



Senior Management Interviews – Sample Questions

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These sample questions should provide you with some ideas as to questions that might be asked to draw out a candidates's capabilities against a range of common competences associated with any relatively senior management position.

Competence Area	Requirements	Sample Questions
1. Writing Skills	<i>Writing reports, business plans, business emails/letters, promotional literature, etc.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What type of writing have you done in your previous positions? What makes you believe that you are good at it?</i> • <i>In your opinion, what are the main challenges when preparing written communications of all types?</i> • <i>What positive and negative feedback have you received about your writing skills? Give an example where one of your reports was criticised.</i> • <i>How do you plan the writing of a report?</i>
2. Presentation Skills	<i>Delivering talks and using PowerPoint and other Visual Aids effectively when presenting to groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What experience have you had in delivering presentations? What feedback have you received on your performance?</i> • <i>What do you think is your greatest strength as a presenter? Weakness?</i> • <i>How do you prepare for an important presentation?</i>
3. Project Management Skills	<i>Taking ownership for, and effectively managing projects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tell me about your experience of project management to date— give me a specific example of a time when you have managed a project.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>If you were to plan that project again, is there anything that you would do differently?</i> • <i>Describe a situation where one of your projects suffered a setback due to an unexpected change in circumstances. How did you keep things on track?</i> • <i>What tools and resources do you use to help you manage projects?</i> • <i>How do you prepare and monitor an appropriate budget for any given project?</i>
4. Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills	<i>Analysing problems, using structured problem solving techniques and making effective decisions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tell me a little about the most challenging problem that you have had to solve in a work situation? How did you devise and implement a solution?</i> • <i>Tell me about a decision that you made, which you knew would be unpopular with a group of people. How did you handle the decision-making process and how did you manage expectations?</i> • <i>How do you enlist support of your staff to establish a common approach to solving a problem?</i> • <i>What was one of the most difficult decisions that you ever had to make?</i>

<p>5. Management Skills</p>	<p><i>Managing large multi-level teams with respect to setting goals and priorities and achieving results</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What strengths do you think you have that makes others look up to you?</i> • <i>How do you think your employees would describe working for you?</i> • <i>What do you think employees are looking for from work-life today? How do you get the best out of your employees?</i> • <i>Give us an example of where you had to deal with conflict within your team. How did you manage the situation? What would you do differently next time?</i> • <i>What type of responsibilities do you delegate? Give examples of projects where you made best use of delegation.</i>
<p>6. Managing Innovation</p>	<p><i>Defining and managing processes for managing innovation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tell us a little about a project or situation where you felt that the conventional approach would not be suitable. What challenges did you face and how did you address them? How did you define a new or better way of doing things?</i> • <i>What do you believe are the important elements of an effective process for managing innovation within a business?</i> • <i>How in the past have you involved your employees in coming up with new ideas and approaches?</i>
<p>7. Communication</p>	<p><i>Ability to communicate effectively with multiple stakeholders</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What experience have you had communicating with diverse stakeholder groups?</i> • <i>Describe a situation where you were able to influence others on an important issue.</i> • <i>How do you prepare for an important meeting?</i> • <i>What do you feel are the most important steps to take to get the best from your meetings?</i> • <i>What do you think your past colleagues would say about you as regards your ability to communicate?</i>
<p>8. Information Management and ICT Skills</p>	<p><i>Capability to analyse and assimilate information and the effective use of ICT resources</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What IT Software are you competent in using?</i> • <i>Given me an example of where you think IT could be more effectively applied in your current role than it is at present?</i>
<p>9. Managing Change</p>	<p><i>Championing and managing change throughout the business</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tell me about the biggest change in a work situation that you have had to manage. How did you cope with it?</i> • <i>What do you believe are the most critical steps to take when managing any change?</i> • <i>What are some of the pitfalls to avoid?</i>

