

## Guide to Competency-based Interviews

### What are Competency-based Interviews?

Competency-based interviews are interviews where the questions are designed to explore specific competencies or skills. Candidates are asked questions relating to their behaviour in specific circumstances, which they then need to back up with specific examples. The interviewers may then probe further into examples by asking for further explanation in relation to behaviours or skills. The answer is then matched against pre-decided criteria and scored accordingly.

Candidates should use specific and relevant situations from their work life as examples when answering this type of interview question. Candidates should explain why they made certain decisions, how they implemented these decisions and why certain outcomes took place. Candidates should avoid talking in broad terms or be too general when replying to questions.

### Techniques for Answering Competency-based Questions

There are several ways to answer competency questions in an interview. One useful technique that can be used is the **STAR** technique:

**Situation:** Describe the situation.

**Task:** Describe what the situation required of **you**, i.e. your involvement / responsibilities.

**Action:** Tell the interviewer what action **you** took.

**Result:** Conclude by describing the result of that action.

Whichever technique is used, the answer should demonstrate what you specifically did in any given situation.

### How to Prepare for a Competency-based Interview

It's really, really simple:

- List the competencies for the specific job
- Review your CV and Application form (experience, skills and knowledge etc )
- Come up with examples and for each example, consider the **STAR** headings above
- practice your answers with a critical friend
- and...enjoy the interview because you have prepared