
Strategic-thinking interview questions

Use these sample strategic-thinking interview questions to identify candidates who can craft effective strategies for your company's needs.

Why ask strategic-thinking interview questions

Strategic-thinking in the workplace is the ability to make business decisions by analyzing current and future scenarios. Strategic thinkers translate a company's vision into doable actions.

Companies hire employees with a strategic mindset to help achieve long-term business goals. Strategic thinkers:

- Set long-term objectives
- Proactively identify and address potential risks
- Use resources efficiently
- Develop action plans in the face of obstacles
- Successfully deal with competition

Here are some sample strategic-thinking interview questions to ask candidates during interviews:

Examples of strategic-thinking interview questions

- How much time per week or month do you invest in strategic planning? What do you do?
- How do you inform your team and other departments within your company about your strategic decisions?
- Describe a time when you proactively identified and addressed an issue at your company.
- How do you set long-term goals for your team? How often do you check and review these goals?
- Describe a time when you failed to achieve your goals and had to follow a different approach. What happened?
- What are the key factors you take into consideration when building an action plan? (e.g. to increase sales)
- How do you measure a strategy's effectiveness?

Tips to assess candidates' strategic-thinking skills

- Before deciding on a business plan, employees need to know how their company or team works. During interviews, evaluate candidates' [analytical skills](#) in gathering and evaluating

information.

- Ask candidates to explain how they craft a strategy for their company/team. Opt for people who are methodical and assess all alternatives and potential risks.
- Describe a past campaign/methodology that failed and ask candidates to evaluate it. You'll be able to test whether candidates can identify mistakes and suggest better solutions.
- Challenge candidates with [hypothetical scenarios](#) that relate to your company's operations. Test whether they understand your needs and can craft strategies that align with your objectives.

Red flags

- **They're uncomfortable making decisions.** To choose the best tactics, employees need to evaluate various alternatives, weigh pros and cons and forecast potential risks. Candidates who lack confidence and seem nervous when they have to [make a decision](#) mightn't be a good fit.
- **They lack leadership skills.** Strategic planning involves setting challenging objectives and motivating your team to achieve these goals. Look for candidates who are [good team leaders](#) and are confident delegating tasks.
- **They don't consider consequences.** Candidates who approach your questions superficially and pick the first answer that comes in mind, mightn't be prepared to think strategically when problems occur.
- **They don't embrace change.** Strategies need to be flexible. If your candidates are not [adaptive](#) and have poor change management skills, they're likely to stick to an ineffective approach instead of re-evaluating strategies.

Don't miss: [The best interview questions to ask candidates \(and how to evaluate answers\)](#).