**Competency Based Questions - Workbook**

**Examples of Competency Interview Questions and Answers**

Competency Question:

Give an example of when you've led a team.

Answer:

I have led a team on a number of occasions. For example, when I was coach of my university football league. Not only do I believe that I am an efficient leader; I also believe that I work well as part of a team and can take instructions and work simultaneously with other people or colleagues. I have the ability to communicate among different team members effectively, ensuring that the message I am try to put across to members is done so with clarity. This ultimately enables me to be an effective and successful team leader. Providing direction, support and guidance is the key to success.

Competency Question:

Give an example of when you've overcome a problem at work.

Answer:

I have not really encountered many problems with work as this will be my first time in full-time work, though I do have deadlines to meet both at work in my part-time job and also in college. At college I have deadlines to meet and have tasks that need to be completed; these are often challenging, so I plan my time around them and also do what I can to deliver the best and highest quality work.

Exercise 1

XYZ Corporation wants its employees to be technically competent, to be able to set priorities and be result oriented. XYZ Corporation has identified 3 key competencies that would be on top of the list when they interview candidates.

1. Functional-Technical Skills
2. Drive for Results
3. Priority Setting

Assume that you have applied for a job in that company. Answer the following questions asked by the interviewer.

**Functional-Technical Skills Competency**

**Question 1:** Please describe a period of time in which you *fully applied* your functional and technical knowledge and skills and performed at your *highest level*. What was the situation? Describe your performance or accomplishments and to achieve them.

**Your response:**

**Question 2:** Describe a situation, task, or project for which you carefully selected the tools, technology, and/or processes you used. Which did you use “as is” and which—if any—did you redesign or have to invent? What were the results?

**Your response:**

**Question 3:** Briefly describe several situations in which you shared your technical knowledge or skills with others. What prompted you to share? How did you share it and what were the results?

**Your response:**

**Question 4:** Describe a situation that required you to learn new technical knowledge and skills. What was it that you needed to learn and how new was it to you? How did you go about learning it and how much time did you commit to it? How did you apply what you learned and what were the results?

**Your response:**

**Drive for Results Competency**

**Question 1:** Share the most difficult and complex situation in which you set clear, lofty goals for yourself (and others, if applicable) and then pursued those goals with enthusiasm and energy.

**Your response:**

**Question 2:** Think back to a complex and challenging time in which you anticipated obstacles and were prepared with a contingency plan so as not to hinder the drive to the goal and, if applicable, kept others involved on track also.

**Your response:**

**Question 3:** Describe two situations that demonstrate your reputation for success and quality performance in the eyes of your peers and superiors.

**Your response:**

**Priority Setting Competency**

**Question 1:** Describe a time when you kept yourself or others focused on completing high-payoff, complex tasks instead of getting sidetracked into trivial, lower-priority tasks. How did you zero in on the most critical tasks to accomplish? How did you keep yourself—or others—organized and focused?

**Your response:**

**Question 2:** It can be challenging to coordinate the efforts of multiple people and keep them focused. Describe a specific time when you had to do this. What approach did you use to get them coordinated? How did you keep them focused? What challenges—if any—did you overcome? What were the results?

**Your response:**

**Question 3:** Describe a situation in which you not only set goals or created a plan, but also took time to proactively anticipate obstacles and create contingency plans. What challenges or obstacles did you anticipate? What contingencies did you develop? Which did you implement? What was the result?

**Your response:**

**Given Below are extra questions that you may want to try answering.**

**CORE COMPETENCIES**

**Adaptability**

1. Tell me about a time when you changed your priorities to meet others' expectations.
2. Describe a time when you altered your own behaviour to fit the situation.
3. 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**

1. 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?
2. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a client/stakeholder service issue.
3. Describe a situation in which you acted as an advocate within your organization for your stakeholder’s needs, where there was some organizational resistance to be overcome.

**Communication**

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

**Organizational awareness**

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

**Problem solving and judgment**

1. Tell me about a time when you had to identify the underlying causes to a problem.
2. Describe a time when you had to analyze a problem and generate a solution.
3. 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**

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

**Teamwork**

1. Tell me about a time when you worked successfully as a member of a team.
2. Describe a situation where you were successful in getting people to work together effectively.
3. 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?

**ROLE-SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES**

**Developing others**

1. Tell me about a time when you coached someone to help them improve their skills or job performance. What did you do?
2. Describe a time when you provided feedback to someone about their performance.
3. 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**

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

**Innovation**

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

**Leadership**

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

**Relationship building**

1. 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?
2. Tell me about a time when you relied on a contact in your network to help you with a work-related task or problem.
3. Give me an example of a time when you deliberately attempted to build rapport with a co-worker or customer.

**Resource management**

1. Describe a situation in which you took a creative approach to resourcing to achieve a goal.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a particular resource management issue regarding people, materials or assets.
3. 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.
4. Describe a situation in which you established a partnership with another organization or stakeholder to achieve a mutual goal. What steps did you take to ensure the partnership was effective?

**Self-management**

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

**Strategic thinking**

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