

Competency-based personnel selection

**Guidelines from the Coordination Centre for Gender Studies and
Equal Opportunities at the University of Graz**



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1 INTRODUCTION

Are you also looking for someone who can do it all?

The person who is young and experienced, adaptable and independent, creative and structured, goal-oriented and open-minded, with international and regional networks?

These guidelines will help you make personnel selection decisions: **prioritizing** requirements for applicants, describing **realistic expectations**, formulating competency-based **questions** and tasks for job interviews, and dealing with biases in perception and **assessment**.

These guidelines cover

- Tips for creating a **requirements profile**
- Information about **competencies** that may be asked about in a job interview
- Suggested wording for specific **questions in the job interview**.

Avoid snap judgments that may arise from unconscious biases regarding age, gender, origin, physical and mental abilities, sexual orientation and lifestyle, appearance, and values by asking fair questions and conducting a systematic, reflective assessment.

1.1 Competence orientation

A job interview should provide an assessment of whether the qualifications and experience presented in a resume can be implemented in a self-organized manner in the future job, i.e., whether the person has the appropriate competencies and takes "*Regeln, Werte und Normen*" (translation: "*rules, values, and norms*") into account appropriately (cf. Erpenbeck/Rosenstiel 2017). Since competencies can be developed in different ways, the interview should also give an impression of the person's more stable personal characteristics and the competencies they can learn to develop.

Creativity is the key competency of the future, according to Heyse/Erpenbeck/Ortmann (2019). The authors define creativity as the „*Fähigkeit, etwas zu (er-)schaffen, was neu und zugleich anwendbar, also nützlich und brauchbar*“ (p. 260) (translation: "*ability to create something that is new and at the same time applicable, i.e., useful and practical*"), even if the benefits sometimes only become apparent many years later.

Other important future competencies related to creativity include flexibility, creative drive, personal responsibility, problem-solving and openness to dialogue, resilience, value orientation, teamwork, and interdisciplinary work (Heyse et al 2019, p. 260). The authors justify this selection of key competencies with disruptive social changes, especially in the areas of „*Wissen, Werte, Digitalisierung und damit verbunden in sozialen und gesellschaftlichen Beziehungen. Die Welt wird volatiler, unsicherer, komplexer und widersprüchlicher und zwar schneller und öfter.*“ (p. 11) (translation: "*knowledge, values, digitalization, and the associated social and societal relationships. The world is becoming more volatile, uncertain, complex, and contradictory, and at a faster pace and more frequently*").

1.2 Recommendations for fairness in the selection of personnel¹

To ensure that selection of personnel is as fair and non-discriminatory as possible, please note the following three points:

- No one makes decisions without prejudice, they are always based on subjective perceptions and **previous experiences** (which act as a framework for interpreting these perceptions) as well as **social influences** (such as stereotypical attributions or role expectations) and associated **feelings** (such as sympathy or antipathy).
- Therefore, consciously **reviewing** and exchanging subjective perceptions, as well as consciously **expanding** assessment criteria are key factors in the fair selection of personnel.
- Knowledge of **research results** on decision-making errors, unconscious bias and social stereotypes relating to age, gender, appearance, origin, values, physical and mental abilities, or lifestyles can support this process.

¹ See also: Guidelines to diversity-fair personnel selection, online at <https://koordination-gender.uni-graz.at/en/coordination-centre-for-gender-studies-and-equal-opportunities/services/publications-and-materials/>

In this context, we recommend that you pay attention to the following:

Multiple- eyes principle and addressing impressions in the job interview

- People often leave different impressions in job interviews. Check your impressions by **addressing them directly** in the interview and, if possible, share your subjective impressions with others involved in the application process.

Be aware of your feelings, focus on the job requirements

- **Sympathy** is an important criterion in personnel decisions, but should not be the decisive criterion. Therefore, check to what extent a person actually meets the requirements profile.

Avoid typical decision-making errors

- Impressions that correspond to one's own values or experiences are often evaluated more positively (**similarity and confirmation bias**). Discuss this with other people.
- Sometimes a person's characteristics stand out as particularly positive or negative (**overemphasis** or **comparison bias**). Evaluate this impression as one piece of information among many.
- Additional (private) information about applicants (e.g., is familiar with ...) or about their already high reputation often results in more positive evaluations (**relationship or hierarchy bias**). Focus on the information you can explore in the interview.

