



FindingPotential

Interview Guide

Profile Head of Marketing

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The FindingPotential Personality Questionnaire Competency Report provides an objective view of each candidate directly matched to this interview guide. Create a free account at www.findingpotential.com.



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This report is based on a Managerial and Leadership Competency Model and is designed to help you identify the competencies that are most important for the role. The closer the fit between a candidate's competencies and the competencies in this report, the more likely they are to succeed in the role and feel engaged.

This report has 3 sections:

- **Competency Review**

This section provides you with a rank ordered list of competencies. The ranking is based on your responses to the Job Profiler questionnaire.

- **Interview Questions**

In the second part of this report you will find a series of suggested questions and a series of positive/negative indicators to help you probe and evaluate each candidates' responses. In most cases you will find questions and indicators for the top 5 competencies that you identified. However, you may have ranked some of the competencies as equally important – in these cases more than 5 competencies are shown.

- **Quick Tips**

If you this is your first experience of a using a competency-based interview method you will find the "Quick Tips" section really useful - we would encourage you to read this section. Even if you are more familiar with this approach the tips are a great refresher. They include:

- The Interview Plan & Timing
- Introducing a Competency Based Interview
- Using the Competency Based Interview Questions
- Posing Great Questions
- Assessing and Rating Candidates.

Please remember – you don't need to print the Quick Tips Section every time just select the page range you do need to print (Sections 1 & 2).

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As a result of completing the Job Profiler you have identified the following competencies, ranked in order of importance, as critical to the role. You should focus your interview on the top five ranked competencies (highlighted green). Remember it is possible you may end up with more than five competencies highlighted green where ties occur. Competencies highlighted in grey are less or not important to the role and are not needed.

Rank	Competency
1	Handling Pressure
=	Building Positive Working Alliances
=	Embracing Change and Ambiguity
4	Having a Thirst For Development
=	Leading the Way for Others
=	Making Sound Business Judgements
7	Understanding the Commercial Context
8	Thriving in a Performance Environment
=	Relating to Others
10	Being Dependable and Taking Accountability
=	Effectively Executing the Task

The following pages will now describe possible interview questions as well as positive and negative indicators for your top ranked competencies.

Remains calm and in control under pressure, staying focused on delivering results. Stands their ground when challenged and maintains a positive outlook when faced with setbacks.

Suggested questions

1. Describe a situation where you felt that unreasonable pressures/demands were being placed on you/your team.

- What did you do to help manage the pressure and demands?
- How successful were you? How do you know (feedback)?
- How did you minimise negative impact on performance?
- With hindsight what have you done differently when faced with demanding/pressurised situations?

2. Tell me about a crisis (at work) you have handled recently.

- What caused it? What did you do to resolve it?
- How were you feeling at the time? How did you manage your emotions?
- How did you ensure yourself/others coped through it?
- How did you know they were coping?

3. Sometimes our values and beliefs can be called into question by business decisions and we need to take a stand. Describe a time when this has happened to you.

- Why was it important for you to stand your ground?
- How comfortable did you feel doing this? How successful were you?
- What made you successful? What got in the way of success?
- What have you learned about yourself from this experience?

4. Give me an example of a significant setback that you have experienced in your role/career to date.

- How did this come about? What did you do? Why?
- To what extent were others aware of your feelings?
- How do you feel about the situation now?
- What would have helped you to pick yourself up more quickly?

5. How do you stay focused on the right things day to day?

- What are the right things? How do you know?
- What kinds of distractions exist in your environment?
- How do you guard against these? Give an example of a time you've done this well.

6. Tell me about a time when you have felt under real pressure to deliver results.

- What did you need to deliver?
- What was the pressure you faced?
- What did you do?
- What was the outcome?
- What did you learn about yourself?

Remains calm and in control under pressure, staying focused on delivering results. Stands their ground when challenged and maintains a positive outlook when faced with setbacks.

