

Structured Interview Guide

A smiling man with a beard, wearing a light-colored blazer over a blue checkered shirt, is sitting at a desk. He is looking down at a document on the desk, holding a pen in his right hand. The background is a soft, out-of-focus office setting with warm lighting.

Details

Candidate - Mark

Job Title - RetailSales

July 10, 2024

Overview

This interview guide is designed to assist the hiring team in the selection of qualified applicants.

This guide helps the hiring team reassess this candidate on up to four Work Personality Traits important for the performance of this job where the candidate scored one standard deviation below the mean. For each competency, the interview guide provides you three questions.

Structured interviews are an efficient and valid means by which to learn important job relevant information about applicants and are much more predictive of future job performance than unstructured interviews that are commonly used today.

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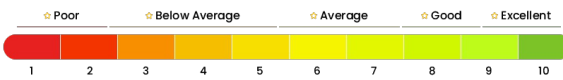
Interview Tips

The following tips are intended to help you conduct both a smoother and a more valid interview. These tips are general in nature and thus can be used for any competency in this guide.

① Before the Interview

- 1 Review any legal or regulatory guidelines involved in your process.
- 2 Review the competency definitions and the behavioral questions.
- 3 Review the candidate's resume, application, and any other information. Modify any questions based on the competency definitions and your knowledge of the role. Note any additional questions that emerge from your review or that you feel are important.
- 4 Assign interview sections (if applicable):
 1. Decide which member(s) of your interview team will cover the employment history and employment gaps.
 2. Decide which member(s) of your interview team will cover hard skills.
 3. Determine which members of your interview team will cover which competencies and the associated behavioral questions.
 4. Try to avoid overlap in questioning, but do attempt to cover each competency thoroughly.
- 5 Familiarize yourself with the rating errors when rating a candidate on the competencies and common interview mistakes as listed in the Appendix.

③ After the Interview

- 1 Note the behavioral examples and actions taken by the candidate in the situations he/she described.
- 2 Identify the most relevant examples based on recency, impact, and similarity to the open position.
- 3 Rate the competency using the appropriate scale; after the interview, review the answers to the behavioral questions and record the score of each competency in the box as described below:


The rating scale consists of 10 colored boxes numbered 1 to 10. The colors transition from red (1) to orange (2-3), yellow (4-5), light green (6-7), and dark green (8-10). Labels above the scale are: Poor (1), Below Average (2-3), Average (4-5), Good (6-7), and Excellent (8-10).
- 4 Contact other members of the interviewing team and ensure a meeting time is set in order to review the candidate's qualifications.

② During the Interview

- 1 Greet the candidate, giving your name and position if you have not previously met.
- 2 Explain the interview's purpose:
 1. To acquaint interviewer and candidate
 2. To describe the role.
 3. To learn more about the candidate's background and experience.
- 3 Acquaint the interviewer and candidate:
 1. Build rapport with the candidate.
 2. Get a feel for personality including energy, eye contact, enthusiasm, proper attire, social skills, etc.
- 4 Describe the role:
 1. Explain the position and the organization from the interviewer's point of view (avoid reciting the job description).
 2. Talk about a typical day.
 3. Answer the candidate's questions about the position and organization.
- 5 Employment history & gaps review (see later part of this document for questions):
 1. Briefly review recent and relevant jobs and experience.
 2. Ask questions to get specific information about those jobs/experiences.
- 6 Behavioral Interview (see later part of this document for competencies and associated questions):
 1. Indicate that you will be taking notes.
 2. Ask assigned questions that were agreed upon before interview.
 3. Take notes on responses.
- 7 End the Interview:
 1. Read over your notes, asking for any clarification.
 2. Give candidate the opportunity to ask questions, and note any concerns you have based on those questions. Answer questions thoroughly and honestly. Ask if the candidate is clear on your responses.
 3. Explain next steps in selection process, if applicable, and direct the candidate to the next associate involved in the hiring process (if not last interviewer, ensure the candidate has been "handed off" to your colleague)



Employment History Review

The following tips are intended to help you conduct both a smoother and a more valid interview. These tips are general in nature and thus can be used for any competency in this guide.

Review job experiences with the candidate. Ask questions about any jobs/experiences on which you are unclear or would like more information.

Note any gaps in employment and have the candidate explain these gaps. Ask follow-up questions if you are not completely clear on the reason for these gaps.



Behavioral Interview Follow-up Questions

During the behavioral interview, you may need to ask the candidate follow-up questions in order to delve deeper into understanding how well the candidate has demonstrated a competency. Below, we provide a list of commonly used follow-up questions.

