

Content Writer interview questions

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What to expect

Content Writer interviews usually mix a look at your actual writing with questions about how you plan, prioritise and defend your work under deadline pressure. Expect the panel to probe both craft (can you write clearly for an audience) and process (can you manage a content pipeline without things slipping).

- **Process:** Questions about how you'd plan and run editorial calendars, content workflows or SEO research from scratch.
- **Behavioural:** Past-experience questions about deadline pressure, feedback, or juggling competing projects.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical situations testing judgement, such as underperforming content or conflicting stakeholder input.
- **Technical:** Questions on SEO practice, keyword research and analytics tools like Google Analytics or SEMrush.
- **Portfolio discussion:** A walkthrough of a piece of your own writing, why you made the choices you did, and what it achieved.

Most interviews open with a portfolio or writing sample discussion, move into process and technical questions about your SEO and content workflow, then close with behavioural and scenario questions about deadlines and stakeholder feedback. Some employers include a short writing or editing test either before or after the interview.

1. Walk me through how you'd build an editorial calendar for a new content topic area.

Why they ask

Tests whether you understand the research-to-publication workflow rather than just the writing itself.

How to structure your answer

Step-by-step walkthrough: start with audience and keyword research, move through topic selection and prioritisation, then scheduling and stakeholder sign-off.

Example answer

"I'd start by researching what the audience is actually searching for using tools like SEMrush, and check what's already ranking so I'm not duplicating existing content. From there I'd group topics into themes, prioritise based on search demand and business relevance, and map them against campaign dates so content supports upcoming launches rather than sitting separate from them. I'd share the draft calendar with marketing stakeholders for sign-off before locking in deadlines, then track progress week to week so nothing slips without anyone noticing."

2. Tell me about a time you had to manage several content deadlines at once.

Why they ask

Deadline and workload management is a core part of the role given the fast-paced, multi-channel nature of the work.

How to structure your answer

STAR: situation, task, action, result.

Example answer

"I once had a blog post, two email campaigns and a set of social captions all due in the same week, on top of my usual publishing schedule. I listed everything out by deadline and estimated effort, then

flagged to my manager that one item needed to shift by a day so quality didn't suffer. I blocked time for deep writing work separately from quick edits, and used a shared content calendar so the marketing team could see progress. Everything went out on time except the one item I'd already flagged, and the client didn't notice any disruption."

3. A blog post you wrote isn't ranking after several months and traffic has stayed flat. What do you do?

Why they ask

Checks diagnostic thinking and whether you treat content as something to monitor and improve, not just publish and forget.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: diagnose the likely causes first, then explain a prioritised response.

Example answer

"First I'd check Google Analytics and Search Console data to see whether the page is getting impressions but low clicks, which points to a title or meta description problem, or getting neither, which points to a ranking or indexing issue. I'd also check whether the content actually matches search intent for the target keyword, since that's a common reason pages stall. Depending on what I find, I'd either rework the on-page SEO, update the content to better answer the query, or build internal links to it from stronger pages. I'd give it a few weeks after changes before judging the result, rather than assuming failure too early."

4. How do you approach keyword research before writing a new piece of content?

Why they ask

Direct technical check on SEO literacy, a core skill for this role.

How to structure your answer

Technical explanation: outline the tools and steps in order, then explain how the output shapes the writing.

Example answer

"I'd use SEMrush to find keywords with reasonable search volume and manageable competition around the topic, and look at what's already ranking to understand search intent, whether people want a how-to guide, a comparison, or a quick answer. I'd pick a primary keyword and a few related terms, then structure the piece around answering the query clearly rather than stuffing keywords in. Once it's published I'd check performance in Google Analytics after a few weeks to see if it's landing with the intended audience."

5. A stakeholder wants to change your copy in a way that breaks the brand's style guide. How do you handle it?

Why they ask

Tests stakeholder management and whether you can hold a line on quality without becoming difficult to work with.

How to structure your answer

STAR, focused on the conversation and resolution rather than just the disagreement.

Example answer

"This came up when a stakeholder wanted more formal, jargon-heavy language on a page meant for a casual, younger audience. I acknowledged what they were trying to achieve, then walked them through the style guide and explained how the current tone was tested to perform better with that audience. I offered a compromise version that kept some of their preferred terminology while staying within brand voice. They agreed to the middle version, and the page went live without further changes"

needed.”

6. Talk me through a piece of writing you're proud of and why it worked.

Why they ask

Lets the panel assess your actual writing judgement and whether you can explain your choices, not just produce copy.

How to structure your answer

Narrative walkthrough of the portfolio piece: context, key decisions, and outcome.

Example answer

“I'm proud of a long-form guide I wrote that answered a common but under-served question in our industry. I chose a clear, direct structure with headers matching how people actually search, rather than a traditional narrative format, because the goal was fast, useful answers rather than a long read. I kept the tone conversational but avoided fluff, and used real examples instead of generic advice. It ended up being one of the better-performing pages on the site for organic traffic, and I think that came down to matching the format to what the audience actually wanted, not just writing well in the abstract.”