

Today's Presenters



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Today's Presenters



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House Keeping Rules

You are muted by default. The chat function is disabled.

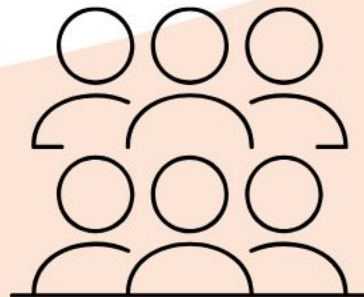
If you have any questions, please submit them through **Zoom Q&A button**.

The session will be **recorded**. The recording and presentation will be available on: [Inter-Agency Career Week 2026 webpage](#)



Due to the large number of participants in this session, we might not be able to respond to all of your questions.


Thank you for your understanding.




What We Will Cover Today


- How interviews are structured — beyond the UN
- Why Competency-Based Interviewing (CBI) is used
- How to prepare: research, reflect, build your stories
- Structuring answers: the STAR+L framework
- Hypothetical questions — a growing trend
- Your motivational pitch: telling your story persuasively
- Interview day: do's, don'ts, and managing nerves
- Virtual and pre-recorded interviews
- Practice techniques and using AI as a prep tool
- Q&A


How Do You Feel Before an Interview?

 Nervous — “I worry about saying the wrong thing”

 Excited — “I see it as a great opportunity!”

 Calm — “I’ve prepared and feel ready”

 Anxious — “My mind races with what-ifs”

 Curious — “I’m eager to learn more about the role”

 Confident — “I know I’ve got this”

How Interviews Are Structured

Technical test / pre-recorded video

Required before the live interview in some processes

Competency-Based Questions (CBI)

3–5 behavioral questions drawing on your past experience

Hypothetical / Problem-Solving

How would you approach a specific challenge or scenario?

Questions for the Panel

Your chance to show curiosity and knowledge of the organization

Motivation / Tell me about yourself

Why do you want this job? What makes you the best fit? (90 sec–3 min)

Values and Ethics

A question on your personal values or an ethical dilemma

Strengths and Weaknesses

Honest, calibrated self-assessment tied to the role requirements

Out of the Box Questions

Questions that ask if you were to be hired

Why Competency-Based Interviewing?

Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance.

1

Mitigates bias

All candidates answer the same questions, scored against the same criteria



2

Increases fairness

Judgements are based on demonstrated behaviors, not personal impressions



3

Promotes diversity and inclusion

Reduces the impact of personal chemistry or cultural familiarity



4

Focuses on actual competencies

Evaluates the specific skills and behaviors needed for the role



Know Your Competency Framework

Organization	Framework Name	Core Values / Examples
UN Secretariat	Competencies for the Future	Integrity, Professionalism, Respect for Diversity
UNIDO	Core Values and Key Competencies	Integrity, Diversity, Commitment, Professionalism, Creativity, Excellence
IAEA	The Competency Framework	Collaboration, Communication, Commitment to Learning
Private sector	Varies by organization	Leadership, Innovation, Customer focus, Accountability
NGOs / INGOs	Varies by organization	Mission alignment, Accountability, Collaboration

Tip: Search “[Organization name] competency framework” — always check the specific job opening for the assessed competencies.

First Steps: Preparation

1

Research the Organization and Role

Mandate, strategy, priorities, current challenges, values, recent news

2

Analyze the Job Opening Carefully

Every word matters — identify required competencies, duties, and level

3

Understand the Responsibilities

Map each duty to a skill or story from your own professional experience

4

Ask: What is the hiring manager looking for?

Think beyond qualifications — what problem are they trying to solve by hiring you?

Tip: Use specific examples from your career — these become your interview answers.


Reflect on Your Professional Journey

 **Skills Developed or Mastered**

Technical, interpersonal, leadership — what can you do now that you could not do before?

 **Accomplishments You Are Proud Of**

Results you delivered, measurable impact, recognition received, goals exceeded

 **Mistakes You Learned From**

Shows self-awareness and growth — some of the strongest CBI answers come from here

 **Challenges and Problems You Solved**

Difficult stakeholders, tight deadlines, ambiguous situations, conflict resolution

Structuring Your Answers: The STAR+L Framework

S	Situation Set the scene briefly. Where, when, with whom?	10%
T	Task What was your specific objective or challenge?	10%
A	Action What did YOU do? How exactly did you do it? Be very specific.	70%
R	Result What was the outcome? Quantify where possible.	10%
L	Learning What did you learn? How did you apply it later?	Bonus

Spend **70%** of your answer on the **ACTION** — that is what interviewers are assessing.

