



National Frontline Supervisor Competencies Frontline Supervisor Structured Behavioral Interview Questions

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Research & Training Center on Community Living
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Frontline supervisor structured behavioral interview questions

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Name | Date completed |
| Name/title of direct supervisor conducting this interview | |

Background

Structured behavioral interview questions were based on the competencies identified in the National Frontline Supervisor Competencies (NFSC) and were adapted, in part, from *Staff Recruitment, Retention and Training Strategies for Community Human Services Organizations* (Larson & Hewitt, 2005). The NFSC was largely informed by the National Validation Study, a recent validation of the Minnesota Frontline Supervisor Competencies and Performance Indicators (Larson, Doljanec, Nord, Salmi, Hewitt, & O’Neill, 2007). For more information about the NFSC, refer to <http://rtc.umn.edu/misc/pubcount.asp?publicationid=232>; for more information about the National Validation study, refer to <http://rtc.umn.edu/docs/NationalValidationStudyReport2007FINAL.pdf>.

Instructions for direct supervisor completing assessment

This interview guide includes both behavioral and situational questions and is intended to be used for external Frontline Supervisor (FLS) candidates. For internal FLS candidates, refer to the Frontline Supervisor Assessment found at (provide link). As you conduct the interview, use the following likert scale to assign a score to each response —

- 5 = Excellent;** response demonstrated knowledge and experience, and included concrete examples
- 3 = Average;** response demonstrated some knowledge or experience, and included limited examples
- 1 = Poor;** response demonstrated no knowledge or experience, and included no examples

For the best and most efficient use of this assessment tool, we make the following recommendations —

- Prior to the interview, identify which questions will be asked
- Choose only the questions that are in alignment with your organization’s mission and goals
- Ask the same questions of all applicants
- Use probing and clarifying follow-up questions as necessary to gather complete information

Note: having too many questions can be frustrating for the interviewer and interviewee; 8-10 questions are sufficient for a one hour interview.

1. Direct support

Frontline supervisors demonstrate excellence in providing culturally appropriate direct support services to participant using person-centered approaches and strategies that support participant to be fully engaged and included in each aspect of his or her daily life, have maximum choice and control, and gain independence.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Describe what direct support means to you (i.e., in terms of doing, teaching, assisting, person-centered care) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Describe ways in which you have communicated with a person who does not communicate verbally. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Describe a time when you assisted an individual with creating a physical environment that was accessible, comfortable and met his or her unique style and needs. | 5 4 3 2 1 |

2. Health, wellness, and safety

Frontline Supervisors work with participant and his or her teams to develop a support plan to promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of participant based on individual preferences and goals. Frontline Supervisors actively monitor, review, discuss with participant, and modify support plans to ensure most effective strategies are in place.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Betty, an individual receiving supports, is sensitive to loud noises. One afternoon, the maintenance crew comes to the house to do yard work and the sound of the riding mower sends her into a panic. She begins pacing rapidly while crying and covering her ears. She picks up a nearby object in an attempt to throw it through the window toward the maintenance employee. How would you handle this situation? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. Sally, who is nonverbal, has had increased instances of self-injurious behavior during the last few days. What might be your next steps? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. Describe the last time you became involved with a challenging behavior or crisis with an individual receiving supports. What was the situation? What did you do? How well did it work? What could you have done to prevent the situation from occurring? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. A health care professional has diagnosed Charlie with diabetes, and identified numerous treatment options. How might you support Charlie and his support network in making informed decisions about the most appropriate treatment option, including health care choices, lifestyle choices, and informal supports? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 5. Describe your experience working with a DSP who has made medication efforts. What steps did you take, or what is your support strategy to ensure best practice? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

3. Participant support plan development, monitoring, and assessment

Frontline Supervisors operationalize participant’s individual goals and identified outcomes into a coordinated support plan. Frontline Supervisors coordinate and facilitate support network meetings, maintain communication with other service providers, family, and allies, and monitor, document, and report progress toward goals.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. What is the most effective way to communicate and maintain positive working relationships with staff from other agencies? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. Give an example of a program you developed with individual goals and outcomes. What assessment strategies did you use and how did you engage the participant in the process? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. Describe how you maintain confidentiality of individuals supported and DSPs as you partner with community organizations and others in the community. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. Share your understanding of Positive Behavior Supports. How have you built this into the services individuals receive? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

