



# Shannon Competency Based Interviews Preparation

*Competency Based Interview* has become an increasing common type of interview technique selected by companies.

The basic premise of a Competency Based Interview is that a candidate's past performance is the best indicator of their future performance. All of the questions will be directly linked to a particular function of the position for which you have applied.

There are a number of categories of Competency Based Interview questions you should prepare. If you do so competency based interview allows you to sell yourself in the interview. While some categories are particularly geared towards senior level management roles, the basic principles will remain the same.

**LEADERSHIP**

**COMMUNICATION**

**CLIENT FOCUS / CLIENT RELATIONSHIP.**

**TEAM WORK**

**INNOVATION**

**STRATEGY**

**ORGANSIATION AWARENESS**

**CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT**

**TECHNICAL SKILLS**

**TIME MANAGEMENT**

Interviewers will ask for examples of things you have actually done that demonstrate the key categories or characteristics their organisation needs from the particular role.

**Have an example of every one**

Take your actual experience – when it happened

Explain how you have performed in a certain situation.

How successful were your actions

Detail what you have learned from the situation.

Give an overview of how you would cope in the future given a similar situation.

## **LEADERSHIP ABILITY**

This is very relevant for those seeking a managerial position – it will give the potential employer an insight into how you would lead a team, what your managerial style is like and how that style would blend in with their culture.

*Sample questions:*

Describe how you led a team

How did you motivate your team?

How did you improve your team's individual performances?

What do you think your team would say about you?

## **COMMUNICATION**

Many people use the terms "good communication skills" in their CV, you need to be able to give good solid examples of where they used those skills. Communication is vital, not only externally but internally within the company across all levels of roles and potential employers want to see those communication skills in interview.

*Samples of questions:*

Give an example of a difficult / sensitive situation that requires you to use excellent communication skills?

How have you developed communication skills in others?

How do you keep your clients or your reporting line informed about difficult issues that directly affect the company's bottom line?

## **CLIENT FOCUS / CLIENT RELATIONSHIP.**

This again covers all levels of staff as clients can be both internal and external.

*Samples questions:*

Describe how you develop new client relationships or maintain existing ones.

Describe how you keep your existing client base in the face of competition.

Describe the process you use to keep in touch with your client's requirements.

## **TEAMWORK**

Organisations are quickly coming to realise that a cultural fit is just as important as the ability to do the actual job so they are looking for people to fit in easily with their existing teams.

*Sample questions:*

Describe a situation in which you were a member of a team – what do you do to make a positive contribution?

Describe a situation where there was conflict in a team and what did you do to resolve it?

## **INNOVATION**

Innovation is across the board and not just limited to managers, it is sought after across every role from managerial level to administration. For example, if you are in charge of stock control, is there anything you'd do to improve the process that would (a) increase business flow or (b) decrease monthly costs? If you have done anything that added value to your firm, make sure that's in your CV and make sure you bring it up in interview.

Employers are looking for an individual who can make a positive profit making contribution.

*Sample question:*

Describe something you have done that was new for your company that improved the

performance of your team or the value of the work done.

Have you done anything innovative (either produced surveys or written reports) that would be of direct interest to your target market or enhanced awareness of your company?

## **STRATEGY/STRATEGIC THINKING**

Again this applies across the board of roles, how you view decisions you would make both on a macro and a micro level. This shows what level of decision making you are capable of and what value you can add to the company.

*Sample questions:*

Describe the most challenging aspect of your current role and what you have done to adapt your performance.

How did you go about assessing your own performance and your team's performance in that situation?

## **ORGANISATION AWARENESS**

This is finding out how the potential employee (you) thinks and how you perceive your contribution to the company would be as a new member of their team.

*Sample questions:*

Describe the structure of your current company and give an example of how you work within this culture to achieve your goals.

Describe how you perceive the new company and how you would fit in.

These questions would help the employer as an indicator of:

- (a) how they're perceived in the market and
- (b) how they're perceived as an employer.

It also gives them an overview of the way you are accustomed to working and it will help them figure out if you would fit in with their company culture. It will also allow you as the interviewee to give some valuable insights into how you'd add value to their organisation.

## **CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT**

Again this is very much geared towards senior management and how you view decisions you would make both on a macro and a micro level. This is particularly relevant at managerial level where the employers are looking for an individual who can make a positive profit making contribution. This is particularly relevant at managerial level where the employers are looking for an individual who can make a positive profit making contribution.

*Sample question:*

Describe a change of policy that you were involved in for your company that improved performance of your team or the value of the work done.

Have you made any change in management or structure that would be of direct interest to your target market?

## **TECHNICAL SKILLS**

At the end of the day you are being hired for your ability and what you can contribute to the company and target market. Be able to give examples from your previous role that highlights your skill-set in its best form. If you have listed skills in your CV have a solid example of when you used these that you can discuss. If you bring any certificates with you to the interview be able to discuss their relevance to the role you are applying for.

*Sample questions:*

What is a good example in your previous role that highlights that you are the correct person for this position?

What particular skill set do you believe you can bring to this role and can you give an example where you have successfully used this before?

## **TIME MANAGEMENT**

Actually infrequently used as a question but you may still get questions on your ability to manage your workload in a timely and efficient manner especially for roles where time is of the essence, eg: project management.

*Samples questions:*

Give a specific example of meeting deadlines

What could you have done differently if you could have?

Has the experience affected the way you deal with deadlines now?

The major benefits of Competency Based Interviews are that these questions will allow you, the candidate to relate your answer to a real life experience rather than giving a generic textbook answer. Think and include what if the most relevant information in context to the current job opportunity.