

Telecommunications Field Engineer interview questions

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What to expect

Telecommunications Field Engineer interviews usually combine technical fault-finding with safety and customer-facing scenarios. Employers want to see that you can work independently in the field, follow Australian standards, and communicate clearly with customers and supervisors.

- **Process:** Questions that ask you to walk through a field task from start to finish, such as installing a fibre link or commissioning equipment.
- **Technical fault-finding:** Questions that give you a fault symptom and ask how you would diagnose and repair it using tools like OTDR or a spectrum analyser.
- **Safety scenario:** Questions that put you in a hazardous situation, such as working at heights or in a confined space, and check whether you stop work and follow procedure.
- **Behavioural:** Questions that ask for a real example of how you handled a difficult customer, a tight deadline, or a team conflict.
- **Judgement and prioritisation:** Questions that ask how you would order competing jobs or respond to an urgent request when you cannot do everything at once.
- **Compliance and standards:** Questions about ACMA rules, AS/CA S009, cabling registration, and how you keep your work compliant.

A typical interview starts with a phone or video screen covering your experience and tickets. The next stage is usually a face-to-face or panel interview with a technical lead and a supervisor. You may be asked to complete a practical fault-finding exercise or a written scenario. Some employers include a site walk-through or a safety induction as part of the process. The final stage is often a conversation about pay, rosters and start date.

1. Walk me through how you would install and commission a new fibre link from the street to a business premises.

Why they ask

This is a process question that checks whether you understand the full field workflow, not just the splicing.

How to structure your answer

Give a clear step-by-step walk-through, covering site survey, cable route, installation, splicing and termination, testing with OTDR and power meter, and handover documentation. Mention safety checks and compliance at each stage.

Example answer

"I start with a site survey to confirm the cable route, entry point and any hazards. I check the as-built drawings and confirm the location of the fibre access point and the customer's equipment room. I then run the cable, using suitable pulling tension and bend radius, and secure it to standard. At the joint, I prepare the fibre, fusion splice the cores, and protect the splices in a closure. I test the link with an OTDR and a power meter to check loss and continuity, and I record the results. If everything is within spec, I commission the service, confirm with the customer that it is working, and complete the handover documentation. Throughout, I use the correct PPE, check for asbestos if the building is older, and follow the ACMA cabling rules."

2. You arrive at a site where a customer has no internet and the ONT shows a red LOS light. How do you diagnose and fix the issue?

Why they ask

A technical fault-finding question that tests your systematic approach.

How to structure your answer

Work from the customer end towards the network, explaining each check and the tool you would use. Mention safety and customer communication.

Example answer

"A red LOS light usually means the ONT is not receiving an optical signal. I first check that the fibre patch lead is seated correctly and the connector is clean. If that is fine, I use an OTDR from the customer side to test the drop cable and look for a break or high loss. If the fault is in the drop, I locate the damage, splice a new section if needed, and retest. If the OTDR shows the signal is good to the premises but the ONT still has no light, I check the splitter or the network side and escalate to the access network team if required. I keep the customer informed, and I document the fault and the fix. I also make sure I am working safely, especially if I need to access a pit or pole."

3. You're working at heights on a pole and notice the harness has a frayed strap. What do you do?**Why they ask**

A safety scenario that checks whether you will stop work and follow procedure.

How to structure your answer

Show that safety comes first: stop, assess, report, replace, and do not continue until it is safe. Mention documentation and communication.

Example answer

"I stop work immediately and descend the pole using a safe method. I do not continue with a damaged harness. I tag the harness out of service, report the damage to my supervisor, and arrange a replacement before I go back up. I record the incident in the safety system and check whether any other gear was affected. If the job is urgent, I let the customer and the office know there will be a delay because of the safety issue. I would rather delay the job than risk a fall."

4. Tell me about a time you had to deal with an angry customer while trying to fix a fault.**Why they ask**

A behavioural question that tests your customer-facing skills and composure.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation, the task, the action you took, and the result. Focus on how you listened, explained, and resolved the issue.

Example answer

"I was called to a small business that had been without phones and internet for most of the day. The owner was frustrated because they were losing sales. I introduced myself, listened to their concerns, and explained what I was going to check. I found a faulty jumper in the comms cabinet, replaced it, and tested the services. While I worked, I gave them updates every few minutes. Once it was fixed, I showed them the working connection and gave them my job reference. The owner calmed down and thanked me. I also made sure the fault was documented so the next technician knew what had happened."

5. You have three jobs queued: an urgent business fault, a scheduled install, and a safety audit. How do you prioritise?**Why they ask**

A scenario question that tests judgement under pressure and risk assessment.

How to structure your answer

Explain your triage process: safety first, then business impact, then scheduled work. Mention communication with supervisors and customers.

Example answer

"I would treat the safety audit as the highest priority if it is a compliance requirement with a deadline, but I would first check whether the urgent business fault has any safety risk or is affecting critical services like emergency calls. If the business fault is causing a major outage, I would attend that first and let the scheduler know that the install may need to be rebooked. I would communicate with the customer and my supervisor about the delay and the reason. I would then complete the safety audit and the install in the revised order. If I cannot resolve everything, I ask for help or escalate so the work is covered."

6. What Australian standards and regulations apply to telecommunications cabling, and how do you make sure your work complies?

Why they ask

A technical and compliance question that checks your knowledge of the Australian regulatory framework.

How to structure your answer

List the key regulators and standards, then explain how you apply them in practice: registration, documentation, testing, and staying current.

Example answer

"The main regulator is the ACMA, and the key standard for cabling is AS/CA S009. I hold an Open Cabling Registration, which is required for telecommunications cabling work. I also follow the Telecommunications Cabling Provider Rules. In practice, I make sure I use the correct cable and connectors, test the link to the required performance, and complete the compliance documentation. I keep my registration current and do regular training on updates. I also follow workplace safety rules, including the White Card and working at heights requirements. If I am unsure about a standard, I check with my supervisor or the technical library before I proceed."