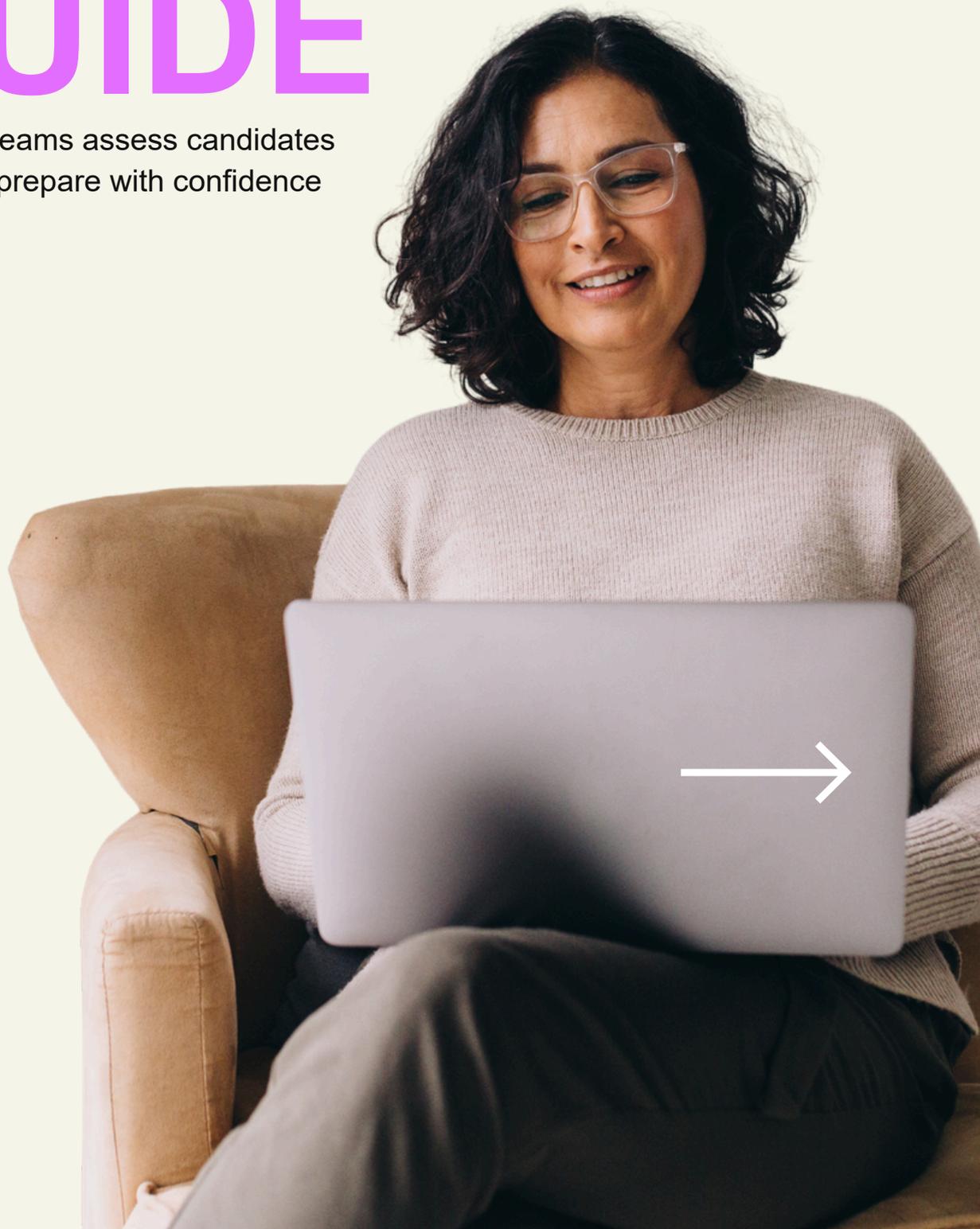


Hudson

INTERVIEW GUIDE

How hiring teams assess candidates
and how to prepare with confidence



A Practical Guide to Interview Success

In over 40 years of supporting hiring across different sectors, we've seen that strong interview performance consistently comes down to three things:

