

*ScottishPower Competency Based Recruitment  
Competency Guidelines – External Candidate*



## Aims and Objectives

This document will give you an overview of the selection process used within ScottishPower.

## Overview of the selection process

### ➤ Preparation

The first stage in the process is the preparation stage, what you can and must do before you go into the actual interview itself.

Please note that it is possible to over-prepare for your interview especially with respect to the competency-based questions that form the majority of the selection assessment.

It is well advised to try to think through your greatest achievements in your role over recent years **before** you review the competencies and work through the STAR approach outlined below.

Some things to consider are as follows:-

- Think about your strengths and, also your areas of development
- What would your career highlights be?
- Think of pieces of work where you were stretched and learnt a great deal from carrying them out. What did you learn and how have you applied any learning since?
- Think through occasions where you received well-deserved feedback for overcoming challenges and delivering important results
- Think of times where you had good reason to feel proud of what you had done and cast your mind back to all the events that were associated with your actions
- Think about times when your actions had a real and genuine impact on your team, department and the business as a whole

This approach helps when tailoring your answers to whatever questions the interviewer may ask during the course of the interview.

An all too common pitfall that some candidates can succumb to is to prepare to the extent where their “*examples*” are so specific in nature that they fail to answer the questions asked by the interviewer. In these instances the candidate is often aware that they are not answering the question however because they are so focused on specific examples they find it difficult to remember other achievements, which would be more suited to the interviewer's question.

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### ➤ **Beginning the interview**

At the start of the interview, the interviewer will: -

- Introduce all interviewers
- Give a brief overview of the departmental structure and the role(s) you are about to be interviewed for
- Explain the format of the interview

At this point the interview format, competency based interview, will be explained. That this is a means of interviewing based on the premise that past performance is a good indicator of future performance. The interview will be structured in such a way that you will be probed for information in support of the role's key competencies. As such the questions are very much in the format of *"give me an example of a time when....."*

This level of detail is required – to ensure that the best-fit candidate gets the job.

Other points explained will include: -

- The approximate length of the interview.
- That you will have an opportunity to ask questions at the end.
- That both interviewers will be taking notes at times during the interview and that you should not be put off by that as these notes will be invaluable to the recruiting manager at the evaluation stage.

### ➤ **The purpose of competency based interviews**

As covered earlier, the selection method for posts in ScottishPower will include a competency based interview (CBI) to gather information. The purpose of CBI is to explore fully with you any evidence you give showing you have the required knowledge, skills and attitude to demonstrate an appropriate level of competence. CBI is based on the premise that past performance is a good indicator of future performance.

The competencies selected by the recruiting manager will be those that he/she believes to be key for an individual to successfully undertake the role. Within each competency the recruiting manager will be seeking information from you that supports the key behaviours within each competency.

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### ➤ The structure of competency based interviews

Your interviewer will ask you “trigger” or “lead” questions followed by probing questions in order to gather information and evidence relating to the competence questions they are asking. Within each competency various questions have been prepared that are designed to determine to what extent the candidate has performed successfully in previous situations similar to those they will encounter in the position for which they are being interviewed.

With behavioural questions, the interviewer is looking for actions taken and results. They are not just looking for an activity list. So make sure you mention specific names, dates, places, the outcome and especially what **your** role was in achieving that outcome.

You can use the STAR framework, described in the next section to ensure you structure your response as fully as possible. You will also need to be prepared to answer further questions to ensure you have given sufficient detail to your interviewers.

### ➤ STAR

STAR is the acronym that is used to describe the components of the answers to competency questions. It provides a framework for candidates to ensure they have a structure to their responses however **it is not intended to be an isolated statement from the candidate. Details should be followed up appropriately by the interviewer.** STAR stands for:

STAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>S</b>ituation/<b>T</b>ask</li><li>• <b>A</b>ctions</li><li>• <b>R</b>esult</li></ul>

By following this format, you are able to show **situation** or **task** in which you acted, the **actions** that you took and what the **results** of these actions were.

- **Situation/Task** - Situation or task is about the “what,” i.e. the situation or the event. The situation/task should provide the interviewers with an overview of the scenario and the level of simplicity/complexity involved e.g. number of people they had to deal with at varying levels in the organisation or internally/externally.

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- **Actions** - This is where you should talk in detail about the specific actions taken in the situation. You will be probed if you give any vague or general descriptions of behaviours or actions in your response.

For example, you might say:

“Generally I always.....” or “I had great feedback from my customers”

You will be probed to get at the specifics, step by step behaviours or actions if you answer with a vague response. As a rule of thumb you should be talking 70% of the time and the interviewer 30%.

- **Result** - Knowing the outcome of your actions is key in competency based interviews. The interviewer must understand whether the action was effective or somehow influenced the original situation or task. When using the STAR concept, the questions often comprises of a set of sub questions e.g.
  - The first question usually establishes the situation or task
  - The second question normally identifies the action – most time is spent here
  - The third question usually determines the result that was achieved

The interviewer will examine your examples in more detail, asking a series of probing questions. In view of this it is important to use good, solid examples, within which you are able to recall as much detail as possible.

It is vital that you are prepared and have considered the core competencies and suitable examples before your actual interview. When preparing, it would be useful to identify an unsuccessful example for each of the competencies as you may be asked to give an example of a time when things didn't work out as planned.

One way to end an answer to a negative probe is to say something like “the mistake caused me to delay the project, but it helped me to develop a project tracking system which would minimise the chance of that happening again”. Thus a positive outcome is seen to have been achieved from what was initially a negative situation. By responding in this way, you are still able to show yourself in a positive light by explaining the specific learning that came out of the negative situation and how you were able to apply this learning in other situations.

