

Railway Station Manager interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for Railway Station Manager roles focus on your ability to run a safe, efficient station while leading staff and managing passengers. You will be asked about operations, safety, emergency response, customer service and how you handle pressure.

- **Process questions:** These ask you to walk through how you handle routine tasks like rostering, ticketing or daily checks.
- **Safety and compliance questions:** You will be asked how you apply rail safety regulations, conduct audits and report incidents.
- **Behavioural questions:** These use past examples to assess how you lead people, solve problems and manage difficult situations.
- **Scenario and emergency response questions:** You will be given a disruption or emergency and asked how you would respond in the moment.
- **Customer service questions:** These explore how you handle passenger complaints, fare evasion and accessibility needs.
- **Stakeholder management questions:** You may be asked about working with train control, contractors and emergency services.

The interview usually starts with a conversation about your background and experience. It then moves to scenario-based questions about station operations and safety. You might be asked to walk through how you would handle a specific disruption. Later stages may include a panel with a senior operations manager and a safety representative.

1. Walk me through how you plan a roster for a busy station, including how you handle last-minute absences.

Why they ask

They want to see that you can balance coverage, manage fatigue and use rostering systems without leaving gaps.

How to structure your answer

Use a walk-through structure: start with demand analysis, then system use, then contingencies, then review.

Example answer

"I start by looking at the timetable and passenger numbers for the week, noting peak periods and special events. I use Kronos Workforce Ready to build the roster, making sure I have the right mix of skills on each shift. For last-minute absences, I have a list of trained casual staff and I check who can cover without exceeding fatigue limits. If no one is available, I adjust breaks and redeploy staff from quieter areas. I review the roster each day and keep a record of any changes so I can spot patterns and plan better next time."

2. Tell me about a time you had to manage a safety incident on a platform. What did you do and what was the outcome?

Why they ask

This assesses your ability to stay calm, follow safety procedures and communicate clearly under pressure.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result. Keep the result focused on safety and learning.

Example answer

"A passenger collapsed near the ticket gates during morning peak. I was the duty manager on the platform. I immediately radioed train control to hold services, called for an ambulance and directed staff to clear the area and keep other passengers moving safely. I stayed with the passenger until paramedics arrived and made sure an incident report was filed. Afterwards, I arranged a debrief with the team and we updated our first aid kit locations. The passenger recovered, and the station returned to normal within 20 minutes."

3. A train has broken down between stations, and passengers are becoming frustrated. How would you manage the situation on the platform?

Why they ask

They are testing your judgement under pressure and your ability to keep passengers informed and safe.

How to structure your answer

Use a judgement-under-pressure structure: acknowledge the situation, assess safety, act to manage crowds, communicate clearly, then follow up.

Example answer

"First I would confirm the details with train control and find out how long the delay might be. Then I would make sure platform staff are visible and that safety announcements are clear and regular. I would direct passengers to the correct areas, offer alternative travel information and keep the ticket office open for refunds or changes. If the platform gets too crowded, I would consider closing access and redirecting people to the concourse. After the incident, I would review the response with my team and note any improvements for next time."

4. How do you ensure compliance with rail safety regulations in your day-to-day work?

Why they ask

They need to know you understand the regulatory environment and can translate it into daily practice.

How to structure your answer

Use a technical structure: name the key framework, then describe practical steps like audits, training and reporting.

Example answer

"I work under the Rail Safety National Law and the requirements set by ONRSR. In practice, that means I conduct regular safety inspections of platforms, check that safeworking procedures are followed and make sure all staff have current training. I keep a schedule of audits and use a checklist to record any issues. If I find a hazard, I report it immediately and follow up until it is fixed. I also run toolbox talks on safety topics and review incident reports to spot trends."

5. Describe a time you dealt with a difficult customer or a fare evasion issue. How did you resolve it?

Why they ask

This assesses your customer service and problem-solving skills, especially when you need to enforce rules politely.

How to structure your answer

Use a behavioural structure: situation, action, result, with a focus on de-escalation and policy.

Example answer

"A passenger was refused entry because their ticket had expired and they became loud and aggressive. I approached calmly and asked them to step aside so we could talk without blocking the

gates. I explained the fare policy and listened to their frustration. They said they had missed the announcement about expiry. I offered to help them buy a new ticket and showed them how to set a reminder on their phone. They apologised and left without further issue. I later suggested we add clearer signage near the gates."

6. What experience do you have working with train control and emergency services? How do you maintain those relationships?

Why they ask

They want to see you can coordinate with external stakeholders during both routine operations and emergencies.

How to structure your answer

Use a process structure: describe your experience, then your approach to communication, then an example.

Example answer

"I speak with train control every day to report delays, request track access and coordinate responses. I also work with local police, ambulance and fire services during incidents. I maintain those relationships by being clear and calm on the radio, sharing information early and following up after any event. For example, after a trespass incident, I arranged a debrief with the police liaison officer and we agreed on a faster contact method for future callouts. That has helped us respond more quickly and keep everyone safe."