STAR+L in Action: A Worked Example

Question: "Tell us about a time when you were confronted with a difficult interpersonal conflict as part of a team and how you managed it"

S — Situation (10%)	Two colleagues were in conflict and had stopped communicating, impacting the team's work quality and atmosphere.
T — Task (10%)	As a peer (not a manager), I felt responsible to help resolve the tension before it derailed the project.
A — Action (70%)	I spoke with each colleague individually. I discovered both felt the other was not pulling their weight. I reviewed the workplan and identified that roles and responsibilities were unclear. I proposed a revised plan and requested a joint meeting to clear the air and realign on expectations.
R — Result (10%)	Tensions eased once responsibilities were clarified. The team's communication improved and the project KPIs were met on time.
L — Learning (Bonus)	In my next project as team lead, I held a kick-off meeting to define roles, communication norms and shared goals from day one.

How Do You Choose Which Example to Use?



The most impressive result I ever achieved



The one most relevant to the question asked



The most recent experience I can remember



Whichever comes to mind first

Effective vs. Ineffective Competency-Based Responses

✓ Effective Response

Uses past tense: “I designed...” — concrete and contextualized

Explains HOW you did something
“I facilitated the workshop through participatory methods...”

Examples match the complexity and seniority of the role you are applying for

Describes YOUR role clearly — uses “I” with specific actions and outcomes

Ends with a result and what you learned and applied

✗ Ineffective Response

Uses present tense or vague generalizations: “I usually do...”

Tells WHAT without the HOW
“I facilitated a workshop.” Full stop.

Examples are too junior, too vague, or unrelated to the level of the job

Overuses “we” — interviewer cannot tell what you specifically contributed

No outcome or learning — leaves the interviewer wondering what happened

Sample Competency-Based Interview Questions

Competency	Success / Strength question	Setback / Reflection question
Teamwork	Describe a time you worked in a highly effective team. What was YOUR contribution?	Tell me about a time you had difficulties working in a team. What caused the problems?
Communication	Give an example of explaining something complex to a non-specialist audience. What was the outcome?	Describe a presentation where you influenced a key stakeholder's decision. What challenges did you face?
Achieve Results	Describe a project where you delivered results despite competing priorities. What lessons did you learn?	Tell me about a time you met a tight deadline while maintaining high quality. What steps did you take?
Values and Ethics	Describe a situation where you faced an ethical dilemma. How did you handle it? What values guided you?	Tell me about a time your values were tested at work. How did you respond?
Weaknesses	What is one area you are actively working to develop? What steps are you taking?	What feedback have you received about your performance that challenged you?

Hypothetical Questions: A Growing Interview Trend

Used increasingly across sectors, and in few international organizations — tests judgment, prioritization, communication, critical thinking and analysis

What are they? Hypothetical questions present a scenario and ask how you **WOULD** handle it — drawing on your past experience, judgment, and values.

Sample Scenario: Handling Conflicting Priorities

Imagine you are working on an important assignment with a tight deadline. A senior manager from another team contacts you urgently, asking for information that would take several hours to prepare. Both tasks appear important and time-sensitive.

How would you approach this situation and decide what to priorities?

Competencies Assessed

- Time management and prioritization
- Judgment under pressure
- Communication with stakeholders

Follow-Up Questions to Expect

- How would you determine which task takes priority?
- How would you communicate with both stakeholders?
- If both insist their request is urgent, how do you handle that?
- What if you realize you cannot meet both deadlines?

Your Motivational Pitch

"Tell me about yourself, and why you want this position"

A 60–90 second introduction — who you are, what you do, and why YOU are right for THIS role

Structure Your Story

1. Who you are

Your professional identity and core strength

2. How you got here

A brief, compelling arc of your career journey

3. Why this role is the logical next step

Connect your strengths to what the organization needs

4. Express your motivation

What excites you about this specific role and organization?

How to Build Yours

- Be authentic — do not recite your CV
- Write it down first, then speak it aloud
- Practice aloud — not just in your head
- Memorize the key phrases and transitions
- Tailor it to EACH organization and role
- It is about THEM — align with their mandate and goals

Sample Motivational Statement

“ What strongly motivates me about this role is the opportunity to contribute to your organization's mandate by strengthening workforce capability and ensuring staff are equipped to deliver on its mission in a global and operational context.

I am a Human Resources professional specializing in learning and development, with over 10 years of experience supporting staff growth through performance management, career development, coaching, and training.

In my current role, I design and deliver learning solutions for over 2,500 staff across Vienna and more than 115 field locations. This experience has allowed me to translate organizational priorities into practical, scalable development initiatives that enhance both individual performance and institutional effectiveness.

I see this role as a natural next step where I can further contribute by aligning talent development strategies with your organization's goals, ensuring that staff are equipped, engaged, and ready to deliver on its mandate.”

