

# BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCIES

for Canada's Substance  
Use Workforce v. 2

**Interview Tool for  
Health Promotion**



Canadian Centre  
on Substance Use  
and Addiction

Evidence. Engagement. Impact.



## INTERVIEW TOOL FOR HEALTH PROMOTION


This document provides suggested interview questions for the **Health Promotion** job cluster and the relevant competency profile. The competency profiles and proficiency levels are examples only and may be tailored or adapted to specific organizational contexts and job descriptions. Review the *Guide to Behavioural Competency-based Interviewing* to supplement the tools included in this resource.

This tool provides a selection of sample interview questions focusing on behaviour for the Behavioural Competencies and proficiency levels relevant to the **Health Promotion** competency profile. It also includes the procedures for conducting the interview and evaluating candidate responses.

While this tool is a useful template for your interview process, it might not accurately represent the competencies required for the position for which you are interviewing. Before using it, review the suggested competency profile to determine if it is relevant. If not relevant, review the competencies to determine which competencies or proficiency levels you should change to give a more accurate representation. A brief overview of the steps involved in identifying the relevant Behavioural Competencies for a profile has been provided in the *Guide to Behavioural Competency-based Interviewing*.

A job competency profile includes only the critical competencies required for the job, not those that are “nice to have”—that is, not essential to performing the job successfully.

Preferably, each profile should have no more than 12 competencies.



After confirming the competencies and proficiency levels of the relevant competency profile, you must determine which competencies you will assess in the interview and which questions you will ask. Sample questions have been provided for the relevant proficiency level for the suggested profile. A generic interview bank has been provided in the *Generic Questions for the Behavioural Competencies* to assist you in selecting and adapting alternate questions if a different competency profile is used.

Avoid assessing all competencies by interview. It would take far too much time and some competencies are better assessed through other methods, such as reference checks, knowledge tests or simulations. For a one-hour interview, five to seven questions are a reasonable number to ask.

To determine which questions to ask, consider the relative importance of a competency to the position. Also, review competencies for overlap to determine if asking a question on one competency will provide information on another competency that can then be excluded.

You might choose to assess the same competency using more than one method if it is important for the position. For example, if Interpersonal Rapport is more important than other competencies, you may wish to assess it both in the interview and through a reference check. Alternatively, you could ask two questions on this competency instead of one in the interview.

Questions can be used for reference checking by adapting the text to ask about the candidate in the third person, rather than in the second person. For example:

- **Interview Question:** “Please provide an example of a time when you coordinated a large project” (*second person*)
- **Reference Question:** “Please provide an example of a time when Mark coordinated a large project” (*third person*)

**Ensure that all performance evaluations are conducted in accordance with existing organizational policies and procedures.**

## Interviewing Tool for Positions Related to Health Promotion

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Interviewer's Name:	Interviewer's Title:
Date of Interview:	Location of Interview:

### Preparation Checklist

- Review résumé and candidate file information, paying particular attention to jobs/experiences and education/training most related to the target position.
- Review competencies required for the target position.
- Determine which competencies to focus on in the interview.

### Suggested Competency Profile

Job Cluster	Example Job Titles
Health Promotion	Health Promotion Specialist, Health Education Specialist, Prevention Coordinator, Health Educator, Health Promotion and Protection Specialist or Worker

Competency Required	Proficiency Levels
Adaptability and Flexibility	3
Analytical Thinking and Decision Making	2
Collaboration and Network Building	3
Continuous Learning	3
Creativity and Innovation	3
Culturally Safe and Anti-Oppressive Practice	3
Developing Others	3
Effective Communication	3
Ethical Conduct and Professionalism	2
Interpersonal Rapport	3
Person-directed Care	2
Planning and Organizing	3
Self-care	2
Self-motivation	2
Teamwork and Cooperation	2

## Conducting the Interview

1. Greet the candidate and introduce yourself, giving your name and position within the organization.
2. Confirm the job for which the candidate is being considered.
3. Explain the purpose of the interview: to gather specific information about the candidate's past experiences and accomplishments, particularly in the past two to three years; and to help the organization make a fair and informed decision on the most qualified candidate for the job.
4. Describe the interview plan:

The questions in the interview guide are designed to obtain information about the candidate's experience and accomplishments (do not have to be work-related) that relate to the competencies that are important for success in the job to be filled.

For each question, you must obtain one or more specific examples of the candidate's experience or accomplishments, ensuring that the candidate describes:

- The **Situation** or circumstances related to the example;
  - The **Actions** taken by the candidate to address the situation, along with the rationale for the action taken; and
  - The **Results** or outcome of the candidate's actions.
5. Ask follow-up questions as necessary to clarify or obtain additional information. Follow-up questions are provided below the main question.
  6. Take notes on the candidate's answers during the interview to have an accurate record of information about the candidate's experience and accomplishments to evaluate later.
  7. Provide an opportunity at the end of the interview for the candidate to ask questions.
  8. Clarify the next steps in the selection process.



