

# Amusement Centre Manager interview questions

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## What to expect

Amusement Centre Manager interviews are practical rather than theoretical. Employers want to see that you can hold a floor of casual staff together at peak trade, keep machines earning, handle an incident calmly and keep the takings straight.

- **Operational process:** How you build rosters, reconcile takings, schedule maintenance or plan for school holidays.
- **Behavioural:** Past examples of supervising casual staff, handling a difficult team member or controlling costs.
- **Scenario and judgement:** A machine down on a busy Saturday, a queue forming, a parent complaint, staff shortages at short notice.
- **Safety and compliance:** Supervision rules, incident reporting, Working with Children Check obligations, WHS duties for amusement devices and play equipment.
- **Client-facing and bookings:** Handling party and group bookings, complaints and repeat community business.

Expect a short phone screen with a venue or area manager, then a face to face at the site, often with a walk of the floor so you can talk through layout, supervision and machine placement. Some employers add a short practical task such as reading a roster and spotting the gaps, or working through a cash discrepancy. Reference checks and a Working with Children Check usually follow before an offer.

## 1. Walk me through how you build a roster for a school holiday period.

### Why they ask

Rostering is the core weekly task of the role, and school holidays are when it goes wrong if you plan badly.

### How to structure your answer

Walk-through: trading patterns you forecast from, the award and supervision rules you apply, how you publish and confirm the roster, and how you adjust once trade starts.

### Example answer

*"I start from last holiday period's trade by hour and day, because school holidays are busy from open but drop off mid afternoon on weekdays and pick up after lunch on weekends. I block out the peak shifts first, then work backwards to open and close. I check availability three weeks out so I am not chasing people the week before, and I keep an eye on junior staff hours and minimum shift lengths under the award. I publish in Deputy, confirm every shift, then build in one floater per day. After the first two days I check the floor against the plan and move shifts around rather than waiting until the end of the week."*

## 2. Tell me about a time you had to deal with a staff member who repeatedly turned up late for weekend shifts.

### Why they ask

Casual teams are often young and weekend shifts are hard to cover. Employers want to know you address it early rather than absorbing it yourself.

### How to structure your answer

STAR: the situation and how often it happened, the task of fixing it, the specific conversation and follow-up you took, and the result for the team and the roster.

#### Example answer

*"We had a casual who was late three weekends in a row, always by ten or fifteen minutes, and it was landing on the open team during a rush. I pulled him aside after the shift rather than in front of the floor, asked what was going on, and found out his bus route had changed. We moved his start half an hour later on Sundays and he took the open on Saturdays. He was on time from then on, and it stopped the rest of the team feeling like lateness did not matter."*

### **3. It is a busy Saturday and a popular machine stops working with customers queuing for it. What do you do?**

#### Why they ask

This is the everyday judgement call of the role, and it mixes safety, customer service and trade.

#### How to structure your answer

Prioritise under pressure: make the area safe and clearly out of order first, attend to the customers, escalate the repair, then keep the rest of the floor trading and log it.

#### Example answer

*"First I would check whether it is safe and switch it off at the machine if there is any doubt, then put a clear out of order sign on it so nobody tries it. I would apologise to the people waiting and offer to load a credit onto their card or point them to another machine. Then I would log the fault in the reporting system and call the technician, and let my shift supervisor know so the floor is still covered. I would check the fault log at the end of the shift to see whether that machine is becoming a pattern."*

### **4. A parent tells you their child was hurt on the play equipment and wants to know what you are doing about it. How do you handle that conversation?**

#### Why they ask

Safety and supervision is a large part of the job, and how you handle an upset parent reflects on the venue.

#### How to structure your answer

Care first, then facts and procedure: attend to the child and family, separate what you observed from what you were told, follow the incident and reporting process, and set out the follow-up.

#### Example answer

*"I would speak with the parent away from the noise, check how the child is and whether they need first aid, and take down the details while it is fresh. I would ask exactly where on the equipment it happened and whether anything looked broken or loose, then check the area myself or send a supervisor to do it and close it off if there is a fault. I would record it in the incident register, let my manager know the same day, and tell the parent who will follow up with them and by when. I would not promise an outcome I cannot deliver, but I would be clear about what happens next."*

### **5. How do you keep takings accurate across cash, card and token systems?**

#### Why they ask

Venues handle money through several systems at once, and employers want someone who treats controls as routine rather than reactive.

#### How to structure your answer

Process: the controls you put in place up front, the checks you run during and at the end of a shift, and what you do when something does not line up.

#### Example answer

*"Each operator works from a single till with a set float, and counts it at handover rather than letting anyone share. At the end of the night I reconcile the card terminal and the token and card system against the machine meters, then compare the total with the till count. Anything out of step I write down the same night rather than carrying it over. Most of our discrepancies came from rushed*

*handovers during the after school rush, so we moved the count to a fixed point between shifts and gave it enough time. Cash goes to banking on a set schedule with the float reset for the morning.”*

## **6. Tell me about a time you had to cut costs without hurting the customer experience.**

### **Why they ask**

The role carries both revenue and cost responsibility, and cutting in the wrong place is easy to spot on a venue floor.

### **How to structure your answer**

STAR: the cost problem, what you chose to protect and why, the changes you made and how you measured the effect on customers rather than only on the budget.

### **Example answer**

*“Our consumables and prize spend was creeping up, and the easy fix was to shrink the redemption prizes, which would have annoyed our regulars. Instead I tracked what was actually being redeemed over a school holiday period and dropped the lines nobody picked, then reordered the popular ones in larger quantities so the unit cost came down. I also put a sign on the prize counter so staff could explain the changes if anyone asked, and kept the ticket levels for the main prizes where they were. Spend came down over the next holiday period and we did not get a single complaint about the counter.”*