

Railway Station Assistant interview questions

careertips.com.au: common questions and what they're really testing

What to expect

Interviews for Railway Station Assistant roles typically focus on your customer service skills, safety awareness and ability to stay calm under pressure. You may be interviewed by a station manager and a safety representative, and the process may include a practical assessment or role-play.

- **Customer service:** Questions that assess how you handle passenger enquiries, complaints and difficult interactions.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions that probe your understanding of rail safety procedures, emergency response and WHS obligations.
- **Disruption management:** Questions that test your ability to stay calm and coordinate effectively during service delays or incidents.
- **Behavioural:** Questions that ask for examples from your past experience to demonstrate key skills like teamwork and problem solving.
- **Operational:** Questions about ticketing systems, PA systems and other tools you might use on the job.

The interview usually begins with introductions and a brief overview of the role. You may then face a mix of behavioural and scenario-based questions, often with a panel including a station manager and a safety representative. There may be a short practical assessment or role-play. The interview usually concludes with an opportunity for you to ask questions.

1. Can you describe a time when you had to deal with a difficult or upset passenger? How did you handle it?

Why they ask

This question assesses your customer service and conflict resolution skills, which are central to the role.

How to structure your answer

Use the STAR method: describe the Situation, the Task you needed to achieve, the Action you took, and the Result.

Example answer

"In my previous role as a station assistant, a passenger became irate because their train was delayed and they missed an appointment. I listened calmly, apologised for the inconvenience, and explained the cause of the delay. I then helped them plan an alternative route and provided a delay certificate for their employer. The passenger left feeling heard, and I followed up with my supervisor to see if we could improve communication during disruptions."

2. What would you do if you noticed a passenger acting unsafely on the platform, such as standing too close to the edge?

Why they ask

This question tests your safety awareness and ability to apply rail safety procedures in a real situation.

How to structure your answer

Use a judgement-under-pressure structure: assess the situation, take appropriate action, report the incident, and follow up.

Example answer

"I would first assess the situation to ensure my own safety. If safe, I would approach the passenger politely and ask them to step back behind the yellow line, explaining the danger. If they refused, I

would radio for assistance from a colleague or security. I would then log the incident in the station report and monitor the platform until the train arrived.”

3. How would you handle a situation where the ticketing system goes down and there is a long queue of passengers?

Why they ask

This question assesses your problem-solving skills and ability to manage operational disruptions while keeping customers informed.

How to structure your answer

Use a problem-solving structure: acknowledge the issue, troubleshoot, communicate, and escalate if needed.

Example answer

“I would first acknowledge the passengers and apologise for the wait. I would check if the issue is something I can fix, like a reboot. If not, I would immediately contact my supervisor and the IT helpdesk. In the meantime, I would use manual ticketing procedures or allow passengers to travel and pay later if that's the policy. I would keep passengers informed via the PA system and ensure the queue moves as quickly as possible.”

4. Can you give an example of a time you worked as part of a team to achieve a goal?

Why they ask

This question explores your teamwork and communication skills, which are essential for coordinating with colleagues during busy periods or disruptions.

How to structure your answer

Use the STAR method: describe the Situation, Task, Action and Result.

Example answer

“During a major event at the station, our team had to manage an unexpectedly large crowd. I was assigned to direct passengers to the correct platforms while my colleagues handled ticketing and crowd control. I coordinated with my supervisor via two-way radio, and we successfully cleared the platforms without incident. The event ran smoothly, and we received positive feedback from the operations manager.”

5. What do you know about rail safety regulations and how do they apply to your daily work?

Why they ask

This question tests your knowledge of compliance requirements and your commitment to safety.

How to structure your answer

Use a fact-based explanation: name key regulations or regulators, then explain how they apply to your tasks.

Example answer

“I understand that rail safety is governed by the Rail Safety National Law and overseen by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator. In my daily work, this means following safety procedures like checking platforms for hazards, wearing high-visibility clothing, and reporting incidents. I also need to be familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and ensure I don't interfere with train operations without authorisation.”

6. Why do you want to work as a Railway Station Assistant, and what do you think is the most important part of the role?

Why they ask

This question helps the interviewer understand your motivation and whether you have a realistic view of the job.

How to structure your answer

Use a motivational structure: link your personal values to the role, then highlight the most important aspect.

Example answer

"I want to work as a Railway Station Assistant because I enjoy helping people and being part of a team that keeps a city moving. I think the most important part of the role is ensuring passenger safety while providing excellent customer service. When passengers feel safe and informed, their journey is better, and that's what I aim to deliver every day."