Commonly Used Follow-up Questions

- 1 Tell me more about that.
- 2 I'm not sure what you meant by _____. Could you explain that a little more? Could you repeat that?
- 3 What happened next?
- 4 What other options did you consider? What actions did you take?
- 5 What was the result?
- 6 What was your specific task on that project?
- 7 What was your role in the process?
- 8 Were you personally responsible for the outcome you described?
- 9 What did you get from the experience?

Reminders

- 1 Consider recency of examples
- 2 Assess for skills, not experience
- 3 Listen for trainable skills
- 4 Ensure you obtain a result from the behavior
- 5 Use the candidate's examples to rate answers
- 6 Complete ratings as soon as possible, while the candidate answers are fresh in your mind



Rating Each Candidate

Immediately after the candidate leaves the room, the interviewer should review his or her notes and, if the interview is being rated, rate the candidate. Notes should include actual behavioral examples and ratings should be defensible and supported by the notes.

Examples of actual answers given should be included along with explanations of how these answers apply to the competency being rated and why they merit the given rating. Examples of rating forms for use by one interviewer or a panel of interviewers can be found in Appendix G and Appendix H, respectively.

After all candidates have been rated, the interviewer should:

- Review the ratings given to each candidate.
- Ensure the total performance of each candidate has been considered thoroughly and objectively.
- Ensure the ratings are tied to specific behavioral examples.
- Sign and date each rating form.



Behavioral Interview

CONSTRUCTS & QUESTIONS



Self Control



This candidate may lack strong self-control and might struggle to maintain composure, keep their emotions in check, control anger, or avoid aggressive behaviors in difficult or high-stress situations.

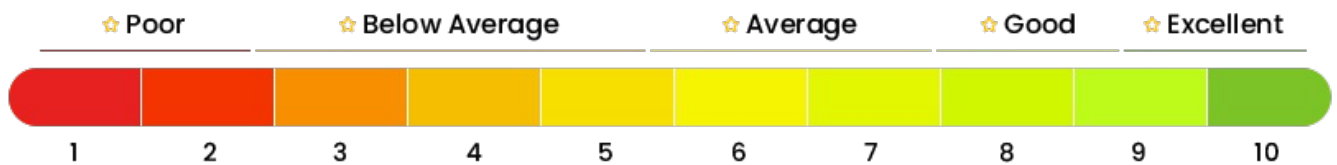


Self Control

Maintaining composure, keeping emotions in check, controlling anger, and avoiding aggressive behavior, even in very difficult situations.

- Describe a time when you could have gotten angry with a boss or colleague, but did not. Walk me through the situation and how you handled it.
- Tell me about a time when you dealt with an extremely difficult or demanding customer.
- Provide an example of a time when you wanted to give up but kept on going. Why did you persist? How long did you have to keep going? What was the outcome?

Notes:



SIGNATURE

DATE



Social Orientation



This candidate may lack social orientation and might prefer to work alone rather than with others. They tend to stay personally disconnected from colleagues on the job.

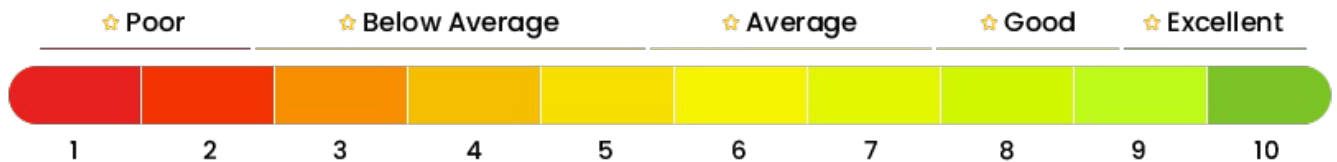


Social Orientation

Preferring to work with others rather than alone, and being personally connected with others on the job.

- Describe a situation in which you built a working relationship with someone outside of your organization. How have you maintained this relationship?
- Describe your relationship with one or two of your oldest business contacts. How have you been able to sustain this relationship(s)?
- Describe how you establish a sense of common ground with someone whom you are encountering for the first time.

Notes:



SIGNATURE

DATE



Achievement/Effort



This candidate scored low in achievement/effort. They may not establish challenging or specific goals, might struggle to strive towards goal attainment, and could lack ambition to master their work roles.

