

A man with glasses is sitting on a bed, looking at a laptop screen. He is wearing a black t-shirt and has his hand on his chin, appearing thoughtful. The background is a plain white wall.

handle
recruitment

WHAT IS A COMPETENCY BASED INTERVIEW?

What is competency?

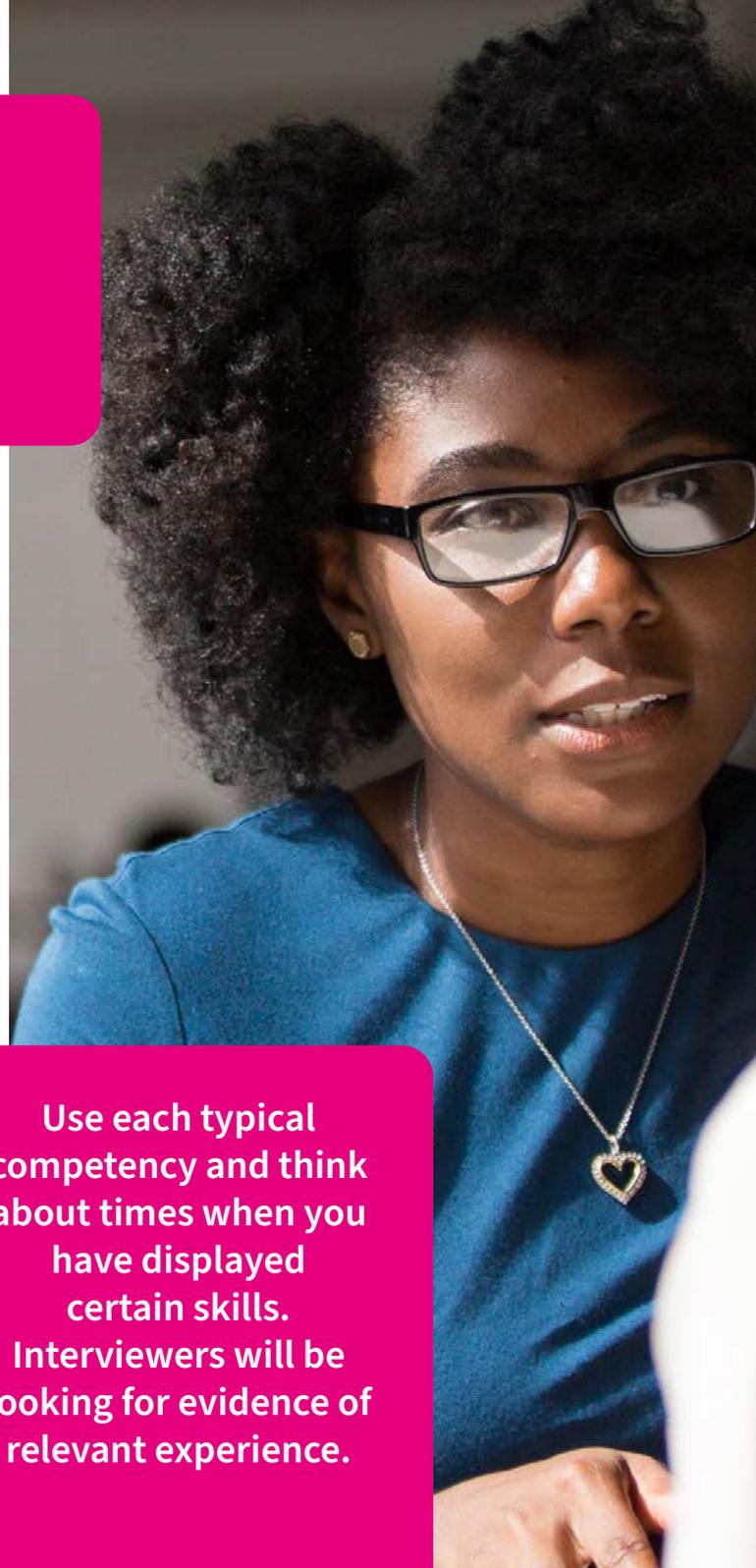
“The quality of being adequately or well qualified physically and intellectually”.

A **competency based** interview (sometimes known as a ‘behavioural interview’) is a structured style of interview where ‘core competences’ for specific job roles are identified and interview questions are built around them.

These can include:

- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Initiative
- Achievement
- Attention to Detail
- Oral Communication
- Leadership Skills
- Technical Ability
- Conflict Management

Use each typical competency and think about times when you have displayed certain skills. Interviewers will be looking for evidence of relevant experience.



Examples of competency based questions...