Break through stereotypical role expectations.

e.g., in relation to gender-stereotypical competencies, the origin or age of applicants, or the compatibility of private life and career.

- Competencies are **individual**, so look for people of all genders with a strong creative drive and select individuals who are both empathetic and good communicators. Discuss your expectations but do not anticipate individual behavior.
- Losing employees due to career changes or job dissatisfaction is more likely than losing them due to potential parenthood. With good **planning, parenthood** can be compatible with the continuous performance of duties. Therefore, focus the conversation on mutual expectations regarding work-life balance.
- From the applicant's point of view, being **transparent** about your **expectations** and requirements is also advantageous. The clearer you are about the working conditions, the higher the chance of finding the **right person**. Also ask about the applicants' expectations – what working conditions they need in order to perform well.

1.3 Profile of requirements

A job description includes information about the technical, personal, social, and methodological requirements for applicants and the expected professional experience. You can describe the following points:

Technical qualifications

- Field of study, (final) grades
- Master's thesis/dissertation topic
- Additional qualifications
- IT competencies, language competencies
- Special techniques, methods, equipment ...

Tip: Also pay attention to professional **potential**. Applicants who can point to a large number of publications may have already reached their peak. Applicants who have few publications may reach their peak productivity in the next 2-4 years.

Professional experience

- Research experience, research focus
- Interdisciplinary, international experience
- Projects, tasks, and roles in projects
- Teaching and continuing education
- Experience outside of academia

Tip: Pay attention to experience outside of academia as well. Applicants with a variety of experience tend to be more flexible, committed, and results-oriented.

Personal competencies refer to

- self-awareness and knowledge about oneself,
- dealing with strengths and weaknesses,
- a person's attitude to work, their motivation, and their professional orientation.

Tip: Those who have a good understanding of themselves, including their values, attitudes, feelings, and motives are often more resilient and reliable.

Social competencies refer to

- a person's interaction with others and their ability to work well with others,
- one's own role and behavior in a group or team,
- the ability to perceive how others react to one's behavior, and
- the ability to compare one's self-image with how others perceive you.

Tip: Decision-making and communication processes are influenced by relationships to about 80% and to only about 20% by content. Applicants who can also perceive and shape relationships can improve the quality and quantity of results.

Methodological competencies for teaching and administration refer to the ability to

- select work techniques and methods in a goal- and target group-oriented manner,
- know several methods and critically evaluate them, and
- develop methods, as well as perceive and recognize connections.

These guidelines provide a description of the personal, social and methodological competencies that are frequently required, as well as their development prospects.

The listed competencies are ranked according to Heyse/Erpenbeck/Ortmann (2019), who cite creativity as the most important future skill, followed by flexibility. The selection and categorization of skills was based on the KODE®X-Kompetenz-Explorer (Erpenbeck/Rosenstiel 2017).

The advantages and potential problems associated with certain competencies are listed. Additionally, there are questions to help you review individual competencies, as well as possible interpretations of reactions and answers in the job interview.

2 PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

2.1 Creativity

Creative people want to express their creativity, try new things, drive innovation, contribute ideas, ask questions, and make suggestions.

Development prospects

- Creativity is a relatively stable characteristic; creativity can be stimulated by techniques if there is at least a willingness to change.

Advantages

- Creative people are eager to learn, tolerate uncertainty well, and are inquisitive and curious.

Potential problems

- Creative people sometimes lose sight of the goal, take little pleasure in implementation and detailed work, and can overwhelm security-oriented colleagues.

Potential experience/evidence

- You have invented or created something, are interested in many things, e.g., related disciplines, are artistically active, and come from creative industries or professions.

Exemplary questions

- How would you redesign the department's website?
- What would you change at the university if you could?

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Putting forward many suggestions and ideas and responding to the question indicates creativity.
- When many ideas are put forward, also ask about implementation: "What would you do to ensure that this is implemented?", "How would you design such a change process?"
- Answers such as "I would have to involve/consult X and Y" or "I can't say that so quickly" indicate conscientiousness rather than creativity.

2.2 Flexibility

People who are flexible can easily adapt to change, cope well with uncertainty in the workplace and handle new situations and tasks with ease.