4. Facilitating community inclusion across the lifespan

Frontline Supervisors facilitate and support the development and maintenance of participant support networks in partnership with person supported. Frontline Supervisors support participant to explore educational, employment, volunteer, and retirement opportunities, and/or collaborate with other staff and providers to coordinate supports that will assist participant in reaching goals and actively participating in activities of his or her choice across the lifespan.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Michelle is quiet and does not leave the house. She is not involved in any activities and does not have any close personal relationships. Michelle claims she has no areas of interest and seems unhappy with her life. How might you assist Michelle, or support a DSP to assist Michelle, in identifying barriers to community inclusion and developing areas of interest, including using technology and participating in online communities? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. John recently moved from a large institution to a supported living setting. How might you assist John, or support a DSP to assist John, to become a part of and build relationship within his new community? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. Describe a time when you have supported an individual in a vocational or educational program or with his or her career development. What did you do, and what was the result? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

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|---|-----------|
| 4. Wilma, a 62 year old, has been attending a traditional day training center for 15 years. She works only 2 hours each week and earns less than \$1 every 2 weeks. Wilma complains of being bored and shows signs of frustration at work. It may be time to consider retirement opportunities. What do you do to begin this process? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
|---|-----------|

5. Promoting professional relations and teamwork

Frontline Supervisors enhance professional relations among team members and their capacity to work effectively with others toward common goals by using effective communication skills, facilitating teamwork, and supporting and encouraging growth and professional development.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Describe a time when you provided counseling and support to a DSP. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. What are some ways in which you might facilitate teamwork and positive attitudes among the staff you work with? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. Susie, a DSP, comes to you about a conflict she had with another DSP regarding something that happened outside of work. How might you handle this? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. Several DSPs you supervise primarily work at remote sites. How might you ensure they are not left without proper supervision and are engaged with other staff? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

6. Staff recruitment, selection, and hiring

Frontline Supervisors use best practices to actively recruit and lead a selection process that actively includes the participant and his or her support network. Frontline Supervisors provide sufficient information about the position through a realistic job preview and conduct effective interviews to promote successful hires of direct support staff.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. What are some barriers and challenges you have faced or expect to face in recruitment of DSPs? How might you overcome these challenges? Describe a Realistic Job Preview (What is it? How can it be used? Why is it important?). | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. How have you (or would you) make hiring decisions? Describe the steps you might take, starting from receiving an application throughout the selection process? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. What retention strategies improve the chances of keeping high quality DSPs? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

7. Staff supervision, training, and development

Frontline Supervisors coordinate and lead competency-based direct support staff training and professional development activities, including coaching and mentoring. Frontline Supervisors conduct performance reviews and are responsible for all aspects of staff supervision, including scheduling and maintaining training records.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Describe your experience with developing staff schedules and managing staffing shortages across multiples sites. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. Janet is a new employee and this is her first position as a DSP. What might be some key pieces of information to include in her orientation? How might you help her feel comfortable in her new position? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. Describe a time that you coached or mentored a direct support professional, based on participant and staff feedback regarding training needs. What worked well? What did not work well? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. It is time for Patrick's, a DSP, performance review. How might you gather information for the review and subsequently recognize his positive contributions? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

8. Service management and quality assurance

Frontline Supervisors effectively manage and oversee participant services and supports in group service settings and individual and remote service settings, including compliance with all federal, state, and local rules and regulations, and apply ethical principles related to best practices in services and supports. Frontline Supervisors oversee the management of financial activities within the scope of work assignments to ensure continued quality service delivery.

| Question | Score |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Describe your experience related to maintaining an organization's policies and procedures, including budgeting, financial reviews, and service regulations. 2. Describe a situation in which you worked with a consumer and their family members/support team members regarding their complaints and issues. How did you implement and evaluate strategies to address the issues? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. Give an example of a situation in which you had to prioritize several tasks and responsibilities. How did you make decisions regarding the order of importance? What technology did you use to do this? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

