



THE BROOKS GROUP

Interview Guide

MARKETING NCO
AIR FORCE RECRUITING SERVICE



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Introduction

Welcome to the Marketing NCO Interview Guide

If you're reading this, your organization has placed great importance on the process by which new professionals get hired, on-boarded, and coached. At The Brooks Group, we've invested a tremendous amount of time, brainpower, study, and other resources determining how to identify people who will perform well. When evaluating candidates for hire, we encourage you to apply equal weight to four key variables in the hiring decision:

1. **Rapport** – What kind of connection does the candidate make with you and other interviewers? Will he or she be a “fit” with your company’s (and team’s) culture? How will they come across to others they will need to work closely with?
2. **Report** – The Assessment allows you to compare any candidate to a benchmark for the job you’re trying to fill—it’s a scientific method for determining with great accuracy if the job seeker is a match for the role.
3. **Resume** – A resume is a reliable standard for many reasons, and it can tell you a lot about how the person thinks of him or herself, as well as an outline of basic qualifications in skills and experience.
4. **References (and Background Check)** – Sure, no one is intentionally going to give you a reference they know is a bad one. That’s why we recommend—at a minimum—checking dates and places of employment to ensure the candidate did, in fact, work where they say they worked, when they say they worked there. You’d be surprised how many people falsify their resumes! If you place importance on past experience, it’s crucial to ensure their reporting of their previous work experience is accurate.

By using the 4Rs as your framework for information gathering, you’ll increase the likelihood of getting the right people in the right places, performing at the top of their game.



The Benchmarking Process

Countless factors combine to ensure that this role at Air Force Recruiting Service requires a different set of job skills and personal skills for success than a similar role at another company. Every company's culture is different, every team works differently together, every position takes slightly different capacities.

Today, when a "good" employee leaves or isn't performing to expected levels, it's almost always because of a misfit with corporate values, their manager, or their work environment. While skills and qualifications listed on a resume or application may determine whether a candidate is capable of doing a job, it's an in-depth look at their personal motivators and behavior style that reveals whether they'll actually be driven to excel in a particular position.

To get objective insight into this position in your organization, we've worked with stakeholders there to create a blueprint for superior performance in this role. Stakeholders typically include people who currently perform the role, people who supervise or are supervised by this position, and people who interact with the position on a routine basis. We survey these individuals about the demands of the position and combine their responses into a position benchmark, which describes:

- Key accountabilities the role demands
- Competencies that are required for success in the role
- Personal and soft skills best suited for the position
- Behavior styles that match the nature of the job
- Motivators that a candidate will need in order to be driven to perform

Once a position benchmark is established, potential candidates may be assessed against it, evaluating their natural behaviors, motivations, and personal skills to determine if they are a fit. That's the purpose of the Comparison Report, which gives you a snapshot of how well or poorly a candidate matches up with the position benchmark.

Where Do the Questions in This Guide Come From?

Short answer: They come from the Comparison Report, which is a one-page, snapshot view of a candidate compared to what the job requires for long-term success and superior performance in this role at this company. This Interview Guide represents the position benchmark and is intended to be used in tandem with the Comparison Report for each candidate for this specific role.



How to Use This Guide

- Step 1** - Review Comparison Report, which comes with the candidate's assessment results.
- Step 2** - Identify any red or yellow areas.
- Step 3** - Look up questions in this guide from those red and yellow areas.
- Step 4** - Review/edit the questions as needed to suit your purposes.
- Step 5** - Ask the candidate the carefully crafted, custom questions.
- Step 6** - Listen actively and ask drill-down questions—don't be satisfied with their first answer.

In general, the more blue and green scores an individual has on the Comparison Report, the more likely he or she is to experience success and satisfaction in the role. Of course, it's quite common for even good candidates to have a few yellow or red scores appear on the Comparison Report.

The questions in this Interview Guide are specifically customized to this unique role. In the following sections, you'll find a series of interview questions related to each of the top three behaviors, top three motivators, and top seven job attributes required for high performance in this position.

While good interviewers encourage candidates to discuss their strengths and successes, they also delve into those areas that may be more challenging for the person.

Interviewing Best Practice: Three-Deep Questioning

Far too often, we rely *only* on a candidate's ability to develop rapport with us and other interviewers—if we like the candidate, and he or she appears to fit our company, we are ready to hire! The significant problem with this is that how a person behaves—his or her “personality”—is only on the surface. What motivates candidates, what personal skills they have, and what sales-related skills they have are all equally (and more) important. Also keep in mind that the person is here to impress *you*. So, if they're NOT giving you answers that impress you...the problem is likely with the candidate!