Development prospects

- People who are less flexible usually need security in order to break out of their "routine," need more time to adapt to change,
- Flexible people can also take on continuous tasks, provided there is sufficient overall variety.

Advantages

- Flexible people are adaptable, do not feel insecure, and are open to the ideas of others.

Potential problems

- Flexible people often find it difficult to maintain long-term working relationships or take on consistent tasks.

Potential experience/evidence

- Changes already experienced, career changes, company changes, experiences with fixed-term employment contracts, family relocations, migration, school changes, including blended families, dealing with unforeseen events such as illness/accidents

Exemplary questions

- Ask the candidate to describe their resume – and when changes occur, ask: "How did you experience this change/this period/this situation?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Signs of flexibility include viewing changes positively as an opportunity, and taking steps towards development.

2.3 Design competency

People with design competency want to "move things forward," initiate new developments, support innovation and contribute new ideas. They are confident, and believe in the chances of success.

Development prospects

- People with little design competency tend to remain stable in their execution.
- People with high design competency want their activities to be noticed and want the opportunity to "move things forward."

Advantages

- People with design competencies tend to be more willing to take risks.

Potential problems

- People with a strong creative design drive tend to be impatient, sometimes rushing into things and lacking prudence.

Potential experience/evidence

- People with design competencies show a high level of work intensity even in part-time jobs and when founding associations and initiatives.
- They demonstrate charitable, social, and socio-political commitment.
- Their leisure activities require initiative.

- They actively shape their studies and initiate/seek out additional projects.

Exemplary questions

- Questions about choosing a course of study, choosing a career, choosing hobbies
- Questions about extracurricular activities
- "Tomorrow you find out that you unexpectedly have four days off. What will you do with your free time?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Ask about the specific role in planned activities.

2.4 Personal responsibility

People with a high level of personal responsibility are active and act responsibly. They can solve or pursue tasks independently and on their own responsibility. They take care of the necessary resources and know-how and respond to difficulties and crises.

Development prospects

- This competency can be developed well, for example, through routine, security, and being "trusted to do something."

Advantages

- People with personal responsibility start tasks actively and are reliable in fulfilling them as well as evaluate these processes by themselves.

Potential problems

- They sometimes network too little with others, show a lack of cooperation, and act as "loners."

Potential experience/evidence

- You have already held positions of responsibility and been solely responsible for something, e.g., as a single parent.

Exemplary questions

- "How was responsibility structured in your previous role? Who made which decisions?"
- "What tasks were you responsible for, and what did this responsibility entail?"
- You can also ask about independent phases in adolescence, such as study trips, or the early establishment of your own household, as well as active decisions to move or relocate.

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Pay attention to whether applicants describe dependencies on others... "I can't do it without X," "Y didn't cooperate," "There's nothing you can do about it"... such answers may indicate a lack of independence.

2.5 Resilience

People who are particularly resilient can cope well with stressful situations at work or know how to deal with stress. They do not dwell on professional failures. They know how to maintain their performance, and can handle multiple stresses well.

Development prospects

- Resilience is a relatively stable personality trait, but experience, social support, or personality development measures can strengthen constructive handling of stress.

Advantages

- Resilient people can set boundaries, pay attention to their performance in the long term, compensate well for peaks in stress, and actively seek mental and physical balance.

Potential problems

- They sometimes tend to neglect their private lives, which creates "potential for personal crises."

Potential experience/evidence

- Project work, deadline-driven work, handling difficult situations – especially in their private lives.
- Extensive experience in social interactions, e.g., with students, multiple responsibilities due to family, work, and household or extracurricular activities, charitable work, caring for sick family members, or personal experience with illness indicate a high level of resilience.

Exemplary questions

- "How do you deal with difficult situations?"
- "Think of a difficult/stressful situation. What did you do? How did you react?"
- "What do you do when project delays occur?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Pay attention to how stress is dealt with, "be creative, actively shape the stressful situation" or "setting priorities and making decisions becomes more important" or even "organizing support" are appropriate responses.

2.6 Self-confidence

People with strong self-confidence like to be the center of attention, feel secure, are independent of the judgment and influence of others, are "at peace" with themselves, can handle criticism well, stand up for their attitudes and opinions, and reflect on themselves.