Positive indicators

- Remains calm and collected in difficult circumstances. Keeps control in stressful situations
- Maintains performance under pressure
- Adopts a range of effective coping strategies to deal with pressure (e.g. manages symptoms, re-frames, tackles the source)
- Recognises signs of stress/pressure in self and others
- Looks to ensure that others are equipped to deal with and supported through pressurised situations
- Responds constructively to challenge or when beliefs and values are called into question
- Prepared to stand ground in the face of opposition
- Persists with a course of action despite setbacks – shows tenacity in the pursuit of goals
- Remains a positive outlook in the face of setbacks and disappointments – sees them as an inevitable part of the process but learns and moves on
- Maintains focus when under pressure
- Manages distractions in the working environment and keeps self focused on performance goals

Negative indicators

- Becomes ruffled or emotional when under pressure – loses control when under stress
- Takes eye off the ball and becomes distracted/preoccupied when under pressure
- Uses a limited range of coping strategies or maladaptive coping strategies when under pressure (e.g. diet, exercise, sleep)
- Fails to spot signs of pressure in self and others
- Focuses on self when under pressure. Does not consider how to support others through pressure situations
- Responds disproportionately/inappropriately to challenge or when values and beliefs are called into question
- Does not stand ground or fails to challenge constructively
- Gives up easily – lacks tenacity when faced with setbacks
- Tends to dwell on disappointments or setbacks which can interfere with focus and performance
- Loses focus when under pressure
- Focuses on the wrong things – gets caught up in distractions and loses focus/attention

Notes

Proactively builds a wide network of internal and external stakeholders. Encourages cooperation between different groups, whilst being comfortable expressing disagreement and handling conflict. Ensures the needs of key stakeholders are met.

Suggested questions

1. Sometimes it is necessary to enlist the help of others in our network to solve an issue. Describe a time when it has been necessary for you to do this?

- How did you establish who was best placed to help? How did you approach them?
- How do you go about building/maintaining your network?
- What feedback have you received on your networking skills?

2. Sometimes stakeholders don't really understand what they want, or present us with requests that will not meet their need. Describe a time when you had to ascertain the exact nature of a stakeholder's need.

- How did you help the stakeholder to articulate the real need?
- How did they respond?
- What would have been the impact of you not acting in this way?

3. Give me an example of a time when you had to deal with conflict/frustrations working with a key stakeholder or another team/department?

- What steps did you take to resolve the problem?
- What was the outcome?
- What feedback did you receive?

4. What steps have you taken to ensure cooperation and collaboration between different departments/teams on a particular business initiative?

- Why was it important to build this cooperation?
- What steps did you take to create this?
- What role did others play in increasing the cooperation?
- What was the impact/value of the increased cooperation?

5. Give me an example of when you have worked with other areas of the business.

- How did you ensure that the teams communicated effectively?
- What conflicts were experienced and how were these managed?
- What were the benefits of collaborating?
- Describe the relationship between the business areas now.

6. Tell me about a time when you have had to say no/push back to a key stakeholder.

- What did you need to say no/push back on?
- Why did you need to do this?
- How did they react?
- What was the outcome?
- What would you do differently?

Proactively builds a wide network of internal and external stakeholders. Encourages cooperation between different groups, whilst being comfortable expressing disagreement and handling conflict. Ensures the needs of key stakeholders are met.

Positive indicators

- Proactively develops and maintains a network of relationships with key stakeholders
- Draws on network when required and with minimum effort as relationships are strong/have been maintained
- Regularly/proactively shares knowledge and information with colleagues within their sphere of influence
- Questions/challenges in order to really understand the needs of stakeholders. Is focused on needs not wants
- Responds promptly to stakeholder requests /feedback
- Demonstrates a clear personal code of conduct with respect to how they engage with others
- Effectively manages conflict/disagreement between different stakeholders
- Encourages cooperation across different stakeholders – helps to establish/ascertain a common goal or purpose
- Expresses disagreement tactfully/assertively
- Keeps communication channels open. Follows up to maintain relationships with stakeholders
- Follows up to ensure that the needs of stakeholders (continue to be) met

