

Competency/Behavioural

Typical competencies assessed: teamwork, analytical skills, communication, leadership, flexibility, creativity, integrity, commercial ability, time management, resilience

- Can you give me an example of when you were part of a team and helped deliver a successful outcome?
- Describe a time when you analysed a situation and how you went about improving it?
- Take me through an occasion you explained something complicated to someone.
- Talk me through how you achieved a goal that you set yourself.
- Tell me when you have had to adapt your approach to accommodate other people.
- Describe a time when you stood up for something you believed was wrong; pointed out an error someone had made.
- Tell me about a time you came up with a creative solution to a problem.
- Describe a situation when you persuaded someone to do something they didn't want to do.
- When have you faced a particularly difficult situation and how did you respond?

Motivation

Can relate directly to a particular role/organisation, the bigger picture motivating the choices made, or more general energy and motivation levels; interested in how you approach decisions, whether your choices fit an overall goal and what kind of energy you are likely to bring to the position:

- Why do you want to work for this organisation?
- Why have you applied for this role?
- How does this position fit with your longer-term aspirations?
- Why do you want to work in this sector?
- What are the main challenges facing the business?
- Talk me through a recent news story you found interesting - what impact might it have on our work?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Why or how did you choose this particular degree/university?

Situational

What would you do if; can be useful to back your theoretical answer up with an example from actual experience:

- You had completed a piece of quantitative research, the client had gone public based on the data and you find an error in your calculations?
- You were aware that a colleague had lied about work they had done?
- You were asked to write a report on a topic you knew nothing about?
- You had to run a project to a tight deadline?
- You had to complete several key projects at the same time and were asked to take on another responsibility?

Strength based

- What are you good at?
- What comes easily to you?
- What do you learn quickly? What did you find easiest to learn at school or university?
- What subjects do you most enjoy studying?
- What things give you energy?
- Describe a successful day you have had.
- When did you achieve something you were really proud of?
- What things are always left on your to-do list and not finished?
- What would you like to be known for?
- What do you do in your spare time?

Commercial awareness

Can be treated as a competency or a separate element; can relate to business or have more personal focus. Will be contextually relevant:

- How do you think the rise in the oil price will affect our client's business?
- What are the key challenges facing our business?
- What will be the short and long term effect Brexit/the pandemic on the British economy?
- Which story in the financial press has caught your interest recently? What is your opinion? What advice would you give?
- When have you had to change plans because of financial constraints?

Value based

- Give me an example of a time you were particularly perceptive regarding a colleague or a client's feelings and needs.
- Tell me about a time it was critical that you establish an effective working relationship.
- Why does our organisation appeal to you?
- What are your core values?
- What parts of the job would you find most/least enjoyable?
- Describe a time when you disagreed with your team's agreed course of action.
- When have you recognised a need to improve quality in your team's work?
- Give an example of a time you have learned from feedback?

Typical questions

- Tell me about a project/essay you have worked on, and what you learnt from it?
- What are the three key strengths you will bring to the role?
- What do you expect to do each day?
- What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses?
- What will be your biggest challenge if we offer you the role?
- Talk me through your CV.

Some questions you can ask

- How would you describe the company culture?
- Can you describe a project you have been working on recently – particular challenges?
- What is the most challenging thing faced by your team at the moment?
- What is your management style?
- What is a typical day/week for this role?
- What do you think would be the biggest challenge for me if I join?
- What is the main thing you enjoy about working here?
- Anything that has been brought up during the day/interview and shows you were paying attention
- What is typical career trajectory?
- What do you wish you had known about role/organisation before joining?
- How does organisation culture compare with other 'similar' organisations – particularly if you refer to something you have been able to find out about them; From speaking with x I learned that you have a very collaborative culture – how does that manifest itself on an everyday basis?

Some questions not to ask?

- Anything you should have been able to find out from website/basic research
- Salary/benefits/working conditions
- Personal questions about interviewer's background
- How quickly you will be promoted