## Questions for Applicable Competencies at the Appropriate Level of Proficiency

The next several pages contain interview questions, one per page, with follow-up questions and space for you, the interviewer, to jot down notes. The follow-up questions are especially helpful because you can encourage the candidate to elaborate on their response to the initial question.



## Question 1: Adaptability and Flexibility

**Definition:** Willingly adjust one's approach to meet the demands and needs of constantly changing conditions, situations and people, and to work effectively in difficult or ambiguous situations.

### LEVEL 3 PROFICIENT

#### Question

Please give me an example of a situation where you adapted your behaviour or approach in response to resistance within a community or population.

- Why did you need to change your approach?
- How surprised were you by the resistance?
- Describe how you changed your approach or behaviour.
- How did you adapt to the situation?
- What was the outcome?

#### Notes

Situation	Action	Results

## Question 2: Analytical Thinking and Decision Making

**Definition:** Gather, synthesize and evaluate information and evidence to determine possible alternatives and outcomes and make well-informed, timely decisions. Includes critical thinking and reasoning skills.

### LEVEL 2 DEVELOPING

#### Question

Tell me about a situation where you had to make a decision or recommendation, first weighing the advantages and disadvantages of a number of options.

- Describe the situation and what decision was required.
- What were the options available to you?
- How were the options identified?
- What factors did you take into consideration when determining how to proceed?
- What did you decide to do?
- What was the outcome?

#### Notes

Situation	Action	Results

### Question 3: Collaboration and Network Building

**Definition:** Identify, create and build capacity with informal and formal interdisciplinary networks and allied community groups, including people with lived and living experience, families and communities from diverse backgrounds, to support the provision of service delivery and achievement of the organization's objectives. People that use services include individuals, groups, organizations and communities.

**LEVEL 3 PROFICIENT**

**Question**

Describe a time when you facilitated the development of a community coalition to address a specific need.

- Why was the collaboration needed?
- What was your role in facilitating the collaboration?
- What were the results of your efforts?
- How did you sustain the collaboration?

**Notes**

Situation	Action	Results



## Question 4: Continuous Learning

**Definition:** Identify and pursue learning opportunities to enhance one's professional practice and development, and the delivery of high-quality programs and services.

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### LEVEL 3 PROFICIENT

#### Question

Please describe an example of a time when you needed to learn a new approach or strategy related to health promotion.

- What was the situation? Who was your audience?
- In what area were you trying to increase your knowledge or skills?
- Describe the methods you used.
- To what extent were you successful?
- What impact did the learning have on you, the situation or others?

### Notes

Situation	Action	Results



## Question 6: Culturally Safe and Anti-oppressive Practice

**Definition:** Provide inclusive, anti-oppressive, sex- and gender-sensitive, equitable and timely services to diverse populations, as defined by culture, age, sex, gender, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, legal status, health, ability, sexual orientation, type and mode of substance use, continued substance use, concurrent conditions, etc. Challenge oppressive structures and unequal power relations, affirm and value the worth of all individuals, families, groups and communities, and protect the dignity of all with cultural awareness, competence, sensitivity, humility and cultural safety.

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### LEVEL 3 PROFICIENT

#### Question

Describe a cultural barrier you identified in your community and what strategy you put in place to address it.

- What was the cultural barrier and what impact was it having on the community?
- How did you recognize it as a barrier that needed addressing?
- How did you and the community work together to address the barrier?
- What impact did your collective recommendations or strategy have on mitigating the barrier?

#### Notes

Situation	Action	Results

## Question 7: Developing Others

**Definition:** Facilitate and motivate sustained learning and create learning opportunities and resources, as well as promote and respect others' ownership of learning outcomes. Includes creation of a continuous learning environment that fosters positive growth in both work and public contexts among peers, individuals, families, communities and other groups.

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### LEVEL 3 PROFICIENT

#### Question

Give an example of what you have done to encourage team members to learn from each other.

- What was the specific situation?
- What did team members have to offer each other in this case?
- What did you do to facilitate an exchange that would allow them to share their knowledge?
- How did you know that this exercise was successful?

#### Notes

Situation	Action	Results
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## Question 8: Effective Communication

**Definition:** Articulate both verbally and in writing across a range of technologies in a manner that builds trust, respect and credibility, including in-person and technology-assisted communication (e.g., video conferencing, texting, social media). Checks with the audience to ensure the message is received and mutually understood. Includes active listening skills (attending, being silent, summarizing, paraphrasing, questioning and empathizing), communicating with gender sensitivity, cultural humility and congruent non-verbal communication.

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### LEVEL 3 PROFICIENT

#### Question

Describe a time when you had to adapt the content and style of your communication for diverse stakeholders to achieve consensus.

- In what ways were the stakeholders diverse?
- How did you try to tailor your communication to achieve consensus?
- How did you ensure that people received the information they needed?
- What was the outcome?

