Competency-based interviews

"Past, demonstrated behavior is the best indicator of future performance"
## Values and Competencies

- **Values:**
  - Shared principles and beliefs that underpin the Organization’s work and guide actions and behaviours of staff

- **Competencies:**
  - Skills, attributes and behaviours directly related to successful job performance

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All organizations of the UN family have values and competencies. Most of them are the same, some are different. Examples:

**VALUES:**
- Integrity, Professionalism, Respect for Diversity

**CORE COMPETENCIES:**
- Communication, Teamwork, Planning and Organizing, Accountability, Creativity, Client Orientation, Commitment to Continuous Learning, Technological Awareness

**MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES:**
- Vision, Leadership, empowering Others, Managing Performance, Building Trust, Judgement and Decision-making
CAR (L) Principle

- **Context:**
  - You will be expected to give an overview of the situation: what the situation was about, when it was, how you first got involved, what were the key events and the time frame

- **Actions**
  - You will be expected to cover significant events, specific instances, that were clearly attributable to you rather than the team

- **Results**
  - What was the outcome, impact or results of your actions: You may be asked questions such as how did it turn out? What was the final result?

- **Learning**
  - What learning did you take away from this experience

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Preparing and Practicing

- **Prepare** for the interview:
  - learn as much as you can about the organization (mandate, publications, organigram, strategic directions, news, etc.)
  - understand the position and look at the competencies in the job opening
  - review your application/PHP and select real examples matching your accomplishments to the competencies (i.e. how did you work in a team, solve conflict, mobilize resources, etc.)

- **Practice, practice, practice** beforehand (refer to your application and the requirements of the job opening)

- If a:
  - **face-to-face**, know what you are going to wear and err on the side of conservatism
  - **telephone** (or Skype/VTC) make sure you are in a private location and equipment is working

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During the interview:

• **DO:**
  - Make a good first and last impression
  - Listen to the question carefully. Ask for clarification if a question is not clear
  - Keep to the point. Be as specific as possible
  - Provide concrete examples that show you were able to handle a situation and/or learned from it
  - Dress appropriately
  - Maintain eye contact with the person who asked the question, if culturally appropriate
  - Even on the telephone, smile

• **DO NOT:**
  - Answer in the hypothetical
  - Talk about “we”, rather talk in the “I”
  - Espouse theories or values (“waffling on”)
  - Make blanket generalizations nor statements about the future
  - Interrupt the panel
  - Ask questions about benefits and entitlements

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Exercise
Teamwork

• Describe to us a successful teamwork work experience
  o What was the situation?
  o Which was your role?
  o What made the team successful?
  o How did you handle the disagreements within the team?
  o What were the results?
  o What did you learn from the experience? If you had to do it again what would you do differently?
Exercise
Planning and Organizing

• Tell us about a time you had to organize or plan a major event
  o What was the nature of the event?
  o Which was your role?
  o How did you plan and organize the different actions to carry out?
  o How did the event turn out?
  o Reflecting back, what did you learn from the experience? If you had to do it again what would you do differently?
Exercise
Planning and Organizing

Tell us about a time where you had a number of demands being made on you at the same time? How did you handle it?
- What was the situation?
- Which was your role?
- How did you plan and organize the different actions to carry out?
- What were the results?
- What did you learn from the experience? If you had to do it again what would you do differently?
Exercise
Creativity

- Describe to us a situation when you had to be creative
  - What was the nature of the situation?
  - Which was your role?
  - What were the different actions to carry out?
  - What were the results?
  - What did you learn from the experience? If you had to do it again what would you do differently?
Exercise
Integrity

• Describe to us a situation where you felt pressured to act in a way that would compromise your values or those of the organization
  o What was the nature of the situation?
  o What were the implications of your actions?
  o How did you respond to the pressure?
  o What was the results?
  o What did you learn from the experience? If you had to do it again what would you do differently?
Exercise
Judgement/Decision-making

Tell us about a time when you came up with different solutions to a problem.
  - What was the situation?
  - What suggestions did you come up with?
  - What did others think of your ideas?
  - What did you learn from the experience? If you had to do it again what would you do differently?
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