



Essential Skills Assessment Tool

Assessing Teamwork

Questions

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Introduction

This guide has been created to assist supervisors and employers in the Wood Manufacturing industry assess teamwork in an interview with potential employees, and in the workplace for current employees.

What is Teamwork?

Teamwork is working collaboratively with others to achieve organizational goals. Some ways that an employee or job candidate could display this skill may be through one or more of the following actions:

- Deals honestly and fairly with others, showing consideration and respect for individual differences.
- Does own fair share of the work.
- Seeks assistance from other team members, as needed.
- Assists other team members.
- Shares all relevant information with others.
- Assumes additional responsibilities to facilitate the achievement of team goals.
- Helps build consensus among team members.

Teamwork Guide

This guide is based on behavioural-based interviewing, which will be discussed in more detail. Though the information provided could be used in interviews to screen new candidates, the same questions could also be used in employee performance evaluations or in personal self-evaluations completed by employees.

The guide will begin with an overview of the behavioural-based interview and conclude with questions which can be used to assess teamwork in the workplace.

Behavioural-Based Interviewing

Behaviourally based questions are a good alternative to the situational question and have been **shown to be one of the most effective structured interviewing strategies**. These types of questions are based on the premise that:

Past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour

Past behaviour is often used to predict future behaviour in all facets of life. Banks lend money more readily to people with a proven track record of paying loans back. People continue to go back to stores that have given them good service.

The same concept is used in the behavioural interview. The questions are directed at obtaining information about the candidate's past experiences and accomplishments in order to make a reliable prediction about how the candidate is likely to perform on the job. For example:

"Can you give me an example of a time where you had to deal with a particularly difficult student?"

If the target job involves teaching students, the interviewer would gather information on the candidate's teaching experience in past jobs. If the target job requires handling marital disputes, then the interviewer would collect information on the candidate's past experience in handling similar conflict situations. **To effectively predict future behaviour, behavioural data does not need to come from past jobs that are identical to the target job.** The data can include other life experiences, such as volunteer work, that provide information on the candidate's job-related competencies. For example, an interviewer can evaluate the sales ability of someone who has never held a sales job by asking questions about situations in which the individual has had to persuade others, sell ideas to fellow workers, or influence a group.

The behavioural interview is focused on gathering examples of how candidates performed in previous jobs and situations that require the same kinds of competencies as the target job.

In contrast to the situational interview that asks candidates what they would or should do, behavioural interviews focus on what the candidate has **actually done**.

All of these types of questions can be included in the Competency-based Interview, striking a balance throughout the interview. However, since behavioural questions have been proven to provide one of the best indications of future job performance, as much as possible, the majority of the questions in the interview should be behaviourally-based.

Assessing Teamwork: Behavioural Questions

What to assess?

- Deal honestly and fairly with others, showing consideration and respect for individual differences.
- Do own fair share of the work.
- Seek assistance from other team members, as needed.
- Assist other team members.
- Share all relevant information with others.
- Assume additional responsibilities to facilitate the achievement of team goals.
- Help build consensus among team members.

Question 1

Provide an example of a time when you required assistance from other team members to complete a project or activity.

- What was the situation?
- How did you seek the help of your team?
- How did you agree on the division of tasks?
- What was the outcome of the situation?

Question 2

In team environments we sometimes encounter difficult situations with other team members. Tell me about a time when you felt uncomfortable with a co-worker due to differences in outlook or perspectives.

- Describe the situation, your role and that of the other person.
- What was the nature of those differences?
- What did you do to deal with the situation?
- How did the situation impact on the rest of the team?
- How did the team deal with the issue?

Question 3

How have you helped someone else to complete a project or activity in the past?

- Describe the situation and your role.
- Were you in a position to offer help or was it requested?
- Was the project one that you were already working on?
- What were you helping out with?
- How did you help?

Question 4

While working with a team, have you ever volunteered to take on additional tasks in order to support the group's efforts?

- What was the situation?
- Why did you volunteer to take on those tasks?
- How was this received by others on the team?
- Were you able to complete these additional tasks?