Negative indicators

- Limited networks or reactive approach to networking - doesn't commit time and effort to maintaining networks
- Networks on a needs basis. No evidence of having strong enough sustainable networks
- Tends to withhold information from colleagues or not share it widely enough in a timely manner
- Responds to wants rather than needs of stakeholders. Fails to question/challenge to establish needs and drivers
- Fails to respond to requests/feedback from stakeholders
- Treats others as a resource rather than as a person (not as they would like to be treated themselves)
- Fails to deal with conflict and disagreement with different stakeholders. Pursues the task without paying attention to issues of climate/relationship
- Fails to establish a common goal or purpose to align differing stakeholder groups
- Expresses disagreement in a less tactful way
- No evidence of building lasting/sustainable relationships with key stakeholders/following up formally or informally
- No evidence of seeking feedback from/following up with stakeholders to ensure their needs are met

Notes

Challenges the status quo, producing new ideas and approaches to improve performance. Open to new ways of doing things and modifies their approach to meet changing demands. Comfortable working without clear guidelines and rules, taking the initiative rather than waiting for direction.

Suggested questions

1. Tell me about a time when you have had to quickly adjust/ shuffle your priorities in response to an emerging issue.

- How did you go about doing this?
- What issues did you encounter? How did you tackle these?
- What was the benefit of the change to you/the team/the business?
- How did you stay positive and remain focused on performance?

2. Describe a situation where you challenged the merit of a tried and tested method or process.

- How did you raise the challenge? What was the response?
- What did you do to ensure your solution was implemented?
- How do you ensure that you/others focus on continuous improvement?
- How did you ensure that business requirements continued to be met while the change was introduced?

3. Describe the most significant change that you have driven in your business/area.

- How did you personally view the change (risks and benefits)?
- How (& when) did you communicate the change to others?
- What reactions/barriers did you anticipate to the proposed change?
- What resistance did you actually encounter? How did you manage this?
- What did you do to keep others positive and focused on the change?
- How did you manage to maintain business as usual/current performance?
- How might you manage change differently in the future?

4. Describe a situation where you got your team together to discuss the way forward/challenges ahead.

- How did you convey your enthusiasm for the challenges ahead?
- How did you encourage others to contribute views, opinions and ideas?
- What decisions were made as a consequence of seeking views of others?
- How did the consultation shape the proposal/solution?

5. Tell me about a time when you have had to work without clear rules/guidelines or where there has been ambiguity.

- How did you feel working in this kind of environment?
- Where did it have a positive/negative impact on your performance?
- What did you do to support others through this situation?
- What could you have done better in this situation?

6. Tell me about a time when you've had to instigate some unpopular changes in your part of the organisation.

- What were the changes?
- Why were they unpopular?
- How did you go about implementing the changes?
- What was the outcome and what did you learn from it?

Challenges the status quo, producing new ideas and approaches to improve performance. Open to new ways of doing things and modifies their approach to meet changing demands. Comfortable working without clear guidelines and rules, taking the initiative rather than waiting for direction.

Positive indicators

- Able to flex and rethink plans/priorities in the light of new information or to meet changing demands
- Keeps others informed and involved with necessary changes to plans. Engages others in a timely manner
- Maintains own performance and a positive outlook during periods of change
- Provides a context for change for others – communicates the bigger picture
- Is open to new methods of working and new ways of doing things
- Is prepared to question the tried and tested (e.g. use of resources, business processes, plans) in order to make improvements or add greater value to the business
- Brings in best practice from outside/other parts of the business to improve the efficiency of business processes
- Fosters a culture of change and continuous improvement in others
- Reviews situations and asks “what can we learn” when things do not go as expected
- Drives change through others whilst minimising disruption to business as usual
- Anticipates responses to change, takes pre-emptive action to manage resistance
- Able to operate without clear rules or guidelines or in situations where there is ambiguous/incomplete information
- Supports others during periods of uncertainty/ambiguity

Negative indicators

- Shows limited ability/willingness to flex/deviate from plan in the light of new information/changing circumstances
- Fails to communicate changes to others in a timely manner. Leaves individuals without clarity on priorities
- Personal reservations about change can negatively impact performance
- Provides little context/rationale to others about the change process and the need to change
- Likes to do things own way – is less open to interference or intervention from others
- No evidence of challenging existing practice (e.g. resource allocation, business processes, business plans) in an aim to improve or create increased value for the business
- No evidence of focusing on continuous improvement
- Does not encourage others to focus on continuous improvement and to challenge existing processes/be forthcoming with ideas for improvements
- No evidence of using review processes to learn lessons to apply to the future
- Works with change but loses day to day momentum needed for business as usual
- Fails to anticipate and respond to resistance to change
- Struggles to operate in more fluid environments where there is ambiguity or little structure or rules/guidelines for operation
- Fails to recognise/respond to individual reactions to change/support individuals with ambiguity/uncertainty

