

Other Interview Question Examples



Select appropriate questions from the following to use during the interview. Remember that the questions or tasks used in the interview need to test the ability of the candidate in the identified selection criteria, and some questions may not be applicable for the role you are interviewing for. Pick the most important to you and the role - remember you only have a limited time for the interview. Limit the number of questions.

Introduction

- Why have you applied for this position?
- What skills and personal attributes do you possess that make you the ideal person for this role?
- Tell me a bit about yourself/your hobbies and interests
- Can you tell me a bit about your present position and the farm that you are on?
- How did you get involved in farming?
- Why did you become a farmer?

Education

- What is the highest level of formal education you have?
- What other courses have you done?
- How are you applying your training in your current position?
- What's the next thing you have to learn/would like to learn about?

Motivators

- Imagine it's six months after you've been in this job. What parts of the job do you imagine will make you glad you came to work here?
- What does the day look like on those mornings you get up and say to yourself "I can hardly wait to go to work today..."
- The next morning you say to yourself "I really don't want to go to work." Why do you say that?
- If you were independently wealthy and didn't have to work, what would make you want to go to work? What would it be about the work, the company, the people or anything else that would be so appealing that money didn't matter?

Assess self-evaluation skills

- In your career, describe your biggest success? What made it so?
- In your career, what's the one thing if you had to do it over again, that you would do differently? Why? What would you do?
- What's your greatest strength and why?
- Then – what is your Achilles heel or your weakness?

Milking

- We all have bad days sometimes. Can you tell me about a time when the milking process did not go well? What happened?
 - What did you do in that situation?
 - Looking back, how do you think you handled the situation?
 - Is there anything that you would change next time?
- Can you tell me about a time when there was a breakdown with the milking machinery in your present job? What happened?
 - How did you know what the problem was?
 - How was it fixed?
- What would you do if you had a thermoduric alert? How about a bacto alert?

Animal health

- Tell me how you monitor animal health in your present job?
- Tell me about the way you identified and managed mastitis in your last role?
 - What improvement, if any, could you make to this system?
- Have you ever treated cows with milk fever? Tell me how you do it.
- How much magnesium should you feed to newly calved cows?
- What in your experience causes bloat?

Stockmanship

- Our farm runs a herd of 450 cows. What experience have you had managing a herd this size?
- What do you think are the most important factors to ensure maximum efficiency and health of the herd?
(Ask questions about animal health)
- Animals don't always do what we want them to do. Can you tell me about a time when this last happened to you?
 - What did you do?
 - How did it all work out?

Mating

- Have you ever been responsible for identifying cows in heat?
 - How did you do this?
 - How successful were you?
- What are the indications a cow is in standing heat?
- How would you go about achieving a high submission rate in the first round of mating?
- How would you manage a tail painting programme?

Pasture management

- In your current job, who is responsible for soil and herbage tests? In what way is that information used, and by whom?
- When feed budgeting, how much do you allow to feed dry cows in winter?
- What growth rates would you allow in June and July for your current farm?
- What are the costs of purchased feed at present?
 - How much supplement would you feed at this time of the year?

Administration

- Part of this role will require you to maintain accurate records. You will also be expected to report to the manager any exceptional circumstances, problems and your recommended solutions. Describe the more complex types of records you have had to maintain in the past.
- What sort of information have you had to provide on a regular basis?
- How did you go about organising yourself to make sure this information was accurate, completed on time and met your manager's needs?

Numeracy

- If the farm is 150ha and has 450 cows requiring 18kgDM/c/d, what is the daily requirement per hectare?
- If the grass is growing at 70kgDM/ha/d and cow requirements are 50kgDM/ha/d, what proportion of the farm should be shut away for silage?
- The percentage of phosphate in DAP is 20%. How many kilograms per hectare will you need to apply to give 75kg/ha of phosphate?
- Teat spray is to be diluted at 9:1. How many litres of teat spray concentrate will you have to use to make up a 25 litre mixture?
- You are wanting to feed 18kgDM/cow to a herd of 500 cows. Paddocks have a pre-grazing cover of 3,000kgDM/ha. You want to leave a residual of 1,700kgDM/ha. What area will the herd need? How many square metres per cow is this?

Self management

- Describe a situation you have been in where you have had to work independently, juggling your personal demands with those of others without any day-to-day supervision.
- What techniques have you developed to make sure you achieve the results expected of you by your manager?
- When faced with a number of conflicting and equally urgent demands, how do you decide what to do first?
- Describe how you decide what work needs to be done in your present job. How do you decide what order to do it in?

Decision making ability

- Tell us about an important decision that you have made recently
 - What was the decision you had to make?
 - What processes did you go through to make your decision?
 - What alternatives did you consider?
 - Do you think that you made the right decision? Why/why not?

Communication

(Make notes here on the effectiveness of the applicant's communication during interview)

- How would you describe the way you communicate?
 - Why do you prefer to communicate this way?
- What types of people do you have most difficulty communicating with, and why?

Influence

- We have all been in the situation where what we believe is best is different from what our manager or peers want, or what has been standard operating procedure in the past. Can you think of a situation like this that you have faced?
 - How did you handle it?
 - How did they react?
 - What was the outcome?
- Describe a project you implemented. What did you do well and what would you like to have improved on?

Initiative

- Have you tended to drive things yourself? Or do you prefer to provide support, advice and processes to enable others to do things?
 - How have you gone about this?

Working relationships

- Please describe your ideal manager. Why do you like this type of manager?
- Who did you like working for least and why?
- Tell me about a time when you disagreed with your employer. How did you handle it?

Health and safety

- Almost everyone has had an accident (or a near miss) while operating machinery at some time. Can you recall such an incident that happened to you? Describe the situation fully
 - What did you do?
 - How did it end up?
 - Could things have been done better?
- What safety precautions do you use when using chemicals?

Staff management

- Think of a time when you had to direct staff to accomplish a relatively complex task. Describe the task and the situation
 - How did you go about giving the task to your staff member?
 - Did the staff member follow your instructions properly?
 - Did the task get done to your satisfaction?
 - How could it have been done better?
- Most people have difficulty with another person working on the farm at one time or another. Tell me about the most difficult situation involving another person that you have had to deal with. Describe the situation fully
 - How did you attempt to resolve this situation?
 - What happened in the end?
- What is the key to getting the best out of people?
- What types of people do you enjoy supervising?
- How do you develop teamwork?
- Tell me about a time when a staff member was really annoying you and how you dealt with it?
- What are the things that annoy you most about staff?

Remuneration

- What do you expect to earn in a position like this?
- How much do you earn now?

Lifestyle

- Do you have any medical conditions that may interfere with your ability to carry out this role effectively? If so, what are they?
- What do you do when you're not working? (Watch out for things that may compete)
- What social or community roles do you have?

Concluding comments/questions

- May we contact your referees?
- When are you available to start work?
- Detail contract and conditions
- Let them know your timeframe for getting back to them and when you anticipate the start date to be
- Check if applicant has any questions or other comments in support of their application

(Note the questions they asked)

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