9. Advocacy and public relations

Frontline Supervisors promote public relations by educating community members about the rights of people with disabilities, advocating for and with the participant for services and opportunities that promote safe, respected, and valued membership in the community.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. What advocacy organizations and services are available in the community that might assist people needing support? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. Describe a situation where you provided education to community members regarding people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (e.g., rights, responsibilities, dispelling myths). | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. Where could you go to find information on state rules and regulations and agency policies and procedures related to the rights of individuals with disabilities? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. Describe a situation in which you have worked to improve the status and image people supported or DSPs, including developing educational or promotional materials. | 5 4 3 2 1 |

10. Leadership, professionalism, and self-development

Frontline Supervisors maintain professionalism and engage in ongoing self-development and professional development activities. Frontline Supervisors share and receive knowledge from others, support coworkers, and actively participate in the life of his or her organization.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Describe the last time you became involved in a conflict or a crisis. What did you do? What could you have done to prevent this situation from occurring?. Share a time when you were stressed. What strategies did you use to ensure balance between your personal and professional life? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. What approaches have you taken to increase your cultural awareness and responsiveness? What might you do, or continue to do, in the future? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. How do you identify the things that are important to include on a personal development plan? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

11. Cultural awareness and responsiveness

Frontline Supervisors respect all unique characteristics of participant by providing culturally appropriate supports and services.

| Question | Score |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Describe what it means to be culturally aware and responsive. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. Describe a time when you needed to be particularly sensitive to another person’s beliefs or cultural background. What were the circumstances? What did you do? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. Describe a time you heard someone make a prejudiced or inaccurate comment about a cultural group. What did you do? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. Carla’s family would like to meet to talk about Carla’s employment goals. Carla’s parents primarily speak Spanish. How might you proceed with preparing for the meeting? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

Additional questions: Experience, credentials, and self-evaluation

(Larson & Hewitt, 2005)

In addition to the structured behavioral interview questions, you may find the following questions to be useful in your evaluation of a FLS candidate’s experience, credentials, and self-evaluation. These questions may also be helpful in assessing a candidate’s well-roundedness and overall ability to communicate effectively.

| Question | Score |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Describe a typical day in your most recent job. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. Please describe your present job responsibilities. What re most difficult and why? Which are most enjoyable and why? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. Describe any classes, experiences, or training you have received to prepare you for the job you are applying for. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. Describe the most difficult job you have ever had. What made the job so difficult? How did you overcome the difficulties? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 5. What is the most common misperception that other people have had about you? | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 6. Most of us have more than one reason for leaving a job. What are some of yours, form past or present experience? | 5 4 3 2 1 |

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| <p>7. What one or two words would most or all of your previous supervisors use to describe you?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>8. What part(s) of your last or present position did you like least? What did you do to try to overcome the situation? What would you think if you were to know in advance that this situation would be present in your new job?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>9. What accomplishment in your present job are you most proud of? What was your best idea (whether implemented or not)?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>10. Under what circumstances might you seek out a co-worker or peer for advice or suggestions? Provide examples of times that you did in the past.</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>11. Describe your ideal job. Explain your preferences, the amount and type of supervision, amount of contact and kinds of relationships with co-workers, job tasks, and freedom to work or to make decisions.</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>12. If you had the authority or power, what one thing would you change about your current or last position?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>13. Other than money, what rewards, benefits, or work situations are most important for you?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>14. How much did you miss from work last year? The year before?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>15. What suggestions has your supervisor given you for performance improvement or development?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>16. What have all made mistakes on the job, some of which are bigger than others. Tell me about the biggest workplace mistake you ever made. What were the circumstances, and how did you deal with the situation? What did you learn from the experience?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>17. Tell me about your schedule flexibility and your work schedule preferences.</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |
| <p>18. If you were offered this position and were to accept it, what one or two major contributions would you make to the organization, in the short term (first few weeks) and in the long term (after a year or so)?</p> | <p>5 4 3 2 1</p> |