1

**Understanding
what the role
requires**

2

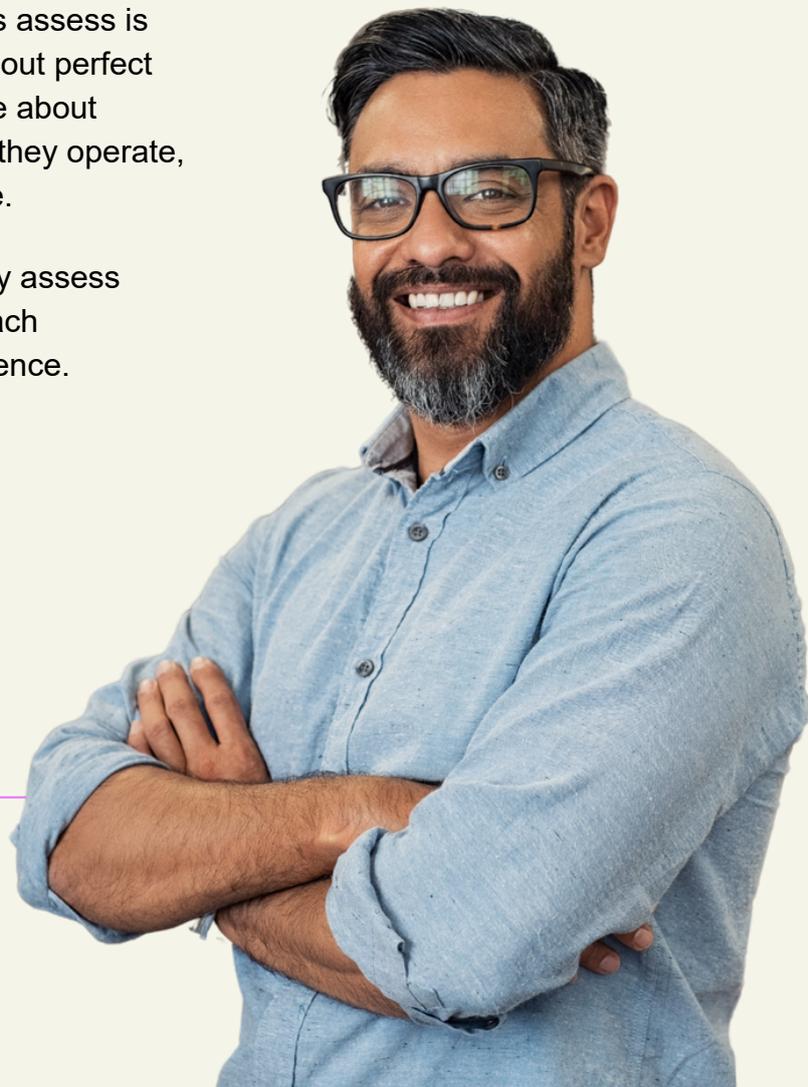
**Preparing
relevant examples**

3

**Communicating
with clarity**

Interview formats vary, but what hiring teams assess is remarkably consistent. Interviews are not about perfect answers or polished performances. They are about understanding how a candidate thinks, how they operate, and how they are likely to perform in the role.

This guide outlines how interviewers typically assess these areas and how candidates can approach interviews with focus, judgement and confidence.



Understand what the role requires

Strong interviews begin with a clear understanding of the role itself. The position description should form the foundation of your preparation. It provides insight into priorities, scope and expectations, and signals what the organisation needs now. Candidates who can describe the role clearly, in their own words, demonstrate understanding and intent early in the interview. This helps interviewers quickly assess relevance and alignment.

Understanding the role also means understanding the organisation at a practical level. This does not require exhaustive research, but it does require awareness of what the organisation does, the environment it operates in, and how the role contributes to broader objectives. Without this context, candidates often default to generic answers that describe capability in broad terms rather than demonstrating fit for the role.

