

Sit down in a quiet room and prepare.  
Revise your C.V ready for questioning.

**Be ready for the standard questions:**

- **What have you done?** (Do not talk for too long . concentrate on the last three years and leave them wanting a bit more)
- **What do you want to do?** (Say how the job meets your career requirements)
- **What sort of person are you?**
- **What are your strengths?** (Use examples not a list of wooly statements)
- **What are your weaknesses?** (Give an old weakness and say how you recognised it and fixed it)
- **Why do you want to leave your current employer?** (Make sure the answer to this is for positive reasons . never criticise your current employer)
- **Why do you want this job?** (Make sure they know you are keen)
- **What do you know about this business?** (Always look at their website)
- **Give me an example of** ò ò ò ò .

Eg: (How you have handled conflict in the workplace)  
(A time when you felt under pressure at work)  
(An achievement at work you are proud of)

There may also be competency based interview questions (see attached sheet).

**If it's a second interview:**

Write down everything from the first interview . a lot of the questions will be repeated (possibly for the benefit of someone you didn't meet first time).

Have an agenda for what you want to cover, i.e. be prepared for the question %Thanks for coming back . what do you want to talk about?+

Be the same person . you know they like you. Be confident, be enthusiastic. Maintain pace in the interview.

## **A CANDIDATES' GUIDE TO COMPETENCY- BASED INTERVIEWS**

In case your interview is a competency based interview, we are enclosing the following guide to help you.

### **THE AIM OF THIS GUIDE**

The aim of this guide is to help you prepare for a Competency Based interview and introduce the competencies for the job relevant to you.

### **WHAT ARE COMPETENCIES?**

Competencies are best thought of as those characteristics which enable a person to deliver fully competent performance in a specific job or role. They are not simply skills and knowledge, but are rather a combination of values and behaviours that contribute to a person's performance.

### **COMPETENCY PROFILES**

Competency profiles define which set of competencies will lead to superior performance in a given job and describe several indicators for each competency. The indicators are behaviours which competent job holders demonstrate consistently.

### **COMPETENCY-BASED INTERVIEWS**

Competency-based interviews are structured interviews, which help to assess candidates against the competencies defined within the profile for a job. This method of interviewing is both a highly accurate and practical means of assessing and selecting candidates.

The objective of a competency-based interview is to elicit evidence from you, the candidate, for each of the required competencies. During the interview you will be asked to draw on previous experiences and describe actual situations when you have demonstrated the behaviours most relevant to the job. You will be asked to give a brief overview of your actions and role for each of your experiences. Try to focus specifically on **your own involvement**.

For example, when assessing a particular competence (in bold print), the interviewer may ask:

#### **Initiative**

- Tell me about a time when you took personal responsibility for a project and made sure it was carried out efficiently+

#### **Achievement Motivation**

- Tell me about a time when you acted to improve the performance of the business+

#### **Relationship Building**

- Tell me about a time when you used your contacts to get a job done+

The interviewer may ask further questions to clarify the details of your involvement and actions.

For example: **“What happened first?”**  
**“What did you do and say?”**  
**“What were you thinking and feeling?”**  
**“What was the outcome?”**

In order to provide the relevant and factual details of your previous experiences, actions and roles, it is advantageous to consider the most significant experiences you have had within the last 18 months.

## **PREPARING FOR A COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW**

Although time is allowed for candidates to think of appropriate experiences during the interview, prior consideration of the competencies would be advantageous. Try to think of one occasion when you have demonstrated similar behaviours to those presented in the competence model. You will not be expected to have demonstrated all the behaviours, although some evidence for each competency is preferable. Try to recall any relevant details, whilst focusing on your actual behaviour.

### **Examples of some of the Competencies Companies use**

#### **Customer Focus**

Is the desire to meet the needs of internal and external customers. It means focusing efforts on discovering and satisfying their needs.

#### **Achievement Motivation**

Is a concern for working well to meet or surpass a standard of excellent. The standard may be one's own past performance; an objective measure; the performance of others.

#### **Teamwork**

Is working co-operatively with others, as part of an immediate team and across functions, to meet business objectives.

#### **Analytical Thinking**

Is the use of logic to assess and improve the accuracy or validity of ideas, information or processes.

#### **Information Seeking**

Is driven by an underlying curiosity and desire to know more about things, people, or issues. It implies going beyond the questions that are routine or required in the job. It may include digging and scanning for further information.

#### **Initiative**

Is about being a self-starter; proactively doing things to solve problems and seize opportunities, taking maximum responsibility (within the limits of authority).

#### **Flexibility**

Is adapting to and working effectively within a variety of situations, with individuals or groups. It includes adopting new behaviours and approaches as required by changes in role and the wider organisation.

#### **Impact and Influence and Effective Work style**

Is about persuading, convincing and impressing others in order to get them to support your agenda in the interests of the business. It is based on the desire to have a specific impact or effect on others where the person has his or her own agenda, a specific type of impression to make, or a course of action that he or she wants the others to adopt.