Notes

Invests time to identify development needs for self and others. Explores different ways of developing all aspects of their performance. Comfortable giving and receiving feedback and quick to learn and move on from mistakes.

Suggested questions

1. What have you done to develop your knowledge, skills and abilities to help achieve in your role?

- What opportunities have you taken/created?
- What improvements have resulted? How have these helped you?
- Talk to me about your current development plan? How are you building your technical capability? Your behavioural/leadership skills?

2. Describe a situation where you received negative/ constructive feedback.

- How did it make you feel?
- How have you modified your behaviour in the light of the feedback?
- Can you think of a situation where you have taken feedback personally?
- Why was this? What did you do in this situation?

3. What techniques do you use to identify the needs and potential of others?

- What methods have been most useful given the business constraints?
- When have you developed a colleague beyond your original expectation?
- What qualities do you possess that help you develop yourself and others?
- How do you help raise others awareness of their development needs & get them to take ownership for their development?

4. What are the main L&D needs of your current team?

- How have you been able to ascertain these?
- What plans have you put in place to address these?

5. Tell me about a time when you made a mistake at work?

- What were the possible implications/ramifications of the mistake?
- How did you react? How did you feel? What did you do?
- Who else was to blame? How did you address this?
- What did you learn? How have you used this learning in similar situations?

6. Describe your current development plan to me.

- What is the key focus of the plan and the activities you have in place to support your development?
- How did you identify your development needs?
- Who was involved in helping shape your plan?
- What action have you taken so far?
- How will you know if your plan is successful?

7. What feedback have you given a member of your team recently?

- What feedback did you give them?
- Why?
- What was the outcome of the conversation?
- How did you feel giving the feedback?
- Give me an example with another member (repeat as needed)

Invests time to identify development needs for self and others. Explores different ways of developing all aspects of their performance. Comfortable giving and receiving feedback and quick to learn and move on from mistakes.

Positive indicators

- Identifies own development needs
- Acts on development needs – creates and seizes opportunities
- Is open about own development needs
- Considers development for both current role and future career aspirations
- Open to feedback on performance from others
- Uses feedback to modify or change behaviour to improve performance
- Sees feedback as an opportunity to improve and grow and proactively seeks this from others
- Uses a range of techniques to allow others to develop and reach their potential
- Invests time exploring others' goals and motivators and agreeing development plans
- Sees the endless potential in others and can cite examples of developing others beyond own capability/expectation
- Understands the qualities of an effective coach and developer and is visibly passionate about taking this role
- Encourages others to take responsibility and ownership for their own development
- Takes time to provide feedback to others. Builds a culture of feedback with team
- Learns from mistakes – uses these as opportunities to learn
- Can demonstrate how their approach has changed in direct response to mistakes that have been made

Negative indicators

- Fails to identify own development needs or does so superficially
- Identifies needs but waits for these to be addressed – does not proactively create or seize opportunities
- Is guarded about own development needs
- Is focused on development in the here and now. Is unable to articulate a development plan to support longer term career goals
- Does not seek or is not open to developmental feedback from others
- Fails to act on or respond to feedback – rather repeats the same behaviour
- Tends to take feedback personally rather than view it as an opportunity to improve and grow
- Uses traditional methods of development (e.g. sending others on courses) rather than think deeply about the most effective way to support the development of others
- Development plans are either non-existent or exist in isolation from an individual's goals and drivers
- Own views and beliefs about the capability of others may create a ceiling on performance and potential
- Fails to articulate the core skills of a coach/ developer. Shows no obvious passion for developing others
- Does not encourage and support others in taking responsibility for their personal development
- Provides feedback when necessary using formal channels – does not proactively provide constant flow of feedback
- Fails to review and rationalise mistakes and use these as opportunities for learning – sees mistakes as negative
- No evidence of applying the learning from mistakes to similar situations

Notes

Creates a clear and compelling vision of the future, devolving accountability for delivery to the right level whilst offering appropriate levels of support. Drives performance through regular, honest feedback and by building a climate of openness and trust.