<p>10. Relationship Management</p>	<p><i>Developing and maintaining partnerships with internal and external stakeholders</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who do you see as the main stakeholders for our business and what do you believe are their priorities needs and expectations?</i> • <i>How would you set about establishing/improving communication with these stakeholders? How would you measure the effectiveness of those efforts?</i> • <i>Describe a project where you needed to involve input from key stakeholders. How did you manage those relationships?</i> • <i>How would you establish rapport with others who do not report to you but from whom you must obtain input/support to help you achieve your goals?</i>
<p>11. Business Awareness</p>	<p><i>Understanding the internal and external business environments</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do you keep up-to-date with local, national, and international trends in our industry?</i> • <i>What do you think will be some of the critical trends that you would need to be aware of in relation to your new role?</i> • <i>What partnerships/alliances do you think will be vital in achieving your goals in the new role?</i>
<p>12. Leadership</p>	<p><i>Developing and sharing a vision for the business and capability to lead others in the desired direction</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you think are the fundamentals to successfully leading any business?</i> • <i>How would you describe your leadership style? Give specific examples of how you apply this style?</i> • <i>Describe a project or situation where you had to use different leadership styles to reach your goal.</i> • <i>Have there ever been situations where you were less successful as a leader than you would have wanted to be? What did you learn from those events?</i> • <i>What, in your opinion, are the critical factors that can help build effective organisations?</i> • <i>How would you best motivate a team to deliver the desired results?</i>
<p>13. Achievement Orientation</p>	<p><i>Striving to meet goals and objectives within agreed deadlines, facilitates and seeks to implement agreed decisions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tell us about a recent accomplishment that demonstrates a success in your present position</i> • <i>Give an example of a time you worked under heavy stress and the sacrifices you made to achieve a certain goal?</i> • <i>What would you intend to accomplish in the first year of your position?</i> • <i>What criteria do you use to determine your own personal effectiveness?</i> • <i>How do you handle a heavy workload?</i>

<p>14. Strategic Planning</p>	<p><i>Expertise in devising and implementing business strategy</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What experience have you had to date in developing and implementing strategy? Tell us a little bit about how that worked in practice?</i> • <i>What do you think are the key strategic goals associated with this role?</i> • <i>How would you intend to measure strategic effectiveness if you were successful in attaining this post?</i>
<p>15. Negotiation Skills</p>	<p><i>Negotiating effectively with a range of internal and external stakeholders</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Give an example where you used your negotiating skills to achieve an outcome that was in everyone's best interest?</i> • <i>How do you deal with situations where you disagree with proposals by your superiors?</i> • <i>What traits/qualities do you possess that you feel make you a good negotiator?</i>
<p>16. Time Management</p>	<p><i>Managing time effectively to ensure delivery on personal and business targets and objectives</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are the key goals and targets that you have in your current position? How do you ensure their achievement?</i> • <i>Tell me how you plan your week?</i> • <i>With reference to a day's work, what steps do you take to organize and prioritize your tasks?</i>
<p>17. Human Resource Management</p>	<p><i>Managing all legal and operational aspects of human resources relevant to the role</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What experience have you had in the recruitment and selection of senior employees/managers?</i> • <i>Tell us a little bit about what you currently do to develop your key employees?</i> • <i>What steps do you take to understand your employees or colleagues' personalities? Give an example where you found it hard to adjust to one particular employee/colleague?</i> • <i>How do you provide feedback to your employees and how do you currently recognise their achievements?</i>
<p>18. Financial Management</p>	<p><i>Directing or supporting budget preparation, implementation, and evaluation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Describe what role you have had to date in budget preparation, implementation, and administration?</i> • <i>Give us a brief overview of how you would prepare a budget for any project?</i> • <i>How do you ensure costs are controlled in your current role?</i>
<p>19. Monitoring and Evaluation</p>	<p><i>Capacity in monitoring and benchmarking of performance</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do you ensure that the direction that you give to your employees is actually followed through upon?</i> • <i>What key performance measures do you use to monitor performance in your current role? How do you currently compare them internally and externally to determine their effectiveness?</i>