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# Strategic Thinking Interview Guide

## Purpose of the Interview Guide:

This Interview Guide is designed to assist in the behavioral interview process. It provides specific questions and probes for the behaviors of the competency. In addition, positive and negative behavioral indicators are listed that will help evaluate the candidate's responses. While the process described below is designed for multiple interviewers seeing each candidate, it can be completed with only one interviewer.

### Prior to the interview:

- Review the candidate's resume.
- Review the assigned the competency(s) and the behaviors that comprise each competency.
- Select the specific questions you feel comfortable asking each candidate. Note: Not all the questions need to be used – select at least two questions.

### During the interview:

- Greet the candidate and spend a few minutes building rapport; talk about areas the candidate is interested in.
- Transition into the formal interview.
- Ask the selected questions and use follow-up probes to get complete examples of the:
  - **Situation** that the candidate encountered;
  - **Actions** that the candidate took;
  - **Results** or outcome of the actions taken.
- Give the candidate time to think about past examples/experiences when answering the questions.
- Ideally get at least 2-3 examples for each question.
- Use this guide to take notes and evaluate the candidate.

### Following the interview:

- Check off appropriate behavioral indicators and summarize key observations and notes. Rate the candidate on each assigned competencies in the space provided at the bottom of each page.
- Note any observations for competencies not assigned and be prepared to discuss.
- After completing, interviewers should meet to discuss and reach consensus on the final ratings for each candidate and complete the Candidate Interview Summary.
- Make the hiring decision.

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Candidate:         |  |
| Interviewer:       |  |
| Date if Interview: |  |

## Strategic Thinking

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**Definition:**

Analyzing an organization's competitive position and developing a clear and compelling vision of what the organization needs for success in the future.

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**Behaviors:**

- a. Understands the organization's strengths and weaknesses as compared to competitors
- b. Understands the industry, market and product/service trends affecting the organization's competitiveness
- c. Develops distinctive strategies to achieve and sustain competitive advantage; translates strategies into clear goals and objectives
- d. Communicates a clear vision that energizes others to accomplish what the organization needs for success in the long term; consistently restates and reinforces that vision and direction
- e. Focuses on ways to build the organization's capabilities for the future

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### Behavioral Questions and Probes

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**1a**

Think about the organization you work for now. What are some strengths and weaknesses of the organization as compared to its competitors?

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**1b**

What industry and market trends are affecting the organization's competitiveness?

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**2**

Think about a product or service provided by your organization. What are some specific competitive strengths and weaknesses of that product or service within the marketplace?

## Strategic Thinking

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**3**

Give me an example of a time when a product or service you were offering was not as competitive as it should be. How did you know this and what did you do about it?

- What was the situation? What action(s) did you take? What was the result?

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**4**

Give me an example of when a product or service you were offering was one of the best in the marketplace. How did you know this and did you do anything to keep it the best?

- What was the situation? What action(s) did you take? What was the result?

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**5**

Share with me a specific strategy you have developed and proposed for your organization. What was the strategy? Why did you develop it?

- What was the situation? What action(s) did you take? What was the result?

| Positive Indicators   | Negative Indicators   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the organization’s strengths and weaknesses as compared to competitors</li> <li>• Understands industry and market trends affecting the organization’s competitiveness</li> <li>• Develops distinctive strategies to achieve and sustain competitive advantage; translates strategies into clear goals and objectives</li> <li>• Communicates a clear vision that energizes others to accomplish what the organization needs for success in the long term; consistently restates and reinforces that vision and direction</li> <li>• Focuses on ways to build the organization’s capabilities for the future</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is unaware of the competition’s strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>• Does not recognize how industry and market trends affect the competitiveness of the organization</li> <li>• Is unaware of or has a shallow understanding of competitive products and services within the marketplace</li> <li>• Can’t or does not articulate a vision for the organization</li> <li>• Articulates a vision and direction, but does not reinforce it over time</li> <li>• Tends to operate in more of a short term, tactical manner in reaction to internal developments within the organization problem</li> </ul> |

### Summary Notes

**Overall Evaluation—Strategic Thinking**

| Strength Area            | Demonstrates Proficiency | Improvement Opportunity  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |