



44 HIGH-IMPACT QUESTIONS

to identify top talent

All great organisations have one thing in common.

They know how to attract, engage
and retain great people.



Don't underestimate the impact of getting recruitment right.

Good recruitment is a highly strategic process, and an effective interview is critical.

- Cynthia Harris, Heart Talent





How do you uncover the insights you need to make the best hiring decisions?

A good interview discovers insights about past performance and future potential while enabling both parties to get to know each other.

Aside from interviewing hundreds of people each year, we invest in continuous learning about global recruitment best practice, including identifying the skills organisations need today and in the future.

We've read all of the research reports, articles and perspectives about the future of work. We've tried and tested various different interview techniques and processes. We know what makes a great interview.

This guide features 44 high-impact interview questions to help you identify top talent, regardless of the role.

The questions centre around key skills and attributes that we know will have increasing value and importance in the future of work, as reported by several recruitment sources, including the World Economic Forum and pwc Australia.

**Overall, social skills
– such as persuasion, emotional
intelligence and teaching others –
will be in higher demand than narrow
technical skills. You will need to
supplement specialised capabilities
with strong social, creative
and collaboration skills.**

– Amanda McIntyre, pwc Australia



Let's get started.

Use these questions to start meaningful conversations.

Get the most out of your interviews.

Hire the right people for your team.

ADAPTABILITY

In today's world, change is constant. If you want to keep up with quickly changing economic conditions and professional goals, you need a team that knows how to go with the flow.

High-performing employees must be adaptable. In fact, a Harvard Business School survey showed that 71% of 1,500 global executives cited adaptability as the most important quality in a leader.



QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY ADAPTABILITY

What has been the biggest change you've faced in the workplace?
How did it impact you, and how did you adapt?

Describe a time when you were asked to do something you'd never done before. How did you react and what was the outcome?

Give me an example of a time when you had to think on your feet to navigate a difficult situation.

Tell me about a time when you had to adjust to someone else's working style or way of doing things to achieve an outcome.

Describe a time when you had to think logically but also creatively to come up with a solution to a problem or challenge.

COLLABORATION

According to ProjectManager's 2022 global trends report, 26% of leaders believe that poor collaboration is their biggest project management challenge.

Hiring people who can work effectively with others is essential for success. When done well, collaboration can be powerful.



QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY COLLABORATION SKILLS

Describe a time when you were working with someone who didn't like you (or vice versa) and there was some conflict. How did you handle it?

What has been one of your favourite experiences working in a team? Why was it so great?

Tell me about a time when you had to use your communication skills to influence others to achieve an outcome.

What do you believe are the three key ingredients in a successful working relationship? Give me an example of you using these at work.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is one of the most important predictors of human performance and potential.

In our future world of work, the ability to understand, respect and work with a diverse range of people is critical. Employees with high social and cultural intelligence can upgrade your organisation and help you work towards success.



QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Describe a time when you were having a bad day and your mood altered your behaviour and/or performance at work. How did you handle it?

Tell me about a time when one of your colleagues was clearly having a bad day. What did you do?

Describe how you build relationships at work. How do you engage with your colleagues in a professional environment?

Describe a time when you had to work closely with a person who was very different from you. How did you approach this, and what did you learn?

If you were to start a company of your own today, what would its values be? Why?

PROBLEM-SOLVING

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black top, is sitting at a wooden desk. She is holding a mobile phone to her ear with her left hand and has her right hand on a laptop. The laptop is open, and there are some papers and a pen on the desk. The background is slightly blurred, showing a plant and a window.

Complex, novel and multi-dimensional problems are everywhere in our world, countries, economies and businesses.

The ability to analyse information, think critically, make decisions and solve problems is a key trait of high-performing employees.

This is sometimes referred to as creative problem solving: the ability to connect the dots of seemingly disparate information and come up with a new solution.

Hiring natural problem solvers will change the game for any organisation – and the clients or stakeholders you serve.

QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Tell me about a problem at work recently that was new - something you'd never faced before. What did you do and what was the outcome?

Describe a time when you had to make a decision or recommendation without all of the information you needed. How did you handle it?

Tell me about the most challenging situation you've been in at work. What did you do? What would you do differently if you were faced with this challenge again?

Tell me about the toughest decision you've had to make at work in the last 12 months.

