



## Example Competency Interview Questions

The theory behind competency-based interviewing is that past work behaviour is a good predictor of future job performance. When interviewers ask you competency-based questions, **they want you to talk about how you have actually tackled real problems in the past**. From this, they are trying to infer how effectively you would tackle future problems if they were to offer you a job.

In responding to a competency-based question, the most important principle is to: **Give a real example that actually happened to you**. Don't talk in broad terms about how you generally tackle those sorts of situations. Talk about a specific example.

The principle to answering these kinds of questions is STAR;

S – Describe the **Situation** you were in

T – Describe the **Task** you were faced with

A – Describe the **Action** you took

R – Describe the **Result**

R – Some people like to add an extra 'R' for **Reflection** and learning from the event.

Example Question:

"How do you deal with working under pressure?"

"I work well under pressure. For example, **(SITUATION)** recently the number of workers in our department was cut while **(TASK)** the amount of work I was given nearly doubled. **(ACTION)** I was asked by the managers to work overtime, and I managed to work efficiently and in a professional manner during a busy and stressful time. **(RESULT)** I showed efficiency and professionalism in spite of the stress."

Try to think of some good examples of the following, you shouldn't ever be asked this many competency questions but it's good to prepare answers just in case (remember to use the STAR principle in your answer)

- Tell me about a time where it was important that you worked as part of a team.
- Describe a time where you were part of a team. What positive contributions did you make?
- Think of a time where you were leading a team, how did you ensure that each member was allowed to participate?
- Tell us about a decision that you have made that was unpopular, what was your thought process and how did you deal with your colleagues' negative reactions?
- What is the biggest risk you have taken in your professional or personal life? Why did you make it and how did you handle the process?
- What do you class as your biggest failure? How did you deal with it and what have you learnt from it?
- What's the biggest challenge that you have faced in your career?
- Describe a time where you had to influence others on a significant issue. How did you approach it?
- Describe a time where you had to influence stakeholders with different agendas. What strategy did you use?
- Give an example of a project where you had to delegate to others.