Suggested questions

1. How have you ensured that your team feel equipped to deliver the business plans in your area?

- How do you keep the team focused on the business goals/ensure they understand the link between their work and the wider company goals?
- How do you ensure your team feel empowered but not overloaded?
- How do you keep the vision real so it resonates with the team?

2. Give me an example of a time when you had to lead a de-motivated team or a team who were less enthusiastic/ committed to the task in hand.

- What did you do to keep spirits up and people focused on objectives?
- How were you sure that you had overcome the difficulties?
- What factors did you consider? What lessons did you learn?

3. Can you give me an example where, with the power of hindsight, you feel you may have pushed an individual or team too hard?

- What feedback did you receive from the individual/team at the time?
- What was the outcome? What might you have done differently?

4. Tell me about the last time you went out of your way to recognise an individual/the team for a job well done.

- Who did you give the feedback to? Where? Why was important to do this?
- When was the last time you sought feedback on your performance from your direct reports?
- How has this informed your leadership/management style and practice?

5. Describe a situation where you have been dissatisfied with your performance as a leader.

- What could/should you have done better?
- How have you used this learning to inform your style and behaviour?
- What do you see as your strengths and limitations as a leader/manager?

6. What is the vision and/or mission for your part of the organisation?

- Who created this and when? (If not them ask – What role did you play in creating this?)
- Why was it created?
- How does it align to the organisation's vision and mission?
- What does it mean to you personally?
- What have you done to engage your team with this?

Creates a clear and compelling vision of the future, devolving accountability for delivery to the right level whilst offering appropriate levels of support. Drives performance through regular, honest feedback and by building a climate of openness and trust.

Positive indicators

- Communicates a compelling vision/picture of the future to generate motivation/enthusiasm in others
- Keeps the team focused on the goals through establishing clear mechanisms for monitoring and reporting
- Devolves accountability to the right level and offers appropriate levels of support without micromanaging
- Provides differential recognition to others on the basis of objective measures of performance
- Ensures the team understand the need for change and that this resonates personally with them
- Provides an appropriate balance of support and challenge
- Checks with the team to ensure that they are feeling appropriately supported and challenged
- Recognises and rewards good behaviour and performance
- Adapts leadership style to suit the needs of the team and the circumstances
- Coaches others to help them perform. Raises awareness and generates responsibility for action in others
- Builds a climate of trust and openness where people are comfortable expressing their views and trying new things

Negative indicators

- Fails to engage others in the “why” or the longer term goal and get buy in and commitment
- No clear mechanisms for monitoring and reporting to track progress to goals
- Keeps hold of too much themselves (fails to empower the team) and/or micromanages the process
- Rewards and recognises others in the same way, irrespective of their personal performance/contribution
- No evidence of checking that the team see personal relevance of the change/direction and their contribution
- Fails to provide the right balance of support and challenge
- No evidence of seeking feedback from the team re the suitability/effectiveness of their management/ leadership
- Provides only developmental feedback rather than praise and motivation to build confidence
- Has less flexibility in leadership style (e.g. struggles to take a directive stance or to collaborate/facilitate)
- Fails to coach – does the job for others. As such may not get (sustainable) performance improvements from others
- Creates a command/fear climate where teams are less comfortable expressing their views or trying new things

Notes

Makes sound decisions and commits to action based on the evaluation of complex information and consideration of alternative scenarios. Quickly cuts through the detail to identify the real issues, develops contingencies to deal with unexpected issues as they arise.

Suggested questions

1. Describe a decision you made recently for which there was no established protocol.

- How did you go about making the decision? What worked well? Less well?
- How did you know what data was relevant/less relevant?
- How comfortable were you making it? How confident in its quality?
- What would have been the consequence of an incorrect/poor decision?
- How did you manage the risk?

