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## Purchasing agent interview questions

These **Purchasing Agent** interview questions bring together a snapshot of skills and qualifications you should look for in candidates to find the best.

### Purchasing Agent Interview Questions

Purchasing agents buy products on behalf of their company for use or wholesale. They may be found in many industries (wholesale, manufacturing etc.), but their core responsibilities (evaluating suppliers and negotiating) remain the same.

Sector-specific experience can be useful in more senior positions. For example, one with experience in manufacturing will know what types of products are needed and which are the most reliable suppliers. Similarly, a purchasing agent in retail will have better knowledge of consumer trends. Have a discussion with the candidates and find out whether their past experience can benefit your company.

Key soft skills to look for are negotiating, [critical thinking](#) and communicating effectively. Knowledge of market research, inventory control and procurement strategies is important. The following questions will give you an idea on how to evaluate these aspects and choose the best among candidates.

Sometimes, the title refers to a position focused more on administrative tasks (processing payments, keeping records etc.) rather than procurement. In that case, look for candidates with administrative experience and skills.

### Operational and Situational questions

- What's the challenge in using just-in-time inventories? How would you ensure this system works well?
- Imagine you are considering two supplier options: one supplier who has very high quality products but is expensive and one whose products have a lower quality but are cheaper. What do you do?
- What steps do you take to make sure purchases will be delivered on time?
- If I gave you a purchase order, how would you go about fulfilling it?
- How do you decide which goods you need to buy and at what quantities?

### Role-specific questions

- How has your background prepared you for this role in our company?
- What do you need to consider when buying a product?
- What are your strategies for discovering the best products?
- What factors would you consider when closing a deal with a supplier?
- What is your experience in creating reports?
- How does technology help you in your job?
- When is it better to sign a contract with a supplier instead of making individual purchases?

## **Behavioral questions**

- Recall a time you were successful in reducing the price of a purchase
- Tell me about a time you disagreed with your manager. What about and how did you handle it?
- Give me an example of a time you failed to make the best purchase. What did you learn?
- Tell me about a time you were very stressed on the job. How did you handle it?
- Recall a time a supplier didn't adhere to the terms of your agreement (e.g. late delivery, lower quality etc.). How did you handle it?