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Project Management, project planning, templates and advice

PROJECT MANAGER JOB INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Use these common interview questions to prepare for your next Project Management interview. Each question includes some the key things that the interviewer is looking for in your answer!

1. **What qualities do you have that will/does make you an effective project manager?**

   Try to hit some of the points below in your answer:

   - Organised
   - Hard Working
   - Attention to Detail
   - Results Focused
   - Highly Motivated
   - Flexible Approach
   - Excellent Interpersonal skills

2. **When given a new project what is the approach would take to start the project and ensure it runs smoothly**

   Review Business Case and objectives to understand what is required

   Initiate project through

   - Project brief
   - Initiation workshop
   - Project Initiation Document (PID)

Project planning

- Planning session

- Estimating, past, experts, complexity

- Work Breakdown Structure

- Gantt chart

- Assign staff to tasks

Agreeing roles and responsibilities

Resource management

- Have I got enough resource?

- Have I got the right kind of resource?

- Do I know how to get extra resource if required?

Risk and Issues management

- Create and maintain risk register

- Create and maintain issues log

- Ensure high level risks and issues are escalated as required

3. **Can you tell me about a time when you have identified a risk to a project? What did you do about the risk?**

- Enter the risk on the risk register

- Assess the likelihood of the risk occurring

- Assess the [impact if the risk](#) occurs

- Identify a [mitigating action](#)

- Choose the most [appropriate response to the risk](#) e.g. [transfer](#), [accept](#), reduce, [contingency](#)

- Ensure high level risks are escalated as required

4. **Describe how you monitored and reported progress on a [project](#) you have managed**

Manage and report on progress

- Update project plan

- Weekly/regular project meetings

- Daily stand-up or [Scrum calls](#)

- Weekly reporting

[Project monitoring](#)

- Use of [Earned Value](#) Analysis

- [S-Curve](#)

- Tracking Gantt

- [Baselining](#)

- Team reporting of progress

- [Milestone Slip chart](#)

5. **Describe a [project](#) / task you feel was a great success and one that failed**

   Successful project - good answers Delivered to time, cost and scope

   - Challenging, but achieved deadline

   - Happy stakeholders

   - Met [business case](#)

   - Achieved [KPIs](#)

   - We won a prize!

   Failed project - good answers

   - The project was not well defined, so I delayed it, so [requirements](#) could be properly defined. I then restarted the project with a [change request](#) agreed for a new go live date.

   - The project was already failing, but I managed to turn it around to meet time, [cost](#) or [budget](#).

   - The project missed the original go live date, but I flagged that the date was not achievable, re-baselined the [schedule](#) and the project was delivered to the new realistic go live.

   - The project widget was not sufficiently tested by the customer, so as part of the post- project review I developed new guidance on user testing for future projects.

- The project was delivered £x k over budget, but the forecast overspend was twice that before I reduced the scope, bringing it within the 10% cost tolerance that could be approved by the project board.

PRACTICE SCENARIO QUESTIONS FOR A PROJECT MANAGER INTERVIEW

Scenario 1 – Difficult person in initiation workshop

You are running an initiation workshop for your project. One of the Subject Manager Experts constantly challenges your authority by questioning the validity of project management. How would you handle the situation?

Good answer:

1. Stay calm and in control

2. Call for a comfort break

3. Take the SME to one side and discuss the situation with him

4. If he is not willing to take a positive role in the meeting advise him you will end the meeting, make an entry into the Risk Register regarding the failure of the workshop

5. Escalate the Risk to the project office and speak to the person's manager.

Scenario 2 - Project team member is not delivering / progressing their work

A resource on your project is responsible for a task that is sitting on the critical path. A few weeks prior to delivery you are nervous that the task is not going to be delivered

due to the abilities of the individual. This individual is also your friend. How would you handle this situation?

Good answers:

- Sit down with the person and talk to them about where they are and if they are facing any barriers

- Make sure the resource is clear on the deadlines

- Speak to the resource's manager and agree a plan of action with them

- Enter this concern as a highly probable project risk

- Escalate to the project office requesting the resource be replaced with a more appropriate person.

This resource is from Project Manager interview questions with answers

See also: 15 Job interview questions on Customer Focus

15 Self-Starter interview questions

16 Interview Questions on Motivation

16 Interview Questions on Leadership

13 Job interview questions on problem solving

22 Interview questions on teamwork