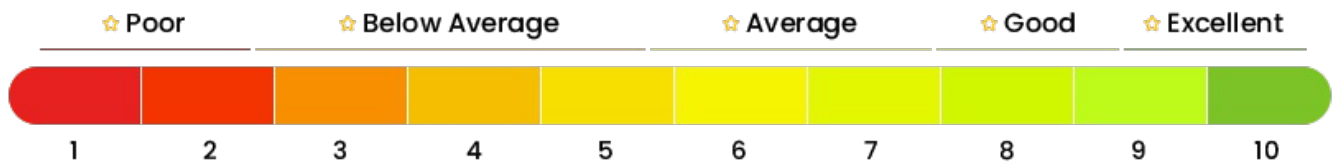


Achievement/Effort

Establishing and maintaining personally challenging achievement goals and exerting effort toward mastering tasks.

- Describe a time when you undertook a project completely on your own initiative. What was the outcome?
- Cite an example of a time when you had to make a decision before all of the facts had come in. What was the basis for your decision? What was the outcome?
- Give an example of a time when you had to make substantial progress on a project while your supervisor was (away). What did you do when you had questions or concerns about the project? What was the outcome?

Notes:



SIGNATURE

DATE



APPENDIX - Common Rating Errors & Interview Mistakes



Common Rating Errors

One way to minimize rating errors is to make interviewers aware of the most common types of error, which are summarized below.

- 1 Rater Bias:** Allowing prejudices about certain groups of people or personalities to interfere with being able to fairly evaluate a candidate's performance. Interviewers should refrain from considering any non-performance related factors when making judgments.
- 2 Halo Effect:** Allowing ratings of performance in one competency to influence ratings for other competencies. For example, allowing a high rating on Oral Communication to bias the rating on Problem Solving, irrespective of the candidate's performance on Problem Solving.
- 3 Central Tendency:** A tendency to rate all competencies at the middle of the rating scale (for example, giving all "3s" on a 5-point scale). When hesitating over making a high rating, interviewers should realize such a rating does not indicate perfect performance; it means demonstrating more of the competency than is generally exhibited. Similarly, when hesitating over a low rating, interviewers should realize it does not mean the candidate does not possess the competency; it means he/she did not demonstrate much of the competency in his/her interview responses.
- 4 Leniency:** A tendency to give high ratings to all candidates, irrespective of their actual performance. There may be candidates who could benefit from further development in certain areas. Interviewers should allow their ratings to reflect these intra- and inter- individual differences.
- 5 Strictness:** A tendency to give low ratings to all candidates, irrespective of their actual performance. There may be outstanding candidates whose demonstration of competencies warrants high ratings. Interviewers should allow their ratings to reflect these intra- and inter- individual differences.
- 6 Like Me:** Giving higher than deserved ratings to candidates who appear like you. People have a natural tendency to prefer others who are similar in various ways to themselves. Interviewers should concentrate on the responses given by the candidate in making evaluations, rather than on the outward characteristics and personality of the candidate.



Common Interviewing Mistakes

- 1 Relying on First Impressions:** Interviewers tend to make rapid decisions about the qualifications of a candidate within the first few minutes of the interview based on minimal information. Interviewers should reserve their judgment until sufficient information on the candidate has been gathered.
- 2 Negative Emphasis:** Unfavorable information tends to be more influential and memorable than favorable information. Interviewers should avoid focusing on negative information to the exclusion of positive information.
- 3 Not Knowing the Job:** Interviewers who do not have a comprehensive understanding of the skills needed for the job often form their own opinion about what constitutes the best candidate. They use this personal impression to evaluate candidates. Therefore, it is important to make sure interviewers fully understand the requirements of the job.
- 4 Pressure to Hire:** When interviewers believe they need to decide quickly, they tend to make decisions based on a limited sample of information, or on a small number of candidate interviews. Interviewers should adhere to the established interview procedure and timeline with each candidate to avoid making erroneous decisions.
- 5 Contrast Effects:** The order in which the candidates are interviewed can affect the ratings given to candidates. While making ratings, interviewers should refrain from comparing candidates to those who have been previously interviewed.
- 6 Nonverbal Behavior:** Interviewers should base their evaluation of the candidate on the candidate's past performance and current behavior as it relates to the competency being evaluated and not just on how the candidate acts during the interview. Questions and probes relating to the competencies of interest will usually direct the interviewer to the important information.

Interviewers can minimize these rating errors by thoroughly understanding the competencies being assessed and by learning to compare the behaviors exhibited in the interview with the behaviors anchoring the proficiency-level ratings for each competency.