- Give me an example of failure and what you learnt from it.
- What is your best achievement?
- Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
- Give me an example of where you have had to prioritise your workload.
- What is your best quality and why?
- What goals did you set yourself in your last role? Did you achieve them? If not, why not?
- Give me an example of team working.
- How would your best friend describe you?
- What has been your best success and why?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ADAPTABILITY

- Tell me about a time when you changed your priorities to meet others' expectations.
- Describe a time when you altered your own behaviour to fit the situation.
- Tell me about a time when you had to change your point of view or your plans to take into account new information or changing priorities.

CLIENT FOCUS

- Give an example of how you provided service to a client/ stakeholder beyond their expectations. How did you identify the need? How did you respond?
- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a client/ stakeholder service issue.
- Describe a situation in which you acted as an advocate within your organisation for your stakeholder's needs, where there was some organisational resistance to be overcome.

COMMUNICATION

- Describe a situation you were involved in that required a multi-dimensional communication strategy.
- Give an example of a difficult or sensitive situation that required extensive communication.
- Tell me about a time when you really had to pay attention to what someone else was saying, actively seeking to understand their message.

ORGANISATIONAL AWARENESS

- Describe the culture of your organisation and give an example of how you work within this culture to achieve a goal.
- Describe the things you consider and the steps you take in assessing the viability of a new idea or initiative.
- Tell me about a time when you used your knowledge of the organisation to get what you needed.

PROBLEM SOLVING AND JUDGMENT

- Tell me about a time when you had to identify the underlying causes to a problem.
- Describe a time when you had to analyse a problem and generate a solution.
- Tell me about a situation where you had to solve a problem or make a decision that required careful thought. What did you do?

