BLACKBIRD FOR TRAINING

Competency-Based Interviewing and Selection Skills

26 – 30 July 2027
Geneva (Switzerland)



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Competency-based interviewing is a structured way of selecting staff in which every candidate is asked about past behaviour linked to the competencies a role needs, and answers are scored against agreed standards. This one-week course on competency-based interviewing and selection skills is for hiring managers and HR generalists, and it ends with each delegate building an interview kit for one live vacancy. Blackbird Training Centre runs this course in competency-based interviewing and selection.

Introduction

Three methods anchor the course. A competency framework describes the behaviours that separate effective from less effective performance in a role. The STAR technique, short for Situation, Task, Action and Result, structures questions and follow-up probes so that answers contain usable evidence. Behaviourally anchored rating scales attach a written example of behaviour to each score, so that interviewers rate the same answer the same way. The level is practitioner: no prior HR training is assumed. Teaching relies on role-play, with delegates interviewing, being interviewed and observing, using vacancies from retail banking and hospital administration.

Course Objectives

- Distinguish recruitment from selection and apply a job analysis to define the competencies a vacancy requires.
- Compare structured with unstructured interviews and justify a fully structured format for a given role.
- Distinguish behavioural from situational questions and select the right type for each competency.
- Apply the STAR technique to probe answers until they contain enough evidence to score.
- Interpret behaviourally anchored rating scales to score answers consistently across a panel.
- Compare common interviewer biases and select controls that reduce their effect on the final decision.

Target Audience

- Line managers who hire for their own teams, deciding which candidate's evidence best meets the role.
- HR generalists and officers who coordinate hiring, judging whether a selection process is consistent and fair.
- Supervisors and team leaders new to interview panels, choosing which questions to ask and how to score them.
- Recruitment coordinators and assistants, deciding how to shortlist applicants against agreed criteria.
- Department heads who chair panels, judging how to resolve disagreement between interviewers' scores.



Course Outline

Day 1: Role Requirements and Competency Profiles

- Recruitment vs Selection: Attracting Applicants Compared With Choosing Between Them
- Recruitment and Selection Lifecycle: Stages From Vacancy Approval to Offer
- Job Analysis: Interviews, Questionnaires and Critical Incidents for Role Requirements
- Competency Profiles: Converting Duties Into Observable Behaviours and Indicators
- Job Descriptions and Person Specifications: Linking Role Requirements to Business Goals

Day 2: Building a Suitable Candidate Pool

- Internal vs External Sourcing: Promotion and Referrals Compared With Open Advertising
- Recruitment Channels: Job Boards, Professional Networks and Agencies by Role Type
- Job Advertisements: Accurate, Inclusive Adverts Built on the Competency Profile
- Employer Branding and Candidate Experience: Communication From Application to Decision
- CV Screening: Applying Must-Have Criteria Consistently to Shortlist Applicants

Day 3: Structured Competency-Based Interviews

- Structured vs Unstructured Interviews: Consistent Questions Compared With Free Conversation
- Behavioural and Situational Questions: Past-Evidence and Hypothetical Formats Explained
- STAR Technique: Probing Situation, Task, Action and Result for Full Evidence
- Role-Specific Question Design: Writing Questions Mapped to Each Competency
- Active Listening and Non-Verbal Cues: Note-Taking Without Over-Reading Body Language

Day 4: Scoring, Assessment and Bias Control

- Gut Feel vs Anchored Scoring: Impressions Compared With Behaviourally Anchored Rating Scales
- Assessment Methods Beyond Interviews: Work Samples, Assessment Centres and Psychometric Tests
- Objective Evaluation Criteria: Weighting Competencies and Recording Evidence Against Scales
- Interview Bias: Halo, Contrast, Similarity and Confirmation Errors and Their Controls
- Panel Wash-Up Meetings: Combining Interviewer Scores Into a Defensible Decision

Day 5: Fair Decisions and the Interview Kit

- Legal vs Ethical Duties: Non-Discrimination Requirements Compared With Good Hiring Practice
- Diversity and Fairness: Inclusive Panels, Reasonable Adjustments and Consistent Treatment
- Data-Driven Selection Decisions: Decision Matrices, Reference Checks and Offer Recommendations
- Hiring Measures and Continuous Improvement: Time to Hire, Quality of Hire, Early Turnover
- Interview Kit: Finalising Profile, Questions, Scoring Guide and Decision Matrix



Skills You Will Gain

- Competency profiling
- Behavioural question writing
- STAR probing
- Anchored rating
- Bias recognition
- Panel facilitation
- Evidence-based shortlisting

Why Attend This Course

- From asking each candidate different questions to running the same structured interview for everyone.
- From accepting general answers to probing with STAR until each answer gives specific, scorable evidence.
- From deciding on first impressions to scoring against written anchors and discussing evidence as a panel.
- From improvising each hire to using an interview kit with a competency profile, questions, scoring guide and decision matrix.

Conclusion

Seen simply, competency-based selection replaces opinion about a candidate with evidence of what the candidate has actually done, collected and scored the same way for everyone. The course clarifies how recruitment differs from selection, structured from unstructured interviews, and behavioural from situational questions. It suits line managers and HR generalists who sit on interview panels and make hiring decisions, rather than recruitment leads designing workforce plans and employer brand strategy across a whole organisation.

Course FAQs

What is competency-based interviewing?

Competency-based interviewing is an interview method in which questions target the behaviours a role requires, candidates describe real past examples, and interviewers score the evidence against agreed rating scales instead of overall impressions.

What is the difference between behavioural and situational questions in competency-based interviewing?

Behavioural questions ask what a candidate did in a real past situation; situational questions ask what the candidate would do in a hypothetical one. Behavioural questions suit experienced candidates, while situational questions help where relevant experience is limited.



Which methods does competency-based interviewing training follow?

The course uses competency frameworks to define role requirements, the STAR technique to structure questions and probes, and behaviourally anchored rating scales to score answers, followed by a panel wash-up and decision matrix.

Is competency-based interviewing training right for a line manager who hires staff?

Yes. A line manager who shortlists, interviews and chooses team members applies every step taught. An HR leader responsible for recruitment strategy and employer brand across the organisation may prefer an advanced recruitment course.

What do delegates produce in competency-based interviewing and selection training?

Each delegate builds an interview kit for one live vacancy: a competency profile, a set of behavioural and situational questions, a scoring guide with written anchors and a decision matrix for the panel.