2. Describe a situation where you had to choose between a number of alternative courses of action.

- Which did you choose? What criteria did you use to make the decision?
- What were the pros and cons of the other options?
- What was the outcome? What was the business impact of the decision?

3. Tell me about a time when you have challenged the information that you have been presented with.

- What was the source of the information?
- Why did you feel it was necessary to challenge it?
- What were the implications (e.g. how did your challenge impact on the final decision made)?

4. Tell me about a time when you were faced with a number of complex issues to resolve and not a lot of time to fully analyse each of them.

- How did this make you feel? How did you go about it?
- How effective were you? What, with hindsight would you do differently?
- What did you do to minimise the risk?

5. How do you ensure what you deliver is best value to the company/assess the value of the work that the team do?

- When have you said no to a request that was not aligned to the wider organisational goal/strategy?

6. Tell me about a difficult business decision you've had to make recently.

- What was the decision?
- What aspect of the decision was difficult?
- What options did you consider?
- Who did you involve?
- What was the outcome?

Makes sound decisions and commits to action based on the evaluation of complex information and consideration of alternative scenarios. Quickly cuts through the detail to identify the real issues, develops contingencies to deal with unexpected issues as they arise.

Positive indicators

- Seeks relevant information from a variety of sources, recognises what is pertinent
- Critically evaluates info. Probes/ challenges the facts
- Applies and adapts previous experience to novel situations
- Makes and is prepared to stand by decisions in the absence of clear procedures and protocols
- Considers the type of problem and how the decision needs to be made (e.g. when to direct, collaborate etc.)
- Considers issues from a range of angles (e.g. cost, risk, impact, benefit, short and long term opportunities).
- Takes a systemic approach to problem solving
- Considers a range of alternatives when making decisions
- Deals with ambiguity and makes sound decisions on the basis of limited information
- Makes/monitors decisions against the wider organisational goals/strategy
- Makes detailed contingency plans to accommodate changing circumstances and mitigate risk
- Understands the risk associated with different courses of action and builds plans to mitigate this

Negative indicators

- Limited thinking in novel situations. Fails to utilise all sources and/or effectively filter pertinent information
- Accepts information at face value
- Fails to apply/adapt previous experience to new situations
- Is reluctant to make decisions in the absence of clear procedures or protocols
- Uses the same style of decision making regardless of the situation
- Fails to consider a range of angles or the implications of different courses of action
- Approaches problems with interventions at the micro level
- Fails to consider the full range of alternatives or to accept that there may be alternative options
- Lacks confidence in decision making when there is ambiguity or limited information
- Considers the immediate impact of decisions/actions rather than their fit to the wider business agenda
- No evidence of contingency/scenario planning in decision making
- Fails to appreciate/articulate the risk associated with different courses of action

Notes

Appendix: Quick Tip 1

Interview Plan & Timing

Interview Plan

Once you have carefully reviewed the competencies and decided which ones you want to focus on you can use this guide to generate a specific interview plan. Please carefully consider how much time you can spend with each candidate and adjust your interview accordingly. As a general guide it will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to ask (and probe) each of the competencies that you have selected.

Interview Indicative Timings

Introduction	5 minutes
Competency 1	10 - 15 minutes
Competency 2	10 - 15 minutes
Competency 3	10 - 15 minutes
Competency 4	10 - 15 minutes
Competency 5	10 - 15 minutes
Close and Candidate Questions	10 minutes

Review the example questions provided and select the two or three questions that you feel are most relevant. Once you have identified the questions that are most relevant, you may wish to tailor the wording to best suit the context or the language used in your organisation.

You may also feel that it is appropriate to include more technical questions. For example, you may require your candidates to demonstrate their ability to apply particular technical knowledge which will be crucial to their ability to perform successfully. Again, this is perfectly acceptable and would naturally sit under the competency Technical Capability, just be sure that you allow adequate time for this when planning and scheduling the interview.