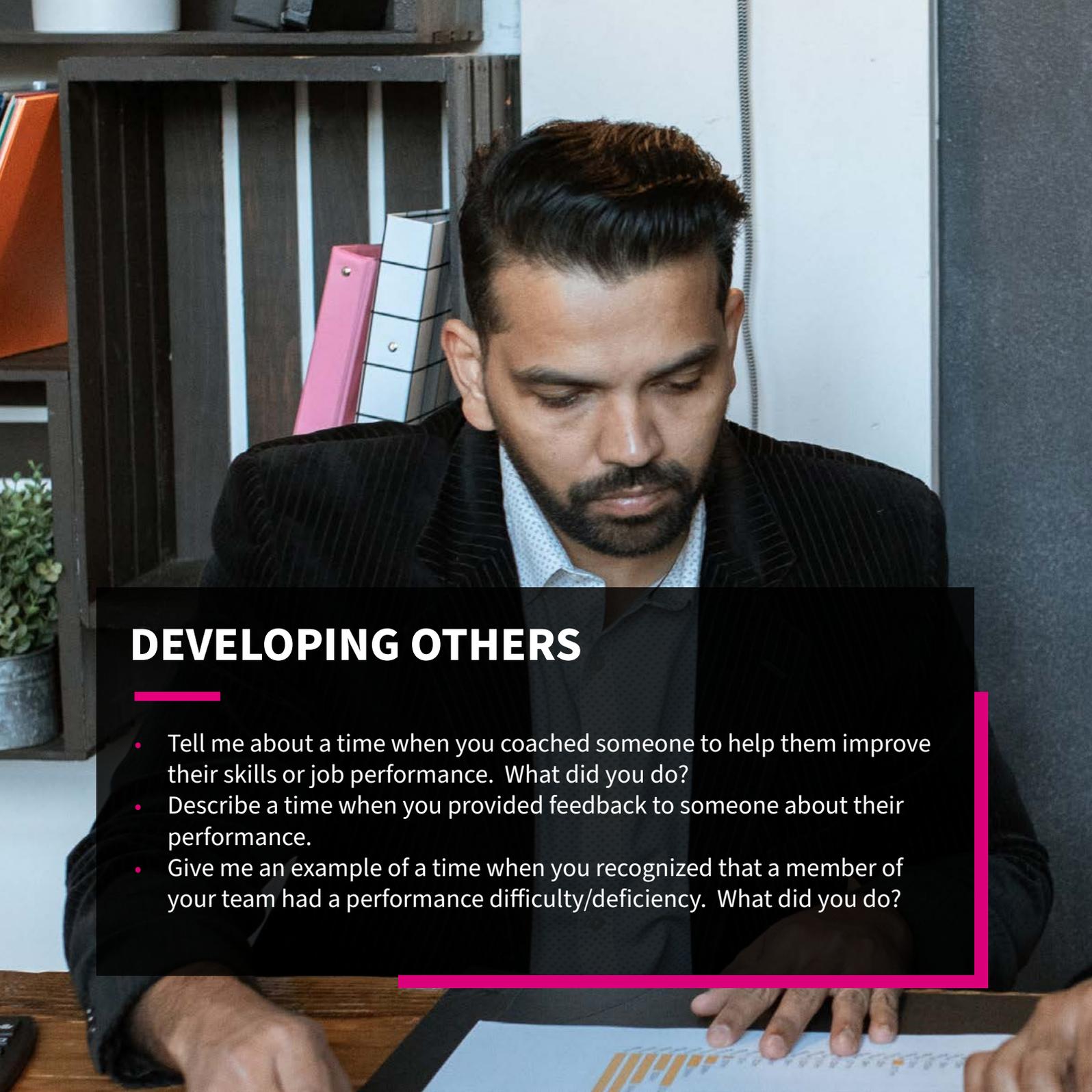
RESULTS ORIENTATION

- Tell me about a time when you set and achieved a goal.
- Tell me about a time when you improved the way things were typically done on the job.
- Describe something you have done to improve the performance of your work unit.
- Describe something you have done to maximize or improve the use of resources beyond your own work unit to achieve improved results.

A photograph of two women in a modern office environment. One woman, with glasses and a white blouse, is leaning over a desk, looking at a document. The other woman, with dark hair and a black polka-dot top, is sitting at the desk, also looking at the document. The desk has a laptop, a coffee cup, and some papers. The background shows a dark leather sofa and a framed picture on the wall.

TEAMWORK

- Tell me about a time when you worked successfully as a member of a team.
- Describe a situation where you were successful in getting people to work together effectively.
- Describe a situation in which you were a member (not a leader) of a team, and a conflict arose within the team. What did you do?

A man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a dark pinstriped suit jacket over a light-colored patterned shirt and a dark tie, is looking down at a document on a desk. The background shows an office environment with a wooden shelf holding a pink folder and a white binder, and a small potted plant on the left. A black semi-transparent box with a pink border is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing text and a list of questions.

DEVELOPING OTHERS

- Tell me about a time when you coached someone to help them improve their skills or job performance. What did you do?
- Describe a time when you provided feedback to someone about their performance.
- Give me an example of a time when you recognized that a member of your team had a performance difficulty/deficiency. What did you do?

IMPACT AND INFLUENCE



- Describe a recent situation in which you convinced an individual or a group to do something.
- Describe a time when you went through a series of steps to influence an individual or a group on an important issue.
- Describe a situation in which you needed to influence different stakeholders with differing perspectives.

INNOVATION

- Describe something you have done that was new and different for your organisation that improved performance and/or productivity.
- Tell me about a time when you identified a new, unusual or different approach for addressing a problem or task.
- Tell me about a recent problem in which old solutions wouldn't work. How did you solve the problem?



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Describe a situation in which you took a creative approach to resourcing to achieve a goal.
- Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a particular resource management issue regarding either people, materials or assets.
- Describe the options you would consider to resource a project or goal if you did not have the available resources within your own span of control.
- Describe a situation in which you established a partnership with another organisation or stakeholder to achieve a mutual goal. What steps did you take to ensure the partnership was effective?

