

**DERBYSHIRE
CONSTABULARY**

Interview Guidance



Doing the right thing

Making a difference

Shaping the future

Congratulations on being shortlisted for Interview

Our selection process is an opportunity for us to see if you'll be a good fit for the role and help you decide if you'd enjoy working in one of our teams. To this end we really want you to be yourself – let us know a bit more about you and what benefit you'd add to the service we provide to the people of Derbyshire if you were successful.

Whilst we can't give you all the answers, we've created the following guide to help you prepare for meeting us.

Thank you for your interest in the role and best of luck!





Our Principles

Personal values are a really important aspect of our lives. Although we probably don't give a lot of thought to them day to day they strongly influence the decisions and choices we make particularly in relation to our careers, activities we engage in and people we relate to. Despite this importance most of us don't consciously choose our values - they tend to be shaped by our life experiences, our parents, friends, school and the society we are brought up in.

Like most people you are probably attracted to policing because you share our value of public service, but this doesn't mean you won't have other unique personal values as well. This is absolutely fine. Whatever your personal values are, we simply ask you to ensure they are focused toward our principles:

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Competencies: To help us be fair and consistent in our recruitment process we look for evidence that supports our principles, plus competencies that are relevant to the role. Our behavioural competencies are provided below. They'll give you some serious clues with regard to the type of people we want working with us. If you don't feel they describe how you typically behave this probably isn't the right job for you.

Acting with Integrity: Is trusted and respected by others and is known as someone who does what they say they'll do. Understands the impact and consequences of doing (and being seen to do) the right thing, is happy to raise concerns and will challenge inappropriate or unethical behaviour.

Communicating and Influencing: Presents written and verbal communication in a clear and effective way. Puts across points of view persuasively, but keeps an open mind and is willing to change their position if sound arguments are presented back.

Delivering Results: Delivers what is needed when promised. Enjoys adding value, knows what needs to be done and stays focused. Identifies issues or obstacles that could prevent or delay getting things done and takes appropriate action.

Customer Focus: Knows how they personally support the service we provide to the public. Is absolutely passionate about adding value for the public and internal stakeholders, improving processes and removing unnecessary cost and waste. Understands how their attitude and behaviour impacts on public perception of the service we provide.

Problem Solving and Innovation: Uses experience, creativity and common sense to solve problems practically and innovatively. Makes sure they fully understand the problem, its cause and implications. Seeks the input and views of others. Weighs up options to make sure the solution they choose is the most effective and makes good decisions in a timely way.

Working with Others: Works to develop a positive team spirit and appreciates the value different backgrounds and experience can contribute to team success. Is approachable and inspires others to do their best. Treats others with dignity and respect, and maintains a positive, friendly outlook. Appreciates the contributions of others – and lets them know.

Planning and Organising: Is clear about their goals and creates plans and processes that are targeted at the right priorities – those that will truly deliver the most value. Copes well with change and uncertainty, knows that it's not always possible to get the full picture or remove every risk before taking action.

Personal Development: Takes opportunities to improve their skills, knowledge and experience. Gives and seeks constructive feedback to help them and others develop successfully.

Operational and Technical Awareness: Keeps well-informed and knows what internal and external factors could impact on our performance. Promotes and pushes activity that improves performance and our service to the public. Is knowledgeable and effective in their area of expertise.

Guidance

The following guidance has been created to help you prepare for interviews. We thought it would be useful to share:



Mindset

Few people look forward to being interviewed – this is entirely normal. You're not alone and it's OK if you feel the same.

But keep the following in mind - we've shortlisted you for interview, so we already like what we've seen and want to hear more – that's clearly a good thing, right? You've impressed us enough for us to want to find out more, so you're already half way there!

What do you need to achieve?

An interview is a way for us to gather and check information. We are mainly looking for two things:

- We want to further explore evidence of your suitability for the role.
- We want to know what you are like as a person and understand if you share our values and passion for public service.

Your aim is to convince us you're the right person for the job. Try to make it clear how you meet the requirements and criteria laid out in the Job Description and leave us in no doubt that we want you.

We aren't going to try to catch you out - we just want to get to know the real you and find out more about your skills, values and behavioural competencies to help us make a fair and consistent comparison between you and other candidates.



The First Step

You hopefully reviewed the Job Description and advert when you applied for the role. This means you should already have a good feel for the eligibility requirements, values and behavioural competencies that we are looking for.

The Interview itself is most likely to focus on your values, behavioural competencies and any specific technical skills. Dependent on the job you've applied for we may also try to find out a bit more about your understanding of the role, our organisation and some of the challenges we face.