Introducing a Competency Based Interview

- Welcome the candidate and offer them a drink
- Introduce yourself and explain your role in the whole assessment process
- Clarify how much time is available
- Introduce the idea of competency based interviewing - key points to cover include:
 - You will be focusing on specific areas (or competencies) that are critical for success in the role. Outline what the competencies are.
 - Within each area you will ask some standard questions designed to give evidence related to specific aspects/demands of the role. All candidates are asked the same questions to ensure that the process is fair. You will ask some supplementary/follow up probes based on the information they give.
 - When answering the questions they can draw on examples from their work experience, education, home life or social activities. Do ask that the candidates try and make the examples recent. When thinking of examples they should think of the acronym STAR (what was the **S**ituation? What **T**ask did they undertake? What **A**ction did this require? What was the **R**esult?).
 - Explain it is not a test of their ability to come up with examples. If their mind goes blank or they need more time to think that is fine. If needs be you can move onto another question and go back to the one they are struggling with.
 - You will need to keep them focused and may cut their replies short at times when they are providing less relevant information or when you have gathered enough evidence for a particular competency. Explain there is no need for them to worry should you do this.
 - You will signpost each new competency area as you move to it so they understand the kind of evidence that you are looking for. In addition you will give them the opportunity to add any information that they feel is important before moving from one competency area to another. This does not mean that they have missed anything out!
- Explain that you will be taking notes and provide them with a pen and paper should they wish to do the same
- Add that there will be an opportunity for them to ask you questions at the end
- Check to see if the candidate has any questions about the process or the interview itself and deal with these before you launch into the interview questions
- Asking an open question about the interviewee's current work, educational or other daytime activities breaks the ice, warms the candidate up and gives some useful context for later questions.

Typical examples include: *"Tell me about the main responsibilities in your current job"*

Be prepared to ask the candidate to summarise if they start to give too much detail.

Using the Competency Based Interview Questions

Now you are in a position to work through the two or three questions that you have selected for each competency to be assessed. As you use the questions:

- Encourage the candidates to identify examples from past or present work experience, education and leisure. Gain as much tangible evidence as possible and focus on what they specifically did.
- Probe the answers provided using the suggested follow up questions listed in the interview guide (please note the list of suggested prompts is not exhaustive and the following page on question types will help you to formulate even more great questions as you need them).
- Try to gather both positive and negative information (i.e. encourage them to discuss both strengths and areas for development, the impact of any limitations and the actions that they have taken to overcome them).
- Listen and encourage the candidate to open up using your verbal and non-verbal behaviour. Try and capture as much of what the candidate says as possible in your interview notes as you will come back and evaluate these later. Avoid making remarks that imply some kind of judgement in the interview such as *"That was a good idea..."*, *"How awful..."*, *"Excellent"*
- Recap and summarise the evidence presented for each competency before you move onto the next area. This helps you to check your understanding of the points that the candidate has made. It also demonstrates that you have listened to the candidate and helps your memory for when you come to write up and rate the candidate against the competencies.
- Ensure that you address each competency area separately, and only gather evidence on one competency at a time wherever possible. If candidates start to stray into another competency area, make a quick note of what they are saying for when you get to that competency but steer them back on track.

For example: *"That will be a useful example when we move onto talk about how you prioritise in a moment. Returning to the way you build networks..."*

- Ask if there is anything the candidate would like to add when you feel that you have explored a competency in sufficient detail before you move onto another area. After all of the competencies have been covered you should provide another opportunity for the candidate to add any further points. For example:

"I feel that I have covered all of the areas that I wanted to ask you about. Is there anything else that you feel is relevant that you would like to add?"

- Following this, you should invite and answer any questions that the candidate has and thank them for their time and repeat information about next steps/timescales
- Once the candidate has left the room you should write up your interview notes as soon as possible. If you will not be writing up your assessment about the candidate straight away jot down any final points and observations while the evidence is fresh in your mind. You'll be amazed at how quickly you can forget significant details, particularly if you have interviewed a number of people in quick succession.

Appendix: Quick Tip 4

Posing Great Questions

You might find you need to ask extra/different follow up questions to those contained in this guide. The table below lists useful types of questions that will help you to collect relevant and comprehensive information.

