

Example interview questions

So you want to be prepared for your next job interview. Chances are that it will be a behavioural or competency-based interview, characterised by the interviewers asking you for examples demonstrating your past achievements/experiences.

In your response the interviewers will be looking for a specific example, what steps (actions) you took and what the outcome was. Models such as CAR (context, action, result) or STAR (situation, task, action, result) can be great tools for capturing your experiences and presenting complete responses at interview.

Following are some sample questions that assess common skills that organisations seek in their employees.

Communication

Tell me about a time when it has become clear that someone has not understood you when you were explaining something to them? How did you know? What happened?

Can you give me an example of when you haven't been sure about instructions you've been given. What did you do?

Customer Focus

Can you give us an example of when you have been required to communicate with a difficult customer? What was the outcome of the communication?

Could you talk about an incident which required you to go above and beyond the call of duty to satisfy one of your customers?

Teamwork

From time to time friction develops in the workplace. Can you give us an example of a situation when you've had to handle this type of problem at work?

Can you give us an example of an occasion when you demonstrated your commitment to teamwork?

What kind of people do you find easiest to work with? Can you give an example which explains why?

Initiative

Tell us a time when you suggested an improvement to work procedures or practices?

Can you give us an example that demonstrates your initiative in the workplace?

Planning and Organising

How do you organise your work? How do you keep track of progress?

Everybody has difficulty meeting deadlines from time to time. Can you tell us about a time you have fallen behind schedule or not met time commitments and tell us how you manage this situation?

Can you tell us about a time when you have had a lot of jobs in progress at the same time. How did you keep track of them?

Conflict Resolution

Tell me about a time when you've experienced a conflict in the workplace. How did you manage the situation?

Please give me an example of a time you had to respond to an unhappy manager/customer/colleague.

Judgment

Can you give us an example of a decision you've made which, in your opinion, involved taking a risk? What criteria did you use to reach your decision?

Tell us about a time when you have had to make a decision with a very tight timeframe. What factors did you consider? What was the outcome?