**Identity and
core strength**

**Scope and
credibility**

**Motivation and
value to org**

Before the Interview: Logistics, Mindset and Practice

Logistics

- Confirm date, time, location or virtual link
- Know who you will be meeting and for how long
- Choose a quiet, well-lit room for virtual interviews
- Test audio, video, internet connection, platform
- For pre-recorded: find uninterrupted time


Mindset and Message


- Think about the professional image you want to project
- Prepare for difficult questions: gaps, weaknesses
- Focus on your strengths and successes — not fears
- Research the interviewers if names are known
- Think positive thoughts about your skills and experience

Practice!


- Rehearse STAR stories aloud — aim for 3 minutes each
- Practice body language: posture, eye contact, gestures
- Do a mock interview with a colleague or coach
- Record yourself — audio AND video
- Ask for feedback on content, structure, and delivery

How far in advance do you typically prepare for an interview?

 The night before

 2–3 days before

 A week or more

 I wing it!

During the Interview: Do's and Don'ts

DO ✓

- Listen carefully; ask for clarification if needed
- It is OK to pause and think before answering
- Write the question down and repeat it back
- Keep answers concise: 3–5 min using STAR+L
- Focus on YOUR role — use “I” not “we”
- Establish rapport: eye contact, smile, engage
- Speak in a conversational, confident voice
- Ask 1–2 thoughtful questions at the end
- End on a positive note — give your motivational pitch if not asked

DON'T ✗

- Ramble or fail to address the actual question asked
- Forget to highlight your individual contribution
- Assume the panel shares your technical background
- Assume your home country context is universally known
- Use unexplained acronyms or technical jargon
- Make up an example — ever
- Speak negatively about former managers or colleagues
- Answer before you are ready — take your time
- Check your phone or look distracted

Virtual and Pre-Recorded Interviews: Special Tips

Virtual (Live) Interview

- Look into the camera — not the screen
- Professional, neutral background
- Ask permission to take notes — explains why you glance down
- Dress professionally (neutral colors read better on camera)
- Consider standing — it energizes your voice
- Test tech before: camera, mic, platform, internet

Pre-Recorded / Async Interview

- Find uninterrupted time and a quiet space
- Maintain energy — there is no live interaction
- Follow time limits strictly — the system cuts you off
- Practice to camera before recording
- Keep your eyes on the camera lens, not the question text
- Dress as you would for a live interview

Managing Nerves (Any Format)

- Take 3 deep breaths before you begin
- Pause and observe your thoughts without judgment
- Create a positive intention: how you will feel and respond
- Visualize yourself answering calmly and confidently
- Remember: the panel wants you to succeed
- Prepare so thoroughly that confidence replaces anxiety

Practice: The Single Biggest Differentiator

1 Build Your Story

- Write out your STAR+L story in bullets
- Check: past tense? Is the Action section ~70%?
- Match complexity to the role you are applying for

2 Say It Out Loud

- Tell the story aloud — do NOT just read it silently
- Time yourself: aim for 3–5 min (motivation pitch: 90 sec–3 min)
- Repeat until it fits comfortably without rushing

3 Record Yourself

- Audio: listen for pace, volume, clarity, filler words
- Video: watch for eye contact, posture, calm gestures
- Be your own honest critic

4 Get Feedback

- Practice with someone who knows your field — feedback on content
- Practice with someone who does not — feedback on clarity
- Ask: Was I clear? Did I stay on track? What was my impact?

Using AI to Prepare for Your Interview

Mock Interviewer

Ask AI to roleplay as an interviewer. Give it the job description and ask it to ask you 3–4 competency questions one by one, then give feedback on each answer.

STAR Story Reviewer

Paste your written STAR story and ask: “Is this clear? Is the Action section specific enough? Does it answer the question? What is missing?”

Organization Researcher

Ask AI to summarize the organization's mandate, recent priorities, and current challenges to help you tailor your motivation statement.

Weakness Coach

Describe your real weakness and ask AI to help you frame it honestly and constructively — showing self-awareness and a commitment to growth.

Question Generator

Ask AI to generate 8–10 likely interview questions based on the job description, then practice answering each one aloud.

Motivation Statement Editor

Write a draft of your pitch, paste it in, and ask: “Does this feel authentic? Is it tailored to the role? What is missing?”

 Always verify any information AI gives you about an organization or role against official sources.

Your Interview Preparation Checklist

- ✓ **Research:** I have researched the organization's mandate, priorities, and current context
- ✓ **Stories Ready:** I have 8–10 STAR+L stories prepared, covering a range of competencies
- ✓ **Motivation Pitch:** I have written, practiced, and memorized my 60–90 second motivational statement
- ✓ **Practiced Out Loud:** I have rehearsed my key stories aloud, timed them, and received feedback
- ✓ **Mindset Ready:** I have visualized a successful interview and committed to showing up at my best
- ✓ **Job Analysis:** I have read the job opening carefully and identified the required competencies
- ✓ **Strengths and Weaknesses:** I can talk about my top 3 strengths and one area of development — with examples
- ✓ **Questions Prepared:** I have 2 thoughtful questions ready to ask the interview panel
- ✓ **Logistics Confirmed:** I know the date, time, format, and interviewers — and tested my tech (if virtual)

What's the ONE thing you'll do differently in your next interview?