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### ➤ General Interview Hints and Tips

- Try to remain calm and focused
- DON'T give general examples instead DO give specific examples that focus on the actions YOU took
- Remember that you will have lots of behavioural examples in your day- to- day work - examples do not have to be extra special and can come from any aspect of your working life or career to date
- There are no trick questions and there are no right or wrong answers!
- It is fine to give negative examples but make sure you tell the interviewer how you resolved the situation and/or what you learned from it
- The interviewers will be trying to help you give the information they are looking for by asking probing questions – don't let these questions unnerve you.
- DON'T over prepare
- Recognise that the same situation could enable you to provide behavioural examples for various competencies
- Remember that specific examples may not always immediately spring to mind – take the time to think of your answer and don't feel the need to rush.
- Don't use a prepared example that doesn't fit the question
- The interviewers will be taking lots of notes so don't be put off

## **Competencies**

The Iberdrola Group Behavioural Competencies introduce a selection of behaviours that are considered important to the Company and essential for individuals to perform successfully in their roles. There are ten general behavioural competencies and these have been further grouped by how they naturally link, into three competency groups: Delivering For The Business, Global Relationships and Managing People. These are outlined below:

**Competency Group: Delivering For The Business**

- Demonstrates a commitment to Iberdrola, understanding that each individual plays a key role in achieving results and makes a constant effort to improve their own contribution to the Company’s success.
- Undertakes to continually review organisational processes and identify best practice to improve efficiency.
- Identifies creative approaches and new ways of operating in the market, allowing the Company to maintain and improve its position.
- Anticipates changes in the environment and identifies new solutions, integrating and synchronising available resources in order to obtain the best results and maximise performance.

	Competency	Summary
DELIVERING FOR THE BUSINESS	<b>Global View Of The Business</b>	<p>Recognises their personal contribution to the Iberdrola Group as a whole through the performance and delivery of their role and responsibilities rather than focussing on one area or department.</p> <p>Understands the global organisation taking the whole Company into account and understanding how the role of each individual contributes to overall results.</p>
	<b>Achieving Results And Continuous Improvement</b>	<p>Thinks about achieving and surpassing goals and is self-motivated. Seeks continuous improvement and works to high standards while fulfilling day-to-day objectives.</p> <p>Directs own activity towards the achievement of goals and demonstrates continuous improvement by trying to exceed the targets set. Demonstrates this with the setting of ambitious goals and the level of effort they place into achieving those goals.</p>
	<b>Initiative</b>	<p>Anticipates problems and future opportunities and acts accordingly. Takes action or provides solutions/proposals/suggestions before being required to do so, or as a result of events.</p> <p>Anticipates organisational needs, makes appropriate decisions, and identifies new opportunities or solutions.</p>
	<b>Innovation And Creativity</b>	<p>Finds new ways to see things and displays innovation and creativity in their approach and solutions.</p> <p>Identifies actions or proposals to address specific situations and are able to tackle complex issues in the most appropriate and effective way.</p>



**Competency Group : Global Relationships**

- Provides value through professional advice and the efficient delivery of products and services adapted to customer needs, as perceived by the individual.
- Establishes open communication with a variety of contacts to gain mutual agreement for the benefit of the Company.
- Encourages teamwork with others as a means of generating value for the customer and the Company.
- Understands the diversity amongst people and appreciates the value of cultural diversity as a key factor in supporting the globalisation of the Company, supporting the identification of synergies across the Group.

	Competency	Summary
GLOBAL RELATIONSHIPS	<b>Flexibility And Globalisation</b>	Is able to work in different environments. Understands and respects cultural aspects that could influence ways of working and is able to adapt and work effectively in diverse situations and in changing, uncertain environments.  Understands and accepts changes in the organisation and the environment (national and international), and adapts their way of working appropriately.
	<b>Customer Focus</b>	Acts on behalf of the internal and/or external customer. Offers accurate and effective solutions to those customers.  Satisfies the customer’s current needs and anticipates those of the future to benefit both the customer and the organisation.
	<b>Communicating And Influencing</b>	Communicates positively and ensures an understanding of how others feel and think. Demonstrates influencing skills when necessary and interacts well with others, understanding and conveying ideas clearly and convincingly.  Establishes positive and effective relationships that facilitate the achievement of organisational goals.
	<b>Teamwork</b>	Participates fully in the achievement of team goals and collaborates fully with other team members to achieve common goals.

## Competency Group : Managing People

- Leads, manages and supports the team in the accomplishment of goals, developing an environment of trust, and fostering commitment to achieve results.
- Supports personal development within the team, by encouraging activities that allow individuals to acquire new skills, in order to foster individual creativity and encourage responsible decision making.

	Competency	Summary
MANAGING PEOPLE	Team Management	<p>Manages a team who work together effectively, ensuring the best results from each team member.</p> <p>Manages and directs the team towards the expected results, clearly communicates priorities, establishes the most suitable level of delegation, and positively influences and motivates the team.</p>
	Developing Others	<p>Allows team members to develop and maximise their potential as professionals.</p> <p>Performs actions that improve the professional learning and development of people, based on an analysis of individual needs and those of the Iberdrola Group.</p>

### ➤ Closing the interview

You will be offered a final opportunity to ask questions or add anything further. You should leave the interview feeling that you have been fairly treated and that you have had an opportunity to demonstrate how you would perform in the job.

**If you have any further queries on the selection process and approach please do not hesitate to contact 1HR Direct on 0141 614 9980 for advice.**