presented a persuasive argument to another person or can you describe the last sales call that you made?
- Was there ever time, whilst selling a product or idea, where you adapted your approach to suit the person you were selling to?
- Describe a time when you could not persuade someone to your point of view?
- What is the most difficult sales situation that you have ever encountered?

Customer service

- What do you dislike most about dealing with people or customers?
- Has there ever been a time that you have dealt with personal criticism relating to a service that you have delivered?
- Describe an instance where you have delivered more than was expected of you.
- Have you received praise relating to the levels of service that you have delivered?