	Monday, 04 May	Tuesday, 05 May	Wednesday, 06 May	Thursday, 07 May	Friday, 08 May
03:00-04:00 (New York) 09:00-10:00 (Europe) 10:00-11:00 (Nairobi) 14:00-15:00 (Bangkok)	Pres (E) - From the UN to the Private Sector: Skills that enable Career Transition	Pres (E) - Thriving in Uncertainty	Pres (E) - Beyond the algorithm: Preparing your career for Life 3.0	Pres (E) - Habits under Pressure: working more intentionally	Pres (E) Behavioural Science for Career Development: Evidence-Based Steps for Action
04:30-05:30 (New York) 10:30-11:30 (Europe) 11:30-12:30 (Nairobi) 15:30-16:30 (Bangkok)	PD (E) - Inside the Recruiter's Mind: How Hiring Really Works in the UN and Beyond	PD (E) - Private Sector Unlocked: How to Enter, Adapt, and Succeed	Pres (E) - Upskilling for the Future: How to Stay Marketable Inside and Beyond the UN	Pres (E) - Becoming a UN Volunteer: What is in it for you? The Hidden Benefits of Volunteering.	PD (E) - Beyond the UN Blue: Navigating Your Career Transition to Other IGOs
06:00-07:00 (New York) 12:00-13:00 (Europe) 13:00-14:00 (Nairobi) 17:00-18:00 (Bangkok)	PD (E) - Talent on the Move: Growing your career through mobility	Pres (F) - Recherche d'emploi optimisée par l'IA : éthique, sécurisée et tournée vers l'avenir	Clinic (E) - AI for Your Career: Practical Tools and Prompts for Career Management	Pres (E) - Leading from Within: Self-Awareness, Authenticity, and Inner Resilience	Pres (F) - Maîtriser les entretiens d'embauche: Transformer son expérience en levier de réussite
07:30-08:30 (New York) 13:30-14:30 (Europe) 14:30-15:30 (Nairobi) 18:30-19:30 (Bangkok)	Clinic (E) - Mapping Your Motivators for Career Choices	Pres (E) - Mapping Professional Achievements to Job Application and Interview	Pres (E) - Breaking Down Job Descriptions	Pres (E) - What remains when everything changes: Insights from Third Culture and Global Nomad Research	Clinic (E) - The skills shift: What skills-based hiring and AI agents might mean for a UN career
09:00-10:00 (New York) 15:00-16:00 (Europe) 16:00-17:00 (Nairobi) 20:00-21:00 (Bangkok)	Pres (E) - Your Career, Your Conversation	Pres (E) - Strengthening Your Adaptability Muscles - AQ: The Adaptability Quotient	Pres (E) - Managing Your Saboteurs: Removing Barriers to Your Career Growth	Pres (E) - Use Your Strengths to Boost Your Career	Pres (E) - Activating Inner Resources in Uncertain Times
10:30-11:30 (New York) 16:30-17:30 (Europe) 17:30-18:30 (Nairobi) 21:30-22:30 (Bangkok)	Pres (E) - A Mind-Blowing Tour of AI Tools to Accelerate Your Career	Pres (E) - From Sat Nav to Compass: Navigating Your Career in a Changing UN System	Pres (S) - Construye tu Asistente de Carrera con IA	Pres (E) - Building a winning profile from application to interview	Pres (E) - Mentoring 2.0: From Top-Down to All-Around
13:00-14:00 (New York) 19:00-20:00 (Europe) 20:00-21:00 (Nairobi) 00:00-01:00 ¹ (Bangkok)	Pres (F) - Opportunités de carrière aux Nations Unies pour les jeunes professionnels et conseils pour réussir sa candidature	PD (E) - Thriving Globally - The human side of relocation	Pres (E) - Career Development: How you can turn a Psychosocial Hazard into a Thriving Strategy	Pres (E) - Youth Engagement: Put in Practice! (Young Talents in the UN System)	Pres (E) - Working for Justice
14:30-15:30 (New York) 20:30-21:30 (Europe) 21:30-22:30 (Nairobi) 01:30 ¹ -02:30 ¹ (Bangkok)	Pres (E) - Mastering Job Interviews: Turning Your Experience into Impact	Pres (S) - Cómo dominar las entrevistas de trabajo: refleja tu experiencia con impacto	Clinic (S) - Desarrollo de habilidades y redes profesionales a través de la mentoría	Pres (E) - Make career moves with confidence using the 5i Framework	Pres (E) - Own your Future, Make your Role Matter