Development prospects

- Self-confidence can develop well, e.g., through positive experiences, especially positive feedback.

Advantages:

- Self-confident people are direct, express their opinions, and know themselves well.

Potential problems

- They are sometimes less willing to learn, are overly confident, and act undiplomatically.

Potential experience/evidence

- They come across as very confident in job interviews and state their wishes directly.
- People who have experience in (gender-specific/age-specific) atypical training and professional fields are often self-confident, e.g., career changers.

Exemplary questions

- "How do you react when confronted with criticism?"
- "What do you do when your contributions are not noticed in a meeting?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Confident people actively shape even difficult situations; they look for the causes of difficulties, reflect on their own attitudes, and see problems as challenges.
- Ask follow-up questions if the answers are too general, e.g., for "Difficult situations are challenging to me" – "What do you do specifically in this situation?" "How do you proceed?" "What do you definitely not do?"

2.7 Reliability

Reliable people have stamina, pay attention to detail, and remain attentive even when performing routine tasks. They are demanding and persistent, pay attention to their public image, and are loyal to their employers. They do not want to show any mistakes to the outside world.

Development prospects

- Reliability is a basic attitude that is difficult to learn; less conscientious people are usually more creative, spontaneous, or flexible.

Advantages

- Reliable people deliver consistent performance, are tidy and dependable, and make fewer mistakes.

Potential problems

- They sometimes take longer to complete tasks, can be perfectionists, and tend to be more leaning on being executors than creators.

Potential experience/evidence

- Tasks involving responsibility for details (funding accounting, administration)
- Positions with responsibility (e.g., club treasurer)
- Very careful application documents, punctuality, confirmation of appointments, etc.

Exemplary questions

- "What role would you be most likely to take on in an association and why?"
- "How do you organize your files and documents?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- The more considered and planned steps, the more careful
- The more spontaneous and unplanned the approach, the less conscientious

3 SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

3.1 Interpersonal competencies

People who are good at making contact can be recognized by the fact that they actively and openly approach other people. They are talkative, feel comfortable at events and in large crowds, are uninhibited, enjoy exchanging ideas, and have networks.

Development prospects

- Sociability is a relatively stable personality trait, so it can only be developed to a limited extent.

Advantages

- Sociable people know many people, exchange ideas with others, contribute new information, and are well connected.

Potential problems

- They are sometimes more "on the road than in the office" and sometimes pass on information too quickly or without thinking.

Potential experience/evidence

- Sociable people know lots of people, like to refer to their contacts, "chat in the hallway before the interview," want to "work with people," and enjoy contact with students and cooperation partners.

Exemplary questions

- "How would you start your new job?"
- "In your opinion, what are the most important success factors for good projects/good teamwork?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Answers such as "bringing the right people together," "knowing the right people at the right time," etc. indicate sociability, while "reading up on the subject" or predominantly mentioning resources or planning as success factors tend to indicate task-oriented, structured individuals.

3.2 Empathy

People with good empathy skills are adept at sensing moods, fostering a positive working atmosphere, addressing and resolving relationship issues, and adapting well to challenging interpersonal situations.

Development prospects

- Empathy can only be developed to a certain extent through self-awareness processes, but mutual needs and expectations can be clarified through regular feedback and conscious discussion of the collaboration.

Advantages

- People with good empathy are sensitive and can increase performance in a team by creating positive relationships.

Potential problems

- They often crave harmony and are sometimes predominantly relationship-oriented, which makes them less resilient to conflict.

Potential experience/evidence

- You talk about moods, relationships, and organizational culture and rate these as positive; you also rate private relationships and family as important.
- Empathetic people are good at describing their own state of mind.

Exemplary questions

- "In your opinion, what is most important for good cooperation?"
- "What do you do when people in the team exhibit destructive behavior?"
- "How do you recognize a good team atmosphere?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- ask for clarification of general statements
- Patent remedies, advice, or trivializations such as "You have to think positively," "I've been through that too - X helps," "You have to get through it" do not demonstrate empathy.

3.3 Communication competencies

People with strong communication skills can articulate their own expectations and goals, communicate appropriately for the situation, and interpret non-verbal cues. They are also characterized by asking many questions and structuring the conversation in a goal-oriented manner. Having strong communication skills means more than "being talkative" in the sense of "enjoying talking to others" (see rather: **sociability**).