By using the questions we've provided in this Interview Guide, you'll be reaching out to candidates in ways that allow them to tell you about their strengths and accomplishments, but also candidly explore their challenges and work-arounds. To make the most of the questions we're providing here, follow the Three-Deep Questioning model (if you've learned IMPACT Selling with us, this may look familiar!). For example, let's say the candidate's score on “influencing others” was in the yellow range compared to the benchmark. You will need to:

1. Look for a question in this Interview Guide related to “influencing others” and ask it.

Example: “Who is the most convincing person you have ever known? What did that person do that made them so convincing?”

2. Based on the candidate's answer to question 1, ask a follow-up question.



Example: “How have you tried to use the same approach in convincing your prospects or customers?”

3. Then, ask an additional question related to the candidate’s answer to questions 1 and 2.

Example: “It sounds like Mr. Scott was a very convincing salesperson, and I see why you would want to follow his example. When you tried to use his technique with your own prospects, what happened?”

- or -

“What held you back from trying his technique?”

Three-deep questioning requires you as an interviewer to listen carefully, think on your feet, and be 100% engaged in the conversation and the candidate. The idea isn’t to check items off your list of interview questions. It’s to get a clearer picture of how, why, and with what attitude the candidate will perform on the job.

The Brooks Group

Founded in 1977, The Brooks Group is an award-winning sales effectiveness firm focused on bringing practical, straightforward solutions to your sales force selection and training challenges. Our sales and sales management training programs are street-smart, logical, and taught and reinforced in ways that guarantee our clients realize a return on their training dollars. Our clients get the best available resources for screening, training, developing and retaining sales and sales management talent, customized specifically to their organization’s needs.

If you have any questions or need additional resources to help you build your sales team, please get in touch. We offer an array of customizable sales and sales management training programs, as well as the comprehensive Assessment for screening, hiring, onboarding, and coaching.

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Job Rewards/ Culture Motivators Questions

What Are Job Rewards/Culture Motivators, and Why Are They Important?

The “why” behind choices is often the primary driver of performance. Why does a person choose to do anything—whether serve in the military, be a teacher, join a religious order, or become a salesperson? The answer lies in what that person values most and how it is rewarded in his or her unique environment. The Assessment uncovers how motivated a person is by six different possible rewards: Theoretical, Utilitarian, Aesthetic, Social, Individualistic, and Traditional.

The questions below are aimed at understanding how well a candidate matches the benchmark for this position, which prioritizes three (out of a possible six) job rewards/culture motivators as most rewarded by *this* role at *this* company.

1. Theoretical

This position rewards those who value knowledge for knowledge's sake, continuing education and intellectual growth.

- Which is more important, action or knowledge?
- Would you consider yourself to be an expert in something? What is it? How did you go about gaining the knowledge?
- Tell me what you especially like or enjoy about learning things. What topics or subjects do you enjoy?
- How comfortable are you in taking the time, energy and effort required to master a subject or topic you currently know very little about? How about one in which you have very little interest?

2. Traditional/Regulatory

This position rewards those who value traditions inherent in social structure, rules, regulations and principles.

- Is there an absolute right and absolute wrong? How do you decide what is right and what is wrong?
- Tell me about "rules." Give me an example of a rule that you follow relative to managing or leading others. Where did you learn that rule? How flexible is it?
- Have there been situations in your work experience when you were absolutely convinced that your rules or standards were superior to your employers? If so, why were they better? Were you able to convince your employees that yours were better?
- Do you sometimes feel that things would be easier and better if there were fewer rules and procedures? Please elaborate.

3. Individualistic/Political

This position rewards those who value personal recognition, freedom, and control over their own destiny and others.

- What role does being in control of a situation play in your job satisfaction? How important is it for you to control your own destiny?
- How important is independence to you? Power? Influencing others? What would be your level of satisfaction with a job if you had none of these?
- How good are you in taking directions from others? How much do you like doing so?
- How do you go about influencing others to act? Give me a concrete, real-world example of a time when you were able to move a group of people to action and exactly how you did it.



Job Attributes Questions

What Are Job Attributes, and Why Are They Important?

The Assessment includes a scientifically validated measure of 23 core personal skills, identifying an individual's likelihood of making quality, logical decisions on a day-to-day basis. These are traits like self-starting, resiliency, self-management, problem solving, and many others. The questions below will help you evaluate a candidate's attributes in relationship to the seven attributes (out of a possible twenty-three) considered most important to this role at your company.

1. Self Management

This position requires the ability to prioritize and complete tasks in order to deliver desired outcomes within allotted time frames.

- Give me a specific example of a project that you were responsible for organizing from beginning to end. How did you go about it? How did you deal with changes that arose? How did you ensure that the project stayed on track? What was the final outcome? What did you learn from this experience?
- Have you ever faced a day in which you just couldn't get everything done that you had planned? How did you handle it? (If the position sometimes requires extra hours, simply ask the candidate if they are able to fulfill that requirement).
- