

Telecommunications Linesworker interview questions

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

What to expect

Interviews for Telecommunications Linesworker roles typically focus on technical skills, safety awareness, and problem-solving in the field. Employers want to know you can work safely and efficiently while maintaining network reliability.

- **Technical knowledge:** Questions about splicing, testing, and equipment operation to assess hands-on expertise.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions about working at heights, confined spaces, and following procedures to gauge your safety mindset.
- **Scenario-based:** Hypothetical fault-finding or on-site challenges to see how you think under pressure.
- **Behavioural:** Past examples of teamwork, troubleshooting, and time management using the STAR method.
- **Process and planning:** How you read plans, organise tasks, and interact with clients or supervisors.

The interview may start with a phone screen, then a face-to-face or panel interview. It often includes a practical component, such as a skills test or demonstration. You might be asked to walk through a recent job or solve a hypothetical fault. The panel typically includes a supervisor and a safety representative.

1. Can you describe the process of fusion splicing optical fibre cables and how you ensure a low-loss splice?

Why they ask

This tests your technical knowledge of a core task and your attention to quality.

How to structure your answer

Walk through each step from preparation to verification, highlighting key quality checks.

Example answer

"First, I prepare the fibre by stripping the coating and cleaning it with alcohol wipes. Then I cleave the fibre to ensure a clean end face. I place the fibres in the fusion splicer, which aligns them automatically. I set the splicing parameters based on the fibre type, and the splicer fuses the ends with an electric arc. After splicing, I check the estimated loss on the splicer and then verify with an OTDR. I also protect the splice with a splice protector sleeve. Regular maintenance and calibration of the splicer helps ensure low loss."

2. What safety procedures do you follow when working at heights on a pole?

Why they ask

This assesses your commitment to safety, which is critical in this role.

How to structure your answer

Outline pre-work checks, equipment use, and ongoing precautions in a logical order.

Example answer

"Before I start, I conduct a risk assessment and check the pole for stability. I ensure my harness and lanyards are inspected and properly fitted. I use an elevated work platform if possible, but if climbing, I use a pole ladder with fall arrest. I maintain three points of contact. I also check for overhead power

lines and use a spotter if needed. I follow my training and company procedures at all times."

3. Tell me about a time you had to troubleshoot a complex network fault. How did you resolve it?

Why they ask

This looks at your problem-solving skills and ability to work under pressure.

How to structure your answer

Use the STAR method: describe the situation, task, action, and result.

Example answer

"Situation: We had a fault on a fibre link that was causing intermittent outages. Task: I needed to locate and fix it quickly. Action: I used an OTDR to test the link and found a high-loss event near a joint. I inspected the joint and found water ingress. I re-spliced the fibres and sealed the joint. Result: The link was restored and the intermittent issue stopped. I also recommended a regular inspection schedule for that area."

4. You arrive at a site and find that the underground conduit is blocked. What do you do?

Why they ask

This tests your judgement and ability to adapt when plans change.

How to structure your answer

Describe your step-by-step approach, including assessment, options, and communication.

Example answer

"First, I assess the blockage to determine if it's a simple obstruction or a major issue. I try to clear it with a rodder or jetter if available. If that doesn't work, I check the plans to see if there's an alternative route. I might need to dig or use a different access point. I would also inform my supervisor and the client about the delay and discuss options. Safety is paramount, so I ensure the area is secure before starting any work."

5. How do you read and interpret telecommunications plans and specifications?

Why they ask

This checks your ability to work from documentation accurately.

How to structure your answer

Explain your systematic approach to reading plans, from symbols to cross-referencing.

Example answer

"I start by identifying the legend and symbols. I look at the overall layout to understand the scope. I check for details like cable sizes, types, and routes. I also review any notes or specifications. I cross-reference with site conditions to ensure accuracy. If anything is unclear, I clarify with the designer or supervisor before proceeding."

6. How do you handle a situation where a customer is upset about a service interruption?

Why they ask

This assesses your client-facing skills and professionalism.

How to structure your answer

Show empathy, clear communication, and a focus on resolution.

Example answer

"I listen to their concerns and apologise for the inconvenience. I explain what I'm doing to fix the issue and give a realistic timeframe. I keep them updated on progress. If I can't resolve it immediately, I escalate to my supervisor. I always remain professional and calm."