It is sensible to go back over the Job Description and advert again to remind yourself of what we are looking for.

Make a Good Impression

The interview is a competitive process – not everyone we see can be offered a job, even if they all interview well – so your goal is to be the preferred candidate by providing high quality evidence and creating a good impression.

We want you to be yourself – there's no point putting on an act as you can't pretend to be someone you're not for the rest of your career – but there are ways to ensure interviewers see you at your best.

One thing you can do to make a real difference is to prepare. The more comfortable and familiar you are with the demands of the job you've applied for and how you can personally add value to it, the better you'll come across at interview. The following page will help you prepare.

Thinking about the Questions

You want to leave us with no doubt that you're the best person for the job, but how can you make sure you are convincing?

Let us know you understand the role:

Showing an awareness of the challenges, demands and wider context a role sits within helps interviewers appreciate that you have a good understanding of the role and our organisation. This will require some effort, even for internal candidates.

Make a list of the challenges that our organisation faces. Next to each one make a note of how you think this may influence the role you have applied for. What will it require of you in that role? It's easy to think of negative things – carefully consider the opportunities too.

This list will help if you are asked questions on what do you think about 'x'? or what do you think it would be like in 'y'?

Understand what motivates you:

Think about some of the general questions that could be asked so you have the answers already in your head. You could be asked questions such as Why you are interested in the role? What motivates you? Where do you want to be in five years? What do you hope to achieve in a role? What do you think you will bring to the role?

These questions can be a gift! They are easy to prepare for and are a great chance to create that positive impression – be ready for them!

Identify your best examples:

Your application is likely to have contained good evidence and examples of values, behaviour and experience that is relevant to the role. You probably selected them from a bigger selection of examples you could have used. Try to jot down this bigger list of examples as this will help you prepare.

Review the list against our advert and job description. Think about the responsibilities for the job, our competencies and the essential/desirable criteria. If you can think of more examples, add them to your list. Make sure each example gives you a good chance to demonstrate the area you have aligned it to – but don't worry if it doesn't match to all criteria.

Having several relevant examples for each area will give you flexibility to choose a good example for each question that could come up in the interview. It allows you to use different examples throughout the interview, showing real breadth and depth.

Think about the position of the job in our organisation:

Think about the nature of the role you have applied for and who you will be required to work/interact with (internally and externally). Consider the extent to which the role drives or influences actions and decisions – and at what level that happens. Look again at your examples and evidence to make sure they are above, at, or as close to the required level and nature of the role as possible.



Practice, Practice, Practice

A top athlete doesn't try to perform for the first time on race day – and neither should you!

Think about who you can ask to help you practice. This is not about 'beating the system' – just making sure you feel confident and know how you might use your examples, come the big day. Successful interviewees are people who can flexibly adapt to whatever is asked.

On the Day

If you've followed the guidance you'll hopefully be as well prepared as you can be – this should give you confidence. You're bound to be a bit nervous, but that's OK. It's just a natural sign that this is important to you. Take some deep slow breaths!

The panel should give you an introduction to how the interview will run. Take this in, but at the same time try to relax and prepare yourself for the interview itself.

Often they will tell you what values or behavioural competencies they are interested in. You should know these from your preparation, so it will give you a clue as to which of your examples may be useful.

Then there's the questions. These will often ask for a mixture of examples and what you would do. Think about what the question is asking. For example, 'This is about integrity. When have you challenged a colleague's behaviour?'

Choose an example you can think of that does exactly what's asked – i.e., challenging a colleague's behaviour in relation to integrity.

If you need to ask for clarification or the question to be repeated, this is absolutely fine.

Give your best example to answer the question. Briefly explain the situation, the part you played and the issue(s). Next, describe what you did and why – make sure the example you provide actually answers the question - avoid trying to force an answer to fit a question simply because that's what you've prepared - sometimes you may not be able to talk about everything you've prepared because you don't get relevant questions - sometimes you'll need to adapt your prepared examples to make sure they answer the question - try to be flexible. Finally, let the panel know what the outcome was and if appropriate any lessons you learnt.

Remember – the interview is a conversation, so you will be asked some additional questions to clarify what you've said and seek more information.



Keep Positive

As the interview develops, don't second-guess how well it is going. You may answer some questions better than others. That's normal – don't let it distract you. Treat each question as a new opportunity to impress – keep positive and enthusiastic, but try not to over talk the interviewers.

At the close you may be asked if you have any questions. This is a final chance to leave a good impression, so have something in mind.



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