Development prospects

- Communication competencies can be developed, and techniques for conversation and questioning can be learned. It is important to be willing to perceive both self-perception and external perception, and to seek feedback.

Advantages

- Misunderstandings can be avoided or clarified, which contributes to higher performance and conflict management competencies.

Potential problems

- People who are skilled communicators usually also "demand" a high level of communication culture.

Potential experience/evidence

- They are able to express yourself well, describe situations and experiences well, differentiate between your own perceptions and those of others, and are aware of the importance of communication (as a source of misunderstandings or conflicts as well as a means of shaping situations).
- They have already held advisory positions and feel comfortable in advisory situations.

Exemplary questions

- "In your opinion, what are the most important factors for successful collaboration?"
- "How would you structure an institute meeting?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Answers such as "clear communication structures," "clarifying, discussing, communicating with people..." indicate strong communication competencies.
- Responses that good cooperation is primarily based on rules, structures, IT, resources, and framework conditions tend to indicate a lack of awareness of the importance of communication.
- "Talkativeness" or the frequent use of empty phrases tend to indicate poor communication competencies.

3.4 Team competencies

People with strong teamwork skills acknowledge others' contributions, actively listen, ask questions and contribute ideas. They can also take a back seat to allow others or the common goal to take precedence, stand up for others, the team or the department, and solve problems together.

Development prospects

- Team competency is not a basic attitude that can be developed very well.
- Team-oriented personalities can also act and work independently with the support of the team, but they value regular communication.

Advantages

- People with this competency show a high level of cooperation, are aware of relationships, pay attention to maintaining a good atmosphere, are adaptable, and can delegate.

Potential problems

- They may be dependent on the opinions and assessments of others, need feedback and involvement.

Potential experience/evidence

- Reports of professional experience in teams and working groups, had areas of responsibility that were too complex for individuals and therefore had to work in teams.
- They participate in team sports, they organize family or club activities.

Exemplary questions

- "How would you describe good teamwork?"
- "What is important to you in order to feel comfortable?"
- "What experiences have you had with teamwork so far? What do you find difficult based on your experience?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Answers such as "Everyone has their own area of responsibility" tend to indicate lone wolves.
- Team-oriented individuals also mention the achievements of others when describing their own career.

3.5 Diversity and conflict management competencies

People with these competencies acknowledge others' contributions, actively listen, ask questions and can handle differences, such as when their own ideas are questioned. They can address conflicts, actively participate in conflict resolution and recognize their own role in conflicts. They can also accept criticism, and provide constructive feedback.

Development prospects

- These competencies can be developed, for example, by experiencing conflict resolution, by addressing and consciously dealing with conflicts, but it takes time.

Advantages

- People with diversity competency are appreciative, often mediating, and open to new ideas.
- They address conflicts and can deal well with mistakes (their own and others').

Potential problems

- They sometimes pay more attention to relationships or the right language than to content and results, give a lot of attention to disruptions, and sometimes display a strong tendency to be overly direct.

Potential experience/evidence

- Applicants report conflict situations in their professional or private lives, have experienced and resolved conflict situations or crises.
- They describe learning experiences from crises or conflicts, see conflicts (also) as an opportunity, are not afraid of them, see the likelihood of conflict as realistic, and view conflict situations as normal/necessary ("Good teams are not those without conflict, but those that deal with conflict well").

Exemplary questions

- "What difficult situations have you experienced in a team and how did you deal with them?"
- "What do you consider to be a 'good' way of dealing with conflicts?"
- "In your experience/opinion, what is helpful when dealing with conflicts?"
- "How can you deal with different/conflicting goals or interests in a team?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Conflict situations should be described as "normal"; conflicts should not be reduced to individuals ("send difficult employees on training courses" or similar); conflicts should not be trivialized ("adults can talk things through"); conflicts should be perceived and described as manageable.
- When you hear statements such as "Conflicts are opportunities" or "Conflicts always have something good about them," you should ask: "What could the good sides be?" "What do you mean?" "What can a team do to take advantage of these opportunities?" "How would you go about taking advantage of the good sides of the conflict, and what might those be?"

