

Safety Consultant interview questions

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What to expect

Safety consultant interviews typically mix technical knowledge with practical judgement, because the role involves advising clients across different sites and industries. You will be asked to demonstrate how you apply WHS legislation, manage stakeholders and handle incidents.

- **Technical:** Questions that test your knowledge of WHS legislation, risk assessment methods and auditing standards.
- **Process:** Questions that ask you to walk through how you conduct inspections, investigations or policy reviews step by step.
- **Behavioural:** Questions that ask for examples from your past experience, often using STAR to explore how you handled challenges.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical situations that assess your judgement under pressure and your ability to apply safety principles on the spot.
- **Client-facing:** Questions about how you communicate with clients, manage difficult stakeholders and explain complex information clearly.

Interviews often start with a phone screen covering qualifications and availability, then move to a panel interview with a hiring manager and a senior consultant. You may be asked to review a sample risk assessment or incident report as a practical exercise. The final stage may involve meeting a client or discussing a real project.

1. How do you approach a hazard assessment for a site you have never visited before?

Why they ask

This question tests your technical method and whether you can work systematically without prior knowledge of the site.

How to structure your answer

Use a step-by-step walk-through. Start with preparation, then describe the on-site process, and finish with reporting and follow-up.

Example answer

"First, I review any available documentation such as site plans, previous inspection reports and incident history. I also check the relevant WHS legislation and any industry-specific hazards. On site, I walk the area with a supervisor, using a risk matrix and checklist to identify hazards, assess likelihood and consequence, and prioritise controls. I take photos and notes, then write up findings with recommended actions and timeframes. Finally, I follow up to confirm the controls have been implemented."

2. Tell me about a time you had to advise a client on a safety issue they were reluctant to address.

Why they ask

This behavioural question explores your stakeholder management and how you handle resistance while maintaining safety standards.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR. Describe the situation, the task, the action you took to persuade the client, and the result.

Example answer

"At a construction site, a client wanted to delay installing guardrails on a mezzanine to save time. I explained the legal obligations under the WHS Regulation and the potential consequences of a fall. I offered a phased approach that allowed some work to continue while the guardrails were installed. The client agreed, and we completed the installation within two days without delaying the overall project. The site subsequently had no fall-related incidents."

3. You arrive at a construction site and see a worker not wearing fall protection at height. What do you do?

Why they ask

This scenario tests your judgement under pressure and your ability to act immediately on a serious safety risk.

How to structure your answer

Use a judgement-under-pressure structure. State the immediate action, then the follow-up steps, and finish with prevention.

Example answer

"I would immediately signal the worker to stop and come down to a safe area. I would then speak with the site supervisor to ensure the worker is not put at further risk. I would document the incident and report it to the client, recommending a toolbox talk on fall protection. I would also review the site's height safety procedures to identify why the control failed and suggest improvements."

4. Walk me through how you investigate a workplace incident from start to finish.

Why they ask

This process question assesses your investigation skills and your understanding of root cause analysis and corrective actions.

How to structure your answer

Provide a chronological process. Start with securing the scene, then gather evidence, analyse, report, and follow up.

Example answer

"First, I secure the scene and ensure no one else is at risk. I gather evidence such as photos, witness statements and relevant documents. I analyse the sequence of events to identify immediate and root causes, using methods like the five whys. I write an investigation report with findings and recommended corrective actions. I then work with management to implement those actions and monitor their effectiveness. Finally, I review the investigation to ensure lessons are shared across similar sites."

5. How do you explain complex WHS legislation to a manager who has no safety background?

Why they ask

This client-facing question tests your communication skills and your ability to make regulatory requirements accessible.

How to structure your answer

Explain your approach in steps: assess the audience, simplify the language, use real examples, and check understanding.

Example answer

"I start by asking what the manager already knows and what decisions they need to make. I avoid jargon and focus on practical duties under the WHS Act, such as the requirement to provide a safe workplace. I use examples from their own site to show how the law applies. I then summarise key points in a one-page brief and offer to follow up with any questions. I always check that they

understand the next steps.”

6. What steps do you take to ensure your own safety when conducting a site inspection?

Why they ask

This safety question assesses your personal commitment to safety and your ability to model safe behaviour.

How to structure your answer

List your personal safety routine: preparation, PPE, following site rules, and situational awareness.

Example answer

“Before I go on site, I review the site's safety rules and complete any required inductions. I wear the correct PPE for the hazards, such as a hard hat, high-visibility clothing and steel-cap boots. I follow the site supervisor's instructions and never enter restricted areas without authorisation. I stay aware of my surroundings, especially moving machinery and overhead work. If I see an unsafe condition, I report it immediately and remove myself from the area.”