



Preparing for a job interview

IAEA

*A webinar
by
Jack Preston (Recruitment Officer, IAEA)*



human
resources

About Me

- Jack Preston, Recruitment Officer at the IAEA
- Previously worked in recruitment in the nuclear industry in the UK
- Joined the IAEA to experience working in an international nuclear environment

Objectives of the Webinar

- Understand the typical format of IAEA interviews
- Learn what types of questions you are likely to be asked
- Become a better prepared and more confident candidate



human
resources

Congratulations!

- The IAEA has approximately 200 applications for every Professional level position
- The average number of interviews for each Professional level role is five
- If you are called for interview, your application was in the top 2.5%



What format should I expect?

- Nearly all interviews are via video conference
- Interviews are normally scheduled to last 1 hour
- On average an interview has 10 questions
- Normally there are five interviewers on the interview Panel
- Time for your questions at the end

Why are so many people on the interview Panel?

- Hiring Manager
- Technical Expert
- HR Representative
- Administrative Officer
- Someone from another Department



human
resources

What type of questions will I be asked?

- Biographical
- Technical
- Competency-based



human
resources

Old Favorites

9 out of 10 job interviews will include the following questions:

- Please take five minutes to introduce yourself
- Why have you applied for this position?
- What do you know about the IAEA?



What is a competency?

- Combination of knowledge, skills and behavior
- Driving a car



human
resources

What would a typical competency be?

Conflict Management

- Steps up to conflicts, seeing them as opportunities; reads situations quickly; good at focused listening; can hammer out tough agreements and settle disputes equitably; can find common ground and get cooperation with minimum noise.



human
resources

Why use competencies?

Designed to see how you've demonstrated a competency in the past to predict how you will react in a similar situation in the future



human
resources

How are these types of questions analyzed?

SMART methodology

- **S**ituation (what was the **specific event or task**?)
- **M**ission (what objectives did they see as the key things to **resolve**?)
- **A**ction taken (what did they **actually do**?)
- **R**esults achieved (what did they **actually achieve**?)
- **T**eachability (what did they **actually learn** from the experience?)



What did YOU do???

- Common mistake- 'we did...
- Teamwork is important, but what was YOUR role.
- Make it easy for the interviewer



Example Question

What is the toughest dispute you've helped settle?

Why was this particularly tough?

Example Answer

Situation

“I was working on a project with two colleagues who just didn’t get along. The situation got so bad that they weren’t communicating and it was affecting the quality of work that was being produced. The project manager was avoiding addressing the issue as he said that ‘it wasn’t his place to intervene,’ but as we kept missing KPIs the situation became increasingly untenable”

Example Answer

Mission

“If nothing were to happen, I knew that the project would fail. Even though I wasn’t in charge, I decided to see if I could assist my colleagues work through their differences.”



human
resources

Example Answer

Action

“The first thing that I did was to speak to each of my colleagues alone over coffee to see if they would open up to me and reveal the cause of the tension. I found out that both felt that the other was not ‘pulling their weight’ and resented having to pick up the extra work. After this I reviewed the Project Management Plan and noticed that some of our team’s roles and responsibilities were not clearly defined. I created a revised plan and submitted it to the Project Manager for consideration. Once the PM had agreed to the changes, I asked him to call a ‘clear the air meeting’ where the new roles and responsibilities could be discussed”



Example Answer

Results

“Although the meeting was tense at first, once agreement had been reached on the defined roles and responsibilities, some of the tension seemed to go. The next day I invited the whole team for lunch and we slowly started to get along better as a unit. The pair who had not got along previously even managed to say a few words to one another. Over the next few weeks the early phases of a new working relationship started to develop for them and while it is now it is still not as strong as it could be, they are communicating regularly which is helping the team to get back on track and meet their KPIs”



human
resources

Example Answer

Teachability

“This experience has taught me the importance of having clearly defined roles and responsibilities in a team’s project plan. It has also helped me realize that good teamwork is the responsibility of every team member and not just that of the project manager”

How can I prepare for this style of question?

- Think about what competencies may be important to the role
- The IAEA's core competencies are:
 - Communication
 - Analytical and Strategic Thinking
 - Program and individual performance
 - Decision-Making
 - Knowledge Management and Development
 - Teamwork / Relationships
 - Change Orientation



human
resources

How can I prepare for this style of question?

- Think about when you have demonstrated these in the past
- Make sure the examples are fresh in your mind
- Remember the SMART method

What not to say

- Use 'we' in your examples too often
- Assume that everyone in the room has the same technical knowledge
- Assume that everyone is familiar with the structure of US institutions
- Try not to use acronyms wherever possible



What happens next?

- Psychometric Testing
- Internal review process- lasts on average 8-12 weeks



Final Thought – Be Confident

Your application form has already convinced the interview Panel that you are qualified on paper to do the role.

- ✓ Be friendly, be active - make it easy for the interviewers – but take it seriously!
- ✓ Be professional and answer questions – an interview is a structured conversation with a purpose
- ✓ You can only win! Either a job or people who will know you after the interview. Anything can happen in the future... Interviews are a forum to present yourself

Merci

Thank you

谢谢

Gracias

Danke

شكرا

Спасибо

For More Information:

Argonne National Laboratory supports U.S. citizens interested in employment with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by:

- ✓ Providing personalized, field-specific job alerts
- ✓ Sharing tips for applying and interviewing
- ✓ Tracking applications through the selection process
- ✓ Facilitating networking opportunities
- ✓ Providing information on transitioning to Vienna

Email: IAEAStaffing@anl.gov

Visit: international.anl.gov/careers

Join: [Americans @ IAEA](#) on LinkedIn