Open Questions	<i>Who, What, When, Where, Why, How</i>
TED Questions	<i>Tell me about a situation... Explain a little more about... Describe to me...</i>
Probing and Specific Questions	<i>What happened next? What were your specific responsibilities?</i>
Comparative Questions	<i>How does your current role compare with your previous position? How does your experience at college compare to school?</i> You can also ask them to compare their approach/behaviour with others: <i>How does your approach to customers compare with your peers? What makes you say that?</i>
Behavioural Questions	Explore their strengths, limitations, satisfactions and dissatisfactions, likes and dislikes: <i>What did you do best in planning that event? What skills do you bring to planning?</i> <i>On reflection, what could you have improved upon when planning that event?</i>
Feedback Questions	Ask them to report on feedback they have had from others, either in relation to a specific event, or more generally about that competency. For example: <i>What feedback did you get on how you approached that?</i> <i>How have your organisational skills been appraised in the past year?</i> You can also find out what they learned from the experience: <i>Now that you've had experience of planning an event, what if anything would you do differently next time?</i>

Appendix: Quick Tip 5

Assessing and Rating Candidates

Once the interview is completed it is advisable to evaluate the candidate's performance and assign a rating for each competency as soon as possible.

Step One: Review Your Interview Notes

Review your interview notes and decide which evidence supports which competency. On the whole the evidence should relate to the competency against which the question was asked but this may not always be the case. Try to ensure that all evidence is only assigned to one competency (to prevent double counting).

Use the behavioural positive and negative indicators on the Interview Rating Form to help assess the candidate's responses. These are by no means exhaustive but are tailored to represent the kind of evidence that is likely to be obtained by particular questions.

When reviewing your interview notes look for more than one piece of evidence for each competency and group this into themes and trends. Where conflicting evidence occurs try to reconcile this wherever possible.

Step Two: Rate the Candidate on Each Competency

A rating scale is a useful means of promoting accuracy and consistency in evaluation. Assessors should rate candidate behaviours in relation to each of the competencies using the rating scale below. In effect the rating summarises the extent to which a candidate has demonstrated the behaviours resulting in effective performance on a competency. As a candidate's performance more closely "fits" the competency, the higher the rating assigned.

Rating	Level	Description
5	Outstanding	Evidence of strength in this competency demonstrated consistently across all of the agreed behaviours
4	Good	Evidence of strength in this competency demonstrated across most of the agreed behaviours
3	Acceptable	Evidence of strength across some of the agreed behaviours with minor areas of less acceptable performance or inconsistency
2	Marginal	Evidence of less than acceptable performance across most of the agreed behaviours
1	Poor	Evidence of less than acceptable performance across all the agreed behaviours. No strengths demonstrated

Remember, remain objective. Decisions must be made on the basis of concrete evidence rather than on the opinions or assumptions of the interviewer. You should be prepared to admit when there is insufficient evidence upon which to decide about a particular competency and in such instance should assign the rating "Weak or Insufficient Evidence".

About great{with}talent

great{with}talent helps organisations increase levels of performance, employee engagement, and reduce staff turnover. We achieve this through a unique range of customisable services that focus specifically on engagement and retention. 'Person-organisation-fit' is central to our philosophy, and our approach focuses on understanding how individuals and organisations interact.

We've made it our mission to make our products as intuitive and user-friendly as possible. And inside each fantastic service we've included some brilliant and relevant technology. So when you use any of our services for the first time, we know it will save you money, help solve problems and create opportunity for your organisation.

Our roots are in business psychology and user-friendly web based applications. Our client base spans nearly 2000 high profile organisations, and we help them to save vast amounts of money by recruiting the right people, improving employee engagement, and ensuring their organisation is more efficient and effective.

We've proven expertise in designing and delivering questionnaires for every phase in the employee lifecycle. To date this equates to over 500,000 cases of employee data, collected globally in over 18 languages. This experience means we can create the right approach for you.

However, we're much more than an employee survey company. Our psychometric knowledge and research-based approach means we offer innovative approaches to collecting and analysing data. We then use our consultancy expertise to ensure our clients quickly understand and can take action on this data.

Our reports and analysis recognise the complexities of why people really stay or leave on an individual and group basis. This approach enables you to pinpoint exactly where and when dis-engagement occurs. And that's how great{with}talent will help your employees and your whole organisation to perform better.

