

Force Interview Preparation



Devon & Cornwall
POLICE

*WORKING
TOGETHER*



**DORSET
POLICE**

Taking
Positive Action
for a diverse and inclusive workforce

Overview

Putting time into your preparation will make a huge difference to how you perform during interview. By the time you get to final interview stage you would have been through a tough assessment process. It is not worth cutting corners or getting complacent at this point.

The interview is not just a tick box assessment. If you are unsuccessful you will get another try after 6 months however that will be the final attempt so it is better to put everything into it on the first go.

Being well prepared will help you cope with the pressure of the day but will also be evident to the interviewers. You will feel more confident and will be able to cope much better with the parts you cannot plan for like what the actual questions will be.

Areas of Focus

Interview questions will relate to competencies and values from the Competency and Values Framework (CVF). Refer to the level 1 positive indicators for the competencies.

You obviously won't know what the questions are going to be, but you do know what the competencies and values are, and you should already be thinking about times where you have demonstrated those competencies for the rank you are aiming for.

You should focus on the following elements:

- Understanding the Competency & Values Framework

- Understanding different question types

- Identifying examples to use

- Interview response structure

Competency and Values Framework (CVF)

It is important that you understand the Competency & Values Framework. You are not expected to learn them but you are expected to have a good understanding of what they mean and why they are important in policing. You will be assessed against the CVF through your recruitment process, training and the rest of your career so you need to understand them and why they are important.

Start by reading through each of the CVF. Then try to explain it in your own words and perhaps summarise each of them in a few sentences.

Once you understand what they mean, start to think about why they are important in delivering policing. Consider the communities we police, the service we deliver, people within the organisation and partner organisations/agencies.

In addition, think about what kind of role model you want to be and how you would like to carry out your duties as a Police Officer.

Take your time on this and don't tackle it all in one go. Work through each of the competencies and values slowly. When you have completed this you should be able to:

- Describe each of the competencies and values

- Detail how each competency and value relates to policing

- Describe how each competency and value impacts the communities we serve

Understanding Different Question Types

You will be asked various question types. It is important that you understand what to focus on when answering an interview question.

How, Why, What type questions

How would you Describe HOW you would do what you are being asked about

Why is it important to ... Tell the interviewers WHY something is important or relevant

What do you think ... Explain WHAT you think or would do

When you have answered the question, it is good practice to introduce an example of when you have demonstrated the criteria.

So, to recap, answer the actual question first. Then introduce some evidence of when you have demonstrated what the question is asking about.

Understanding Different Question Types

Example based questions

Tell me about a time when ...

Give me an example of when you ...

Describe a time when you ...

With this type of question, you can go straight into providing some evidence of when you have demonstrated the criteria the question is focusing on.

Identifying Examples

Preparing examples of life experiences to use as evidence of your understanding of the CVF and if requested, in answering the question, will enable you to demonstrate your suitability for the role without added stress of having to think on your feet during the interview.

Begin by revisiting the CVF document. Go through the positive indicators for each competency and value making a note of things that you have done or been involved with for each one.

Next, start to narrow it down to two life experiences for each competency. Use examples that cover most of the positive indicators. It is good practice to use examples from different aspects of your life.

Interview Response Structure

When you have examples of life experiences for each competency or value, begin writing them out using the S.T.A.R. structure for guidance.

Situation

Set the scene by describing the situation you were in. Keep this brief.

Task

Explain what the task or overall aim was. Keep this brief.

Action

Explain what you had to do. What was your role and how did you carry it out. This bit is all about you and what you did. Details as much as you can here.

Result/Review

Provide a summary of the outcome to include:

Did it go well or not so well? How did you obtain feedback? What would you do differently next time? What did you learn?

Interview Response Structure

The next phase should be condensing your examples to make them relevant to the question. This is where the 'action' part of your example needs to be flexible. The aim is to make your examples work better for you. You will find that you can use a particular example for many different questions. Your situation and task won't necessarily change but your action could. For instance, if you were being asked an example about teamworking your response may look like this:

Situation

I worked in Primark in the clothing department.

Task

I was part of a small team tasked with removing the winter stock and replacing it with the new spring stock.

Action

[Describe everything you did in that scenario that was relevant to good teamwork. Get as much detail in as possible and make reference to all of the elements of good teamwork such as communication, listening, supporting others etc].

Interview Response Structure

Result/Review

When the task was completed, I asked for feedback from my colleagues and my supervisor on how they thought it went. I was also able to provide feedback to them too. Between us we established that the task went well because we got all of the new lines out and the old stock in within the allocated time. We worked together to ensure that the impact to the customers was minimal and communicated in a subtle but effective manner so as to remain low key and professional at all times. We identified an area for development which was how we initially organised the stockroom to accommodate our task. If I were to do this task again, I would suggest that we take some time to work out a stock room plan before starting to move stock on to the shop floor. I would communicate this to my colleagues and explain how it would help with the overall task in the hope that they would agree.