

## Interview Preparation Guide

**Uisce Éireann is committed to the continuous growth of our employees, encouraging development, and actively supporting learning and on-the-job training. Along with a competitive salary, our employees enjoy career progression and employee assistance programmes.**

We are an equal opportunity employer and recruit from different backgrounds and cultures. We are an Engineers Ireland CPD accredited company.

Thank you for your interest in our company and we look forward to meeting with you over the coming days and welcome the opportunity to discuss our organisation and your background and experience in more detail with you.

To ensure that you have a better understanding of the process and to help with your preparation we have developed this short guide for your reference. **Please take time to read the attached and prepare for your upcoming interview.**

### The Interview Purpose



The purpose of the interview is to understand a bit more about your experience and skills set but also to afford the interviewers an insight into how you work from a behavioural or competency point of view. It is also an important opportunity for you to understand the organisation and role and assess how it fits with your overall career objectives.

### The Interview Structure

- The interview will typically take between 45-60 minutes.
- A Panel Interview will have three interviewers – typically this will be the Hiring Manager, Human Resources, and an appropriate Manager/Functional Expert.

- Interview will be competency based and you will be expected to use examples from your own past or present work experiences to answer the interview questions  
*What is a competency?*  
*A competency is the skill, knowledge or experience that has been identified as necessary to ensure effective performance in a particular job or role. These have been carefully considered and decided on before the interview takes place. It is on these areas or competencies that you will be examined during the interview.*

## The Interview Process

Interviews will be structured and will focus on three sections

1. Brief Summary of your **background and experience** to date (as the interviewers will already have had the benefit of reviewing your CV and Screening notes this will be a high-level overview)
2. **Behavioural Questions** to understand how you typically approach challenges and opportunities in your current/previous roles.
3. **Role Specific questions** which will explore more job-related knowledge or skills.

## How to prepare for the interview

### Background and Experience

Review the job description and consider how your skills, education and experience compare with the skills that the job requires.

Prepare a summary of your experience to date, a good tip is to start with your most recent experience and give a high-level overview of your experience to date.

Make sure to focus on any previous experience you feel is relevant to the position you are applying for.

Keep it brief, this should take longer than 5 minutes to complete.

### Behavioural Questions

A large part of the interview will focus on how you work and how you have demonstrated some key competencies that we feel are required to be successful at Uisce Éireann.

In Uisce Éireann we have 8 behavioural competencies, and our questions will focus on **three** of these areas

1. Working Effectively with Others
2. Making Informed Decision
3. Build and Maintain relationships
4. Communicate with Purpose
5. Developed Self and Others

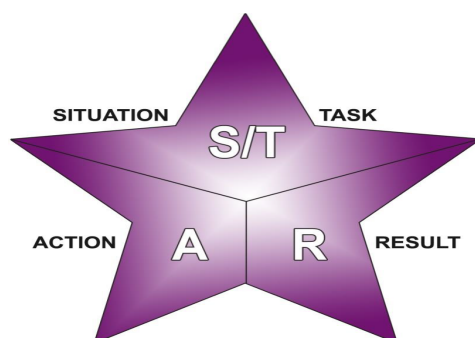
6. Enable change and Continuous Improvement
7. Deliver Key Business Results
8. Drive service excellence

We are looking to evaluate specific examples of how you have demonstrated these competencies and skills in your current (or previous) roles and what business/technical results have been obtained.

Behavioural questions are concerned with **how you work** and not simply what you do, we use them to understand how you have approached business/technical challenges in context of your role and organisation.

A strong behavioural example should be answered in a structured format such as the STAR technique

STAR – Situation/Task, Action and Result



Situation/Task = Why? Action = What done and how done? Result = Effect of Action
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It will include a **description** of the **Situation or Task** that you are going to use as an example

It will include an **explanation of what actions** or decision you personally took

It will include a **summary of the results** of these actions/decisions and what impact they had on your role/organisation.