#### Notes

Situation	Action	Results

## Question 9: Ethical Conduct and Professionalism

**Definition:** Provide professional services according to the principles and values of integrity, competence, accountability, respect and trust to safeguard both self and others. Includes the development of professionalism and ethical behaviour in self and others (individuals, groups, organizations, communities).

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### LEVEL 2 DEVELOPING

#### Question

Describe a situation in which you contributed to a discussion of how ethical issues might impact a proposed community action.

- What was your contribution?
- Describe the key ethical factors you had to consider.
- What was the outcome of these efforts?

### Notes

Situation	Action	Results









## Question 13: Self-care

**Definition:** Deliberately and continuously apply professional and personal principles of well-being. Intentionally support others to sustain optimal well-being, while maintaining physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health.

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### LEVEL 2 DEVELOPING

#### Question

Describe a time when you faced a professional or personal boundary challenge and found your own way to deal with it.

- Describe the situation. What made it a boundary challenge?
- How did you develop your strategy to deal with the situation?
- What was the outcome? What was the impact on you and the people involved?
- How did it change your behaviour after the experience?

#### Notes

Situation	Action	Results

## Question 14: Self-motivation

**Definition:** Remain motivated and focused on goals until the best possible results are achieved, with both passion for making a difference in the substance use field and persistence despite confronting obstacles, resistance and setbacks.

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### LEVEL 2 DEVELOPING

#### Question

Please describe a time when you took the initiative to find a solution to a challenging problem.

- Describe the situation.
- What means did you employ in trying to solve the problem?
- How were you successful?
- What would you do differently next time?

#### Notes

Situation	Action	Results

## Question 15: Teamwork and Cooperation

**Definition:** Work cooperatively and productively with others within and across organizational units to achieve common goals; demonstrate respect, cooperation, collaboration and consensus-building.

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### LEVEL 2 DEVELOPING

#### Question

Describe a time when you were working with a team and took on additional tasks 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?
- Describe how you were able to complete these additional tasks.

#### Notes

Situation	Action	Results

## Evaluating the Interview

All the energy and effort devoted to capturing good job-related information during the selection interview will be lost if this information is not evaluated consistently and appropriately for all candidates. This section provides guidance on how to evaluate information from the candidate gathered through the competency-based interview.

Each behavioural question is designed to elicit information relevant to a specific competency. However, human behaviour can be complex and the following situations can arise:

- A behaviourally based question is asked focusing on one competency area, but a candidate provides an example that relates to another area.
- A candidate provides examples that relate to more than one competency area.
- A candidate provides examples that relate to the required competencies during the introductory phases of the interview or during the close of the interview.

The whole interview should, therefore, be reviewed carefully for evidence of the competencies being assessed. One method for doing this is to circle each behavioural example and, if one demonstrates a competency other than the one intended by the question, note the competency demonstrated alongside the example. Then cross-reference this example in the section of the interview tool devoted to that competency.

Once all relevant information from the interview has been reviewed and correctly classified, the interviewer is in a position to understand and evaluate a candidate's past behaviour for each competency.

The next step is to assign a rating, or score, for each competency, using the rating scale below. The assigned score is based on the candidate's demonstration of the relevant behaviour indicators for the proficiency levels in the competency profile at the beginning of this tool. Refer as necessary to the *Behavioural Competencies for Canada's Substance Use Workforce* for an extended sample of appropriate behaviour indicators for each competency.

Record the score in the scoring grid on the next page. Add any particular comments needed to support the rating.

If there are multiple interviewers, each interviewer completes the scoring grid individually, without consulting the others. Upon completion of all scoring, the interviewers discuss the ratings they assigned and arrive at a consensus score for each competency.

Interview Rating Scale	
5	<b>Well Above Standard</b> ( <i>significantly exceeds requirements</i> ) Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is exceptional and reflects superior ability to perform; all aspects of the competency are demonstrated to a high degree.
4	<b>Above Standard</b> ( <i>exceeds requirements</i> ) Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is above average and reflects more than an adequate ability to perform; all or most aspects of the competency are demonstrated at an above-average level.
3	<b>Meets Standard</b> ( <i>meets requirement</i> ) Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency meets expectations and reflects an adequate ability to perform; candidate may have demonstrated minor weaknesses in some aspects of the competency, but none of major significance.
2	<b>Below Standard</b> ( <i>falls below requirements</i> ) Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is inadequate in key respects.
1	<b>Well Below Standard</b> ( <i>falls significantly below requirements</i> ) Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is far from adequate in all or most respects.

## Scoring Grid

Competency	Interviewer Score	Rationale/Comments	Consensus Score
Adaptability and Flexibility			
Analytical Thinking and Decision Making			
Collaboration and Network Building			
Continuous Learning			
Creativity and Innovation			
Culturally Safe and Anti-oppressive Practice			
Developing Others			
Effective Communication			
Ethical Conduct and Professionalism			
Interpersonal Rapport			
Person-directed Care			
Planning and Organizing			
Self-care			
Self-motivation			
Teamwork and Cooperation			