Hiring processes vary across organisations, industries and levels of seniority. Some interviews are brief and focused, while others involve multiple stages, panels or assessments. Formats may differ, but the purpose remains the same: to understand how a candidate is likely to operate in the role and contribute to outcomes.

Where appropriate, it can also be helpful to understand who you will be speaking with. Interviewers often bring different perspectives depending on their role within the organisation. A functional leader may focus on delivery and outcomes, while a people leader may place greater emphasis on collaboration and working style. The aim is not to tailor responses to individuals, but to ensure your examples are framed in a way that reflects what the role genuinely requires.

Prepare relevant examples

Interviews rely heavily on past experience as an indicator of future performance. While interview questions may vary, interviewers are typically listening for a consistent set of indicators:

Relevance



how well your experience aligns with the role

Judgement



how you make decisions and manage trade-offs

Clarity



how clearly you explain your thinking

Impact



what changed as a result of your actions

Self-awareness



what you have learned and how you have grown

Team contribution



how you work with others

Perspective



the value and approach you would bring to the team

Preparation is not about predicting questions or memorising answers. It is about preparing a small number of strong, relevant examples that demonstrate how you have operated in practice.

Candidates sometimes focus heavily on describing responsibilities or tasks. While this provides context, it does not show impact. Interviewers are listening for what changed as a result of your work, how decisions were made, and what you learned along the way. Examples that remain at a high level, without outcomes or reflection, are difficult to assess.

Many candidates use structured approaches such as STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to organise their thinking. This structure is a guide, not a script. Strong responses focus primarily on actions, judgement and outcomes, with enough context to make the situation clear.

If it's helpful, you can use a short **STAR worksheet** to support preparation by structuring your examples and sense-checking clarity, relevance and impact.

Motivation is often assessed through examples as well. Being able to explain why a role interests you, how it fits with your experience, and what motivates you about the work helps interviewers understand alignment. The most effective responses are specific and grounded. Generic enthusiasm or rehearsed statements are less persuasive than thoughtful explanations that connect your experience to what the role and organisation need.



Communicate with clarity

Interviews are conversations, not performances. Clear, measured communication is generally more effective than rushed or overly detailed responses.

Clarity comes from answering the question directly, using plain language, and focusing on what matters most. It is appropriate to pause, ask for clarification, or take a moment to structure your response. Composure under pressure often leaves a stronger impression than speed or polish.

Presence also matters. Attentive listening, appropriate eye contact and minimising distractions help interviewers focus on your experience rather than delivery. In virtual interviews, practical considerations such as audio quality, lighting and a neutral environment support clarity and engagement.

Professionalism is reflected not only in what you say, but how you engage. Balanced, respectful language when discussing past experiences signals judgement and maturity. Speaking negatively about previous employers or sounding overly rehearsed can distract from your capability and reduce authenticity.

Most interviews conclude with an opportunity to ask questions. Thoughtful questions demonstrate engagement and intent, and help clarify expectations, priorities and measures of success. Failing to ask questions can unintentionally signal limited interest or preparation.

Common clarity challenges in interviews include providing generic answers without examples, focusing on duties rather than outcomes, rigid delivery, or rushing the close. Awareness of these tendencies allows candidates to adjust in the moment and ensure their experience and reasoning come through clearly.

Examples of effective closing questions:

- What are the key priorities for this role in the first six months?
- What does success look like for someone in this position?
- What are the main challenges the team or function is currently navigating?
- How do teams typically collaborate and make decisions day to day?

A closing perspective

Interviews are not about presenting perfection. They are about clearly articulating your experience, judgement and potential contribution.

Candidates who understand what the role requires, prepare relevant examples, and communicate with clarity consistently perform more strongly across hiring processes. A thoughtful, professional approach allows interviewers to see not only what you have done, but how you think and how you are likely to add value over time.