#### Example of a Behavioural Question and Response.

Focus Area: Enable Change and Continuous Improvement - You adapt your approach, constructively challenge thinking, and proactively identify innovative ways to enhance performance and increase efficiencies

Importance to Uisce Éireann: At Uisce Éireann we encourage employees at all levels to take ownership of their role and to identify, where possible, new ways of doing things that will create efficiency and increased service levels across the organisation. This focus area is designed to understand how you facilitate change in your role and what approaches you have taken and what success/results you have achieved.

### Sample Question:

- Tell me about a time when you used initiative to solve a problem.
- Tell me about a time when you worked as a team to complete a difficult task.
- Tell me about a time when you faced change, and how you dealt with it.

### We have included a further example below outlining the required response in the STAR format

Can you tell us about a time when you challenged conventional thinking about a business process or technical solution – what made you challenge this, what steps did you take to get your point across and what were the results.

### Sample Answer

I will use an example which involves the procurement process and in particular contracts management for our vendors.

- **Situation** We used to do all contract generation and signature manually which involved a lot of emails and time for both the procurement teams and the business owners themselves – as the business got bigger this was not a scalable solution
- **Task** I felt that that I could improve this situation and make the process less manual
- **Actions** In a previous company I had been involved with a contracts management tool implementation and thought that this would be a good solution to my growing concerns over the process. I initially discussed this with my manager and agreed that we would do a feasibility study on implementing a similar system. I reviewed the workflow across all the contract stages – drafting, review, preparation, signature and archiving and identified some key metrics like – Time to Signature, Impact on Business Activities and Purchasing Operations in addition to an overall project plan for implementation of a contracts management tool including cost, return on investment etc. I presented this to my manager for their review.
- **Results** We decided in the end not to implement the system because of cost restrictions and other business priorities however the work that had been done was used to make the manual process more efficient using existing tools and processes which results in reduced cycle times and increased accuracy, the review work on automation is also in place should we chose to use it at some point in time (RESULTS)

### TIP The Interview Panel will be looking for

- An example that is relevant to the role that is being discussed.
- An example that covers the situation, actions taken that you took and the business/ technical results that happened. (STAR)
- An example that outlines exactly what you did in your example, don't forget to use the word 'I'

- The results do not always have to be positive – some of the best learning that we have are from those situations where the outcome has been mixed so bear this in mind when considering your answer. If you can quantify improvements as a result of your actions .

### Functional/Technical Specific Questions

Depending on the role this section will focus on the activities and responsibilities of the role itself and will seek to understand your specific technical/operational capability in a specific area that is relevant to the role. This question does to have to be answered in the STAR format.

### Approaching the Interview

Even the most experienced interviewees can feel nervous, it is important to remember that the purpose of the discussion is to understand your background and experience and how it may fit with the requirements of the role and the competencies required to be successful at Uisce Éireann.

If you do feel nervous, preparation is the key so please ensure that you have taken some time to consider the following element, the Requirements of the Role, what has attracted you to the role and what career highlights you may want to consider using as the basis of your behavioural examples.

We look forward to meeting with you and hope that you have found this guide helpful in your preparation. And finally, once again many thanks for your interest in our organisation

Best Regards Human Resources

### Summary Checklist and Tips

- ❖ Read the Job Description
- ❖ Review the Uisce Éireann website
- ❖ Review the Interview Preparation Guidelines document
- ❖ Prepare the [review of your CV](#)- outlining you most relevant experience in relation to the position you are applying for - keep it brief
- ❖ Prepare examples of work placed scenarios that you think will be relevant to what's outlined in the job description
- ❖ Practice your examples in the [STAR format](#)
- ❖ Don't forget to give results, quantify, or give measured improvements if you can
- ❖ Don't use 'we' use I and highlight exactly what you did in each example
- ❖ Prepare why you are the best candidate for the role.