4 TEACHING and ADMINISTRATION

4.1 Didactic competencies

Didactic competency essentially means being able to design/support students' learning processes – i.e., selecting content and presenting it in an understandable way, inspiring enthusiasm for the content or stimulating curiosity, and encouraging self-organized learning. Didactically competent individuals work in a goal-oriented manner, are familiar with didactic methods and different examination methods, and are able to manage group processes. They work together with other teachers on quality assurance in teaching and on processes of curriculum planning or teaching organization.

Development prospects

- Didactic competency can be developed through workshops, reflections, further education, coaching or observations.

Advantages

- Teachers with didactic competency enable sustainable learning among students, want to and are able to inspire students, focus on the essentials, and see students as an important target group.

Possible problems

- Didactically competent individuals often spend a lot of time on high-quality teaching, leaving them with less time for research.

Potential experience/evidence

- Proof of didactic training and continuing education, including non-university education
- During the interview, individuals with teaching expertise can spark curiosity with their own content (e.g., dissertation topic).
- They place a high value on teaching and students.

Exemplary questions

- "What do you consider to be the conditions for good teaching?"
- "How do you prepare your lessons?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- An attitude such as "Teaching cannot be learned" may indicate a lack of interest.
- The attitude that "teaching is a matter of talent" can indicate an undifferentiated view.
- Keep asking questions until you get a very concrete picture of how lessons are prepared and taught; don't settle for generalizations such as "I consider teaching to be very important...", "Students must be taken seriously...", or similar statements.

4.2 Determination

Very determined people have clear goals and want to achieve them. They work efficiently and do not allow themselves to be distracted. They often only consider aspects that are superficially relevant, work quickly, and are highly focused.

Development prospects

- Determination can be learned. Less determined people need feedback on their behavior. Clear goals and deadlines and regular monitoring are helpful so that they do not get "bogged down."

Advantages

- Determined people are willing to take risks, act quickly, and "deliver results."

Potential problems

- They are often impatient, tend to rush into things, lack prudence, and have little time for other experiences and exchanges.

Potential experience/evidence

- There are numerous publications, papers, results, and a very impressive Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- They have very clear visions of the future, for themselves or for their own children, the university, society.

Exemplary questions

- "How do you spend your free time and vacations?"
- "How do you see your work developing over the next x years?"
- Ask simulation questions "How would you proceed in situation X?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Determination is indicated when the actions described pursue a clear purpose and decisions are made with a defined goal in mind.
- Determined people can make decisions, take a stand, and tend to respond more concisely than cautious people.

4.3 Organizational and project management competencies

People with strong organizational competency can structure complex issues, plan tasks, set priorities, estimate time and resources, organize themselves well, can obtain information, focus on implementation, have experienced of administrative tasks/project management, and consider organizational contexts.

Development prospects

- Project management is easy to learn. Understanding complexity is more challenging; people who are detail-oriented and technically focused people may have excellent self-management skills, but are often less aware of organizational contexts.

Advantages

- People with organizational competency are usually good planners, they are prudent, can see and describe connections, have an overview, and focus on implementation.

Potential problems

- They are sometimes more generalist in nature, have less detailed expertise, and focus more on the process than on the content.

Potential experience/evidence

- People with organizational competencies can be recognized by their highly structured applications and structured manner of conversation.
- They are often also talented organizers in their private lives, e.g., in balancing work and private life, juggling several projects at once, participating in club activities, or organizing private parties and events. They take on moderation tasks or roles in committees.

Exemplary questions

- "How would you approach your new area of responsibility?"
- "How would you resolve/begin/handle situation X?"
- "How do you involve others in your planning? How do you keep track of unfinished tasks?"
- "How did you go about writing your master's thesis/dissertation?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- The more structured and linear the description, the more evidence of organizational skills.
- They rate planning and structure higher than creativity, innovation, or team spirit.

4.4 Problem solving and management competencies

Solution-oriented individuals take a goal-oriented approach, continuously reviewing how plans and projects are progressing. They make relevant decisions and coordinate their actions with other university stakeholders in order to ensure that solutions are compatible.

Development prospects

- Management competencies can be developed effectively. Networking, recognizing structural dependencies and taking organizational contexts into account, can be learnt and trained.

