

Competency Based Interviews

Competency based interviews are based on the idea that past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. Accordingly the interviewers' goals are to obtain specific examples of when and how you demonstrated particular behaviours. Interview questions are designed to probe specific skills, competencies and characteristics relevant to the advertised position. Questions will typically begin with:-

Tell me about a time.....

Describe a time.....

Tell me about a situation.....

The interview panel will be looking for relevant examples of what you did in such situations, not what the team's role as a whole was or statements of fact. You can choose relevant examples from your current job, a previous role or a situation outside work altogether. You should be aware that the interview panel will look to probe or clarify a particular area of your responses. You should also expect to be asked some questions about the information you supplied on your application form.

Everything the Scottish Government does demands real professional skills in the business of government. They are complex, and broad ranging e.g. running a prison requires different skills from piloting legislation through the Scottish Parliament, or from delivering a user friendly management information system. To this end we use the Scottish Government's [Skills for Success framework](#) to help recruit, train and develop our people. You should review the skills and behaviours necessary under the band of post you are applying for. Our bands are A, B, C and Senior Civil Service.

Preparing for Competency Based Interviews

To prepare for competency-based interviews, first review the job profile carefully and identify the essential and desirable skills and competencies identified for the role. Next identify the situations and experiences that you will refer to in the interview to demonstrate these skills and traits. Competency focussed, well-structured answers will help you deliver a good rounded performance. Where possible you should follow the STAR model:-

Situation – describe a situation or problem that you have encountered

Task – describe the task that the situation required or your ideas for resolving the problem

Action – describe the action you took, obstacles that you had to overcome

Results – highlight outcomes achieved