

Supply Chain Analyst interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for Supply Chain Analyst roles usually mix technical questions about forecasting, ERP systems and reporting tools with behavioural and scenario questions about handling supplier problems and disagreement between teams. Employers in retail, manufacturing and warehousing want evidence you can read the data correctly and still work well with procurement, operations and finance when priorities clash.

- **Process:** Walk-through questions on how you'd approach forecasting, inventory analysis or vendor scorecard reporting step by step.
- **Behavioural:** Past-experience questions drawing on real situations from procurement, warehousing or supplier management.
- **Scenario:** Judgement questions about handling a live supplier or inventory problem under time pressure.
- **Technical:** Questions on ERP systems, BI tools and data skills such as SQL, Power BI or Excel modelling.
- **Stakeholder:** Questions about aligning procurement, operations and finance when their priorities conflict.

Expect a first-round screening call covering your background and tool experience, followed by a panel interview with the hiring manager and someone from operations or procurement. Many employers include a short data or case exercise, such as interpreting a sample inventory report or comparing two sourcing options, before a final behavioural round.

1. Walk me through how you would set inventory reorder points for a product line using historical sales data.

Why they ask

Checks whether you understand the mechanics of demand forecasting and inventory planning, not just the theory behind them.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a step-by-step walkthrough: what data you'd pull, what tool you'd use to analyse it, how you'd account for seasonality and lead time, and how you'd land on a final reorder point.

Example answer

"I'd start by pulling twelve to eighteen months of sales and lead time data from SAP, then check for seasonal patterns or one-off spikes that would distort a straight average. I'd model demand variability and supplier lead time in Excel or Power BI to set a safety stock level, then combine that with average lead-time demand to get the reorder point. Before locking it in, I'd sit down with operations to check the number against warehouse capacity and current service level targets."

2. Tell me about a time you identified a bottleneck in a supply chain process and did something about it.

Why they ask

Looks for evidence you can spot inefficiency and follow through on a fix, not just flag a problem.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation, the specific bottleneck, the action you took, and the result once it was addressed.

Example answer

"In a previous role, outbound orders were regularly delayed because pick lists were generated in a batch that didn't match warehouse layout, so pickers were backtracking across the floor. I mapped the picking workflow, matched it against the warehouse zones, and worked with the warehouse supervisor to resequence the pick list logic. Order turnaround time in that zone improved noticeably within a few weeks, and the change was rolled out to two other zones."

3. A key supplier's on-time delivery has dropped and it's starting to affect production. What do you do in the first week?

Why they ask

Tests judgement under pressure and whether you go straight to escalation or actually investigate first.

How to structure your answer

Structure your answer around immediate triage, root-cause investigation, and a longer-term fix, showing you can act quickly without skipping the analysis.

Example answer

"First, I'd pull the supplier's scorecard data to confirm the pattern isn't a one-off and check whether it's affecting specific product lines or all orders. I'd contact the supplier directly to understand the cause, whether it's their capacity, a freight issue, or something on our side like changed order volumes. In parallel, I'd work with procurement on a short-term contingency, such as expediting a partial shipment or checking an alternate supplier, while building a case for whether the relationship needs a formal performance review."

4. Which ERP and reporting tools have you used, and how did you use them to build or maintain a vendor scorecard?

Why they ask

Confirms hands-on tool experience rather than a general list of software you've heard of.

How to structure your answer

Name the specific tools, then walk through one concrete example of what you built with them and who used the output.

Example answer

"I've worked mainly in SAP for supplier and purchase order data, with Power BI for reporting on top of it. For a vendor scorecard, I set up a scheduled data pull from SAP covering delivery dates, quantities and quality holds, then built a Power BI dashboard that ranked suppliers by on-time rate and defect rate each month. Procurement used that dashboard directly in supplier review meetings to decide which vendors needed a formal improvement plan."

5. Procurement wants to consolidate suppliers to cut cost, but operations is worried about delivery risk. How do you help resolve that?

Why they ask

Probes whether you can use data to move a disagreement forward rather than just picking a side.

How to structure your answer

Frame your answer around bringing evidence into the disagreement and reaching a decision both sides can accept, rather than defaulting to one team's view.

Example answer

"I'd start by getting both concerns onto the same footing with data: cost savings from consolidation on one side, and delivery risk or single-source exposure on the other. I'd model a couple of scenarios, such as partial consolidation with one backup supplier retained for critical lines, and present the trade-offs rather than a single recommendation. That usually moves the conversation from a values disagreement to a decision about acceptable risk, which is easier for both teams to sign off on."

6. You're asked to build a business case for changing part of the distribution network. What would you include?

Why they ask

Checks whether you understand what makes a business case usable by finance and operations leadership, not just a set of numbers.

How to structure your answer

List the sections of a solid business case and explain how they connect, from current cost baseline through to the final recommendation.

Example answer

"I'd start with the current-state cost and service baseline, including freight, storage and lead time. Then I'd lay out the proposed change and the assumptions behind it, followed by a cost comparison over a few years covering both one-off transition costs and ongoing savings. I'd finish with the risks, such as service disruption during transition, and a clear recommendation so finance and operations can see exactly what they're approving and why."