Advantages

- People with strong problem-solving and management skills are highly capable of taking action and are well accepted as they consider structural aspects and relevant stakeholders.

Potential problems

- On the other hand, they sometimes tend to want to solve social problems through structural changes.

Potential experience/evidence

- Experience in university committee work or interest representation
- offer a change of perspective, in the sense that challenges can also be described from different points of view

Exemplary questions

- "In your opinion, what should good cooperation between the institute and the university management look like?"
- "What experience do you have with committee work, and how can cooperation in committees be most successful?"
- "How can changes at universities—e.g., greater digitization in teaching – be implemented in a sustainable manner?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- Pay attention to whether a person shows awareness of interactions within the organization and whether they take into account factual as well as relational and power aspects.

4.5 Leadership competencies

People with leadership skills are interested in shaping content and exerting social influence. They can inspire themselves and others to pursue a cause, are creative, and aspire to "make a difference" in terms of content. They have strong communication skills, are patient and understanding towards others, and have a strong sense of responsibility.

Development prospects

- Leadership competencies can be developed and trained through further education, but it is important to reflect sufficiently on one's own role.
- This competency can be developed particularly well when people have a vision; they must be able to inspire themselves and enjoy working with others.

Advantages

- People with leadership competencies are responsible and decisive, they support developments in terms of content, and their opinions are listened to by others.

Potential problems

- They may find it difficult to adapt, often want to be the center of attention, are sometimes impatient, and want to impose their own opinions.

Potential experience/evidence

- Management experience in previous jobs,
- managerial or creative roles in non-work contexts,
- also school spokesperson or student representative

Exemplary questions

- "How do you go about convincing a team of the need for change?"
- "How would you ideally like your role to develop over the next few years?"

Interpretation of possible reactions/answers

- can convince others of their attitudes in the job interview
- Want to inspire enthusiasm for "their content"

5 WEIGHTING of Competencies

What is particularly important for the future role? Please select a total of five competencies and rank them in order of importance:

COMPETENCY	RANK
Creativity	
Flexibility	
Design competency	
Personal responsibility	
Resilience to stress	
Self-confidence	
Reliability	
Interpersonal competency	
Empathy	
Communication competency	
Team competency	
Diversity and conflict management competencies	
Didactic competency	
Determination	
Organizational and project management competencies	
Problem solving and management competencies	
Leadership competency	

6 QUESTION FORMATS Competence-oriented

6.1 Appropriate questions and tasks

- Ask **as many open-ended questions as possible**, i.e., questions that begin with WHAT or HOW.
- For applicants who are reserved and quiet: Ask about their **master's thesis**, hobbies, or areas of expertise to offer them a familiar topic of conversation.
- If you want to test decision-making skills, ask **simulation questions** – e.g., "How would you proceed in the following situation?" or "How would you deal with task X?" Pay attention to whether someone commits to a position, takes a stance, or "leaves everything open" in their answer.
- If you want to ask about possible solutions, **question** the reasoning offered by applicants. Ask about the reasons behind their decisions.
- When assigning tasks and reviewing proposed solutions, pay attention to the solution and decision-making processes, the arguments, creativity, concentration, effort, and inventiveness, and not just the specific solution proposed.
- Ask questions about all descriptions and examples until you could present the situation and applicants to a **"third person"** You should have a clear, describable picture of the applicants and not just a rough idea.
- When describing the resume, previous tasks, and goals, pay attention to **strengths and weaknesses**: ask applicants about their **wishes**.
- Ask what applicants **value** in colleagues, managers, or employees – this provides information about what is **important** to applicants. The following questions are also useful for this purpose: "What are your expectations for your new role? What should the tasks and collaboration be like for you to be satisfied?" "How should your tasks and environment definitely not develop? What would make you dissatisfied?"

6.2 Inappropriate questions and tasks

- Avoid questions about strengths and weaknesses such as *"What are you particularly good at?"* or *"What are your weaknesses?"* or *"What do you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses?"*

These types of questions are designed to test applicants' spontaneity, quick-wittedness, and level of preparation, and they prompt applicants to give **rehearsed answers**.

- Avoid stress interviews: when people are stressed, they lose their ability to reflect and learn. While answers may demonstrate skills in dealing with similar situations, they demonstrate competencies such as good time management or resilience less effectively.

Imprint

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