

Broadcast Program Director interview questions

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What to expect

Broadcast Program Director interviews test your ability to balance audience data, creative judgment, regulatory compliance, and commercial pressure. You will likely meet a panel including a head of content and an HR representative.

- **Programming process:** Questions about how you plan and build a schedule from scratch.
- **Behavioural:** Questions asking for examples of past situations, using the STAR framework.
- **Scenario and judgement:** Hypothetical situations that test your decision-making under pressure.
- **Technical and tools:** Questions about your experience with scheduling software and analytics tools.
- **Regulatory and compliance:** Questions about broadcasting codes and how you ensure compliance.
- **Stakeholder and commercial:** Questions about working with sales, production, and marketing teams.

The interview typically runs for 45 to 60 minutes. It may start with a general conversation about your background, then move to a walkthrough of a sample schedule or a ratings scenario. You might be asked to complete a short practical task, such as reviewing a program grid. The panel will then ask behavioural and scenario questions, and you will have time for your own questions.

1. Walk us through how you build a weekly program schedule.

Why they ask

This is a core process question that shows your systematic approach to programming.

How to structure your answer

Start with the strategic goal for the week, then the data sources you use, then the step-by-step: dayparts, audience flow, content pillars, contingency for live events, and how you validate the schedule with ratings and feedback.

Example answer

"First I look at the station's overall strategy, like whether we are targeting a younger demographic or aiming to grow our morning share. Then I pull the latest ratings data and audience feedback to see what is working and what is not. I map out the dayparts, making sure there is a smooth flow from one show to the next. I consider any live events or specials that need to be slotted in. I also build in contingency for breaking news. Once the schedule is drafted, I run it past production and sales to check for any conflicts. After it goes to air, I monitor the ratings and adjust on the fly. For example, last year I moved a talk segment from late night to early evening after noticing a gap in the market, and it brought in a new audience."

2. Tell me about a time you had to change a program at short notice.

Why they ask

Behavioural question to see how you handle disruption and communicate with stakeholders.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

Example answer

"We had a major sponsor pull out of a live sports broadcast two days before it was due to air, which left a hole in the schedule. I was responsible for filling that slot without losing audience. I quickly checked our content library and negotiated with a production team to fast-track a highlights package. I also worked with the sales team to find a new sponsor for the slot. The result was that we kept the audience engaged and actually ended up with a better sponsorship deal for the rest of the season. The key was staying calm and keeping everyone informed."

3. A key program is losing audience in its timeslot. What do you do?

Why they ask

Scenario question to test your analytical and problem-solving skills.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: gather data, diagnose, consider options, consult stakeholders, implement, monitor.

Example answer

"First I would look at the ratings data to see if the loss is across all demographics or just one. I would also check for any external factors like a competitor's new show or a change in listening habits. Then I would diagnose whether the issue is the content, the host, or the timeslot itself. I would consider options like refreshing the format, moving the show to a different time, or pairing it with a stronger lead-in. I would consult with production and marketing to get their input. Once we decide on a plan, I would implement it and monitor the ratings closely for the next few weeks. If it does not improve, I would be ready to make a bigger change."

4. What experience do you have with WideOrbit or RCS Selector?

Why they ask

Technical question to confirm you can use the industry-standard scheduling tools.

How to structure your answer

Describe the tool, how you use it, and give a specific instance of how it helped you.

Example answer

"I have used WideOrbit for the past three years to manage our program logs and traffic. I use it daily to schedule content, track inventory, and generate reports for the sales team. One time we had a last-minute change to a live event, and I was able to quickly update the log and notify all relevant departments through WideOrbit's workflow tools. I have also used RCS Selector for music scheduling in a previous radio role, where I used it to analyse listener flow and optimise the playlist."

5. How do you ensure programs comply with broadcasting codes and regulations?

Why they ask

Regulatory question to check your knowledge and diligence.

How to structure your answer

List the relevant codes, explain your compliance process, and give an example of how you handled a compliance issue.

Example answer

"I am familiar with the ACMA broadcasting codes of practice and the Commercial Radio Australia codes. My process starts at the development stage: I review the content brief against the relevant codes, and I flag any potential issues with the production team early. I also have a checklist for final review before broadcast. For example, when we aired a live interview that touched on a sensitive topic, I made sure we had a delay in place and that the host was briefed on what could and could not be said. After the broadcast, I documented the compliance checks in case of any complaints."

6. How do you manage conflicting priorities between sales and production?

Why they ask

Stakeholder management question to see how you balance commercial and creative needs.

How to structure your answer

Explain your approach to stakeholder management, then give a concrete example.

Example answer

"I start by understanding what each team needs: sales wants strong sponsorship opportunities, production wants creative freedom. I bring them together early in the planning process so we can find solutions that work for both. For instance, we had a sponsor who wanted to integrate their brand into a drama series, but the production team felt it would compromise the story. I facilitated a workshop where we brainstormed alternative placements, like a sponsored podcast companion or a behind-the-scenes segment. That way the sponsor got exposure and the production team kept the integrity of the show. I always keep the lines of communication open and follow up to make sure everyone is happy."