PRIORITISATION

Being able to manage your own time and juggle multiple priorities is pretty much a given in today's workplace.

How effectively your employees manage their time and prioritise tasks can have a big impact on productivity outcomes and even employee moral and engagement.

That's why you need a team that can prioritise effectively.



QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY PRIORITISATION SKILLS

Describe a time when you had to work hard to organise your time and juggle several priorities. How did you do it, and what was the outcome?

How do you prevent yourself from getting overwhelmed and/or stressed at work?

Tell me about a time when it just wasn't possible to get everything on your to-do list done. How did you feel, and what did you do?

Tell me about a time when you delegated an important task successfully. What was the outcome of this?

How do you decide how much time to spend on a task?
What factors do you take into account?



LEADERSHIP

This is one of the most talked about topics in talent. While not everyone is a future leader, leadership isn't simply about managing a team of people.

Someone with leadership qualities can take initiative, think creatively, and bring out the potential in others.

In fact, according to GoRemotely, 83% of employers think it's important to develop leadership skills at all levels of business, not just in executive roles.

QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY LEADERSHIP SKILLS

What do you believe are the three most important ingredients in effective leadership? Why are these things so important?

Talk me through an example of a time when you achieved results through other people, even if those people weren't reporting to you.

Describe a situation where you had to persuade someone to see things your way. How did you do it, and what were the results?

Tell me about a time when one of your colleagues was struggling with something and you helped them through it. What did you do and what was the outcome?

Describe a time when you presented your ideas to others and they were well received. How did you approach this, and why do you think it was a success?

SERVICE MINDSET

Whether you serve clients, customers, partners or internal stakeholders, we all help or serve others through our work. A service mindset will be key to individual and collective success in the future of work.



QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY SERVICE MINDSET

Who are your most important clients or stakeholders?
What problems do you help them solve?

Describe a time when you did not meet a client or stakeholders' expectations. What happened, and what did you do next?

Tell me about a time when you were working with a difficult client.
What was the situation, and how did you handle it?

Describe a time when you had to influence a client
to reach the best outcome. How did you do it?

What do you believe are the three key ingredients in an effective
relationship with a client or key stakeholder?

GROWTH MINDSET

Hiring people who can not only do the job today but who have the ability to grow with your organisation is the holy grail of effective recruitment.

Even if you don't know exactly what the future holds, hiring people with a growth mindset and strong potential can be extremely powerful.

Make the right choices now, and you'll set your organisation on track to achieve bigger and better things in the months and years to come.

Your team will help you along the way!



QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY GROWTH MINDSET

What is your proudest career achievement so far?

Tell me about a time when you faced a setback or failure at work.
What did you do next?

Tell me about a time when you asked for direct feedback
from someone at work. Why?

Describe a time when you volunteered to learn something
new or expand your skills at work.

Describe a time when you didn't achieve a professional goal you set
for yourself. How did you deal with this and what happened next?

What are you looking to achieve in your next job?

CULTURE ADD

Quite different to hiring for cultural fit, looking for people who can add to and enhance your organisation is a smart, future-focused way to hire.

While hiring for cultural fit might mean your new employee will easily gel with the team, get up to speed quickly and effortlessly fit in, it could also result in an organisation or team filled with similar people with similar perspectives and approaches.

Smart organisations look to build diverse teams. Diversity has been shown to improve creativity, resilience, morale, attitude and business performance. To reap the benefits of diversity, aim to hire people who can truly add to your culture and organisation rather than simply fitting in. This is the key to driving your organisation forward.

QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY CULTURE ADD

What three things are important to you in a job?
Why do these things matter to you?

Describe the last time that you felt energised and truly
satisfied at work. What were you doing?

What is the biggest misconception people have about you?
Why do they think that?

What is something interesting about you
that I won't find on your CV or profile?

What three words would your colleagues use to describe you?
What makes you think this?



For Heart, recruitment is more than a job. We're passionate about evolving and improving our knowledge and processes and ensuring we deliver the best solution every time.

Heart is proud to be the only business supporting purpose-led organisations with flexible services across talent engagement and attraction and recruitment marketing.

If you have any comments or feedback on this content, please get in touch with Cynthia Harris at cynthia@hearttalent.com.au or 0432 044 527.



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