

# Competency Based Interview

## A Practical Guide

The purpose of an interview is to obtain relevant information to make the best possible decision about a candidate for a specific role. The role of the interviewer is to effectively and efficiently facilitate the conversation by asking relevant questions that yield the information needed, and keep the conversation on track, ensuring that everything discussed is of relevance for the role.

### Selecting Interview Questions in Ascend

To ensure that the candidate is given the opportunity to provide relevant information during the interview, you need to ask the right questions, and this requires some preparation.

Due to past behavior being the best predictor for future behavior, the interview questions should be phrased in a way that will provide accurate information about how the candidate has acted in previous situations, relevant for the role at hand. The interview should not focus on the opinions and perceptions the candidate has about him or herself.

1. Define the purpose of the interview. (Why are we conducting an interview, what do we want to know?)
2. Set a time frame for the interview. (How long should the interview take?)
3. Create an interview guide in Ascend. (Which questions will give us relevant information about the candidate, related to the selected competencies?)

### Conducting The Interview - Step By Step

#### Introduction

1. Prepare the room – make sure it is inviting and comfortable.
2. Greet the candidate at the door.
3. Break the ice with small talk if the candidate seems nervous.
4. Introduce yourself and inform the candidate of the purpose and structure of the interview.
  - My name is [...] and I work here at [...] as [...].
  - For this recruitment we have selected a number of competencies/skills which we consider important for the role as [...]. The questions I will ask you are related to these specific competencies.
  - The purpose of this interview is to get an idea of whether the required competencies/skills match your approach towards the role and your way of working.
  - The interview will take about [...] minutes and I will ask you questions about specific situations and behaviors. I will also take notes as we go along.
  - Do you have any questions before we move on to the interview?
  - If you have any questions that surface during the interview you will have the opportunity to ask them at the end.

### **Communicate That You Have a Number of Predefined Questions Which All Applicants Will Get.**

- I will be reading the interview questions to you exactly as they are written, to ensure that all candidates involved in this process will get the exact same questions. If I read a question too fast or if you want to hear it again, just let me know. If you are not immediately able to think of an example I will give you a moment to think about your answer.

### **Communicate That What You Are Looking For Is an Example of How the Candidate has acted in Previous Job Situations.**

- What I am looking for in your answers is how you have acted in different work-related contexts. Therefore, I will ask you for specific examples of behaviors, try to be as specific as possible focusing on your own behavior, the situation and role you had.
- If I find your answers too general or vague, I will try to steer you towards the subject again by asking follow up questions.

### **Conducting the Interview**

- Keep in mind that a candidate may be unaccustomed to these kinds of questions. Ask follow-up questions to get the information you need. If an answer is too general and phrases such as "one usually...", "it always ends up...", "I can imagine.." are used; Ask the candidate to specify what they did in the situation. You can make use of the follow-up questions provided in the interview guide.
- E.g. What was your role? What did you do specifically? How did you do it?
- Do not be afraid of silences, allow the candidate to think things through. Do not be afraid to tell the candidate if you do not understand what he or she means. Ask the candidate to explain again:
- I am not sure I understand exactly what you mean. Can you please clarify?
- Work your way through all the questions. When you move on from a question you can say:
- Thank you for your answer, we will now move on to the next question.

### **Wrap it Up**

1. Summarize what you have talked about.
2. Ask if the candidate has anything to add.
3. Tell the candidate what the next step/steps in the process will be.
4. Ask if the candidate has any final questions.