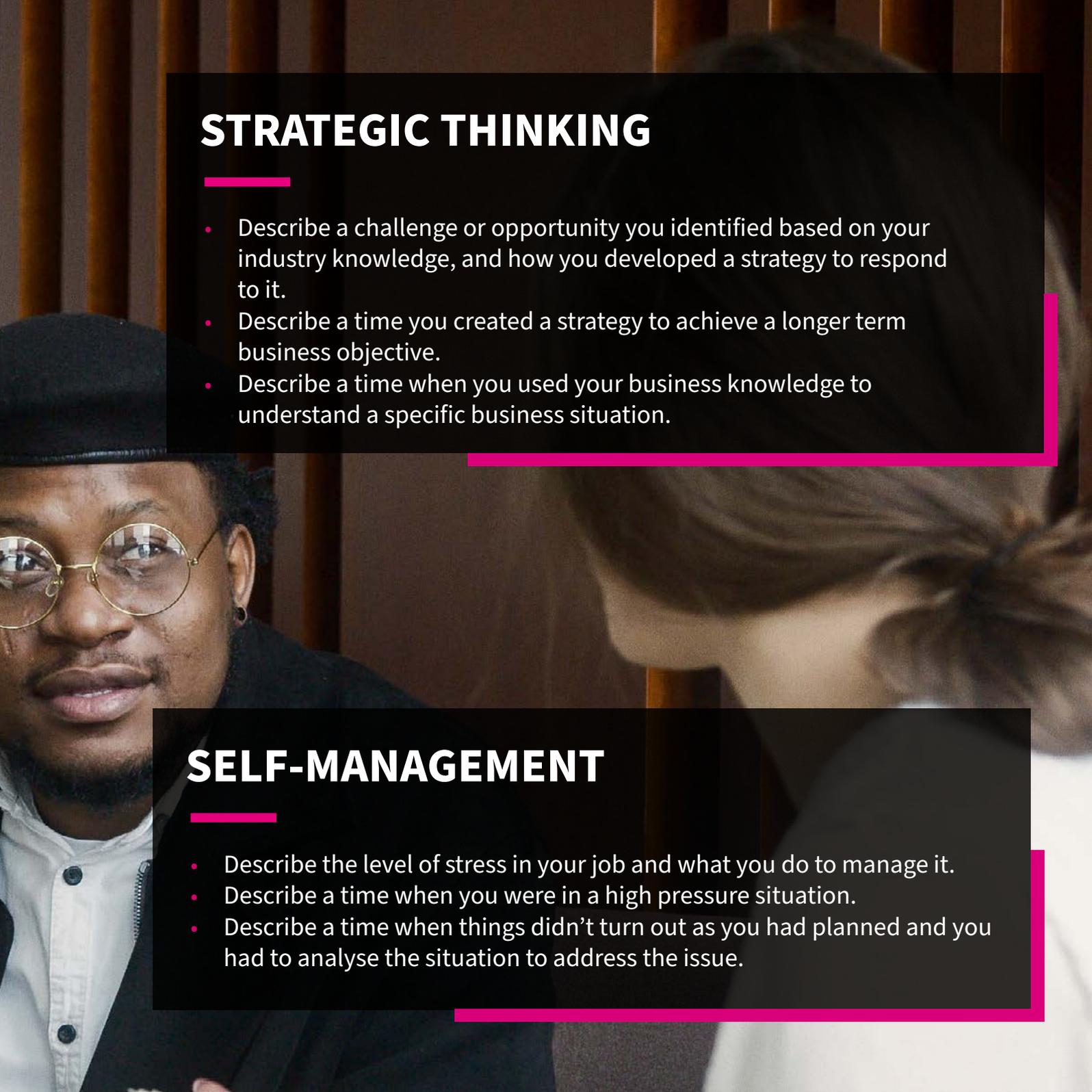


RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

- Describe a situation in which you developed an effective win/win relationship with a stakeholder or client. How did you go about building the relationship?
- Tell me about a time when you relied on a contact in your network to help you with a work-related task or problem.
- Give me an example of a time when you deliberately attempted to build rapport with a co-worker or customer.

LEADERSHIP

- Tell me about a time when you had to lead a group to achieve an objective.
- Describe a situation where you had to ensure that your “actions spoke louder than your words” to a team.
- Describe a situation where you inspired others to meet a common goal.

A background image showing a man with glasses and a woman looking at a screen. The man is on the left, wearing a black cap and glasses, looking towards the right. The woman is on the right, seen from the back, looking at a screen. The image is overlaid with two black text boxes with pink borders.

STRATEGIC THINKING

- Describe a challenge or opportunity you identified based on your industry knowledge, and how you developed a strategy to respond to it.
- Describe a time you created a strategy to achieve a longer term business objective.
- Describe a time when you used your business knowledge to understand a specific business situation.

SELF-MANAGEMENT

- Describe the level of stress in your job and what you do to manage it.
- Describe a time when you were in a high pressure situation.
- Describe a time when things didn't turn out as you had planned and you had to analyse the situation to address the issue.

ADDITIONAL EXAMPLE Q'S

- What problems do you encounter in your current role?
- How do you deal with difficult people?
- What have you done to stand out amongst your peers?
- Describe how you would go about three of your main duties?
- Which career accomplishments are you most proud of and how can it benefit our company?
- What type of decisions do you make?
- How do you feel about routine work?
- How do you feel about project work?
- Give an example of a time when you've encountered a problem and explain how you dealt with it.
- What do you enjoy most about your job?
- What do you enjoy least about your job?
- Can you read people effectively and adjust to meet their style?
- Have you ever failed to communicate to your boss? (e.g. failed to book a taxi, boss was late, you had to apologise to the client and your boss, what was the outcome? What did you learn?)
- What's the worst crisis you've had at work and how did you maintain composure?
- Tell me about a negative situation you've encountered and how you turned it into a learning opportunity?
- Tell me how you've used your good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you changed your priorities to meet others' expectations.
- Give me an example of how you provided service to a client beyond their expectations. How did you identify the need? How did you respond?



CONTINUED...

- Give an example of a difficult or sensitive situation that required extensive communication?
- Describe the culture of your organisation and give an example of how you work within this culture to achieve a goal.
- Describe a situation where you were successful in getting people to work together effectively.
- Tell me about a time when you successfully conveyed your ideas to an individual or group so that they were able to understand and retain the message.
- How do you manage your own time and objectives?
- Describe a time when you had to work exceptionally hard to provide great service to a client. What did you do and what was the outcome?
- Give me an example of the different approaches you have used when persuading your team, colleagues or manager to agree with your views?
- Describe a time when you had to build a collaborative relationship either within your department or outside in order to achieve results?

ABOUT HANDLE

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Handle Recruitment
UK House
180 Oxford Street
London
W1D 1NN
T. 020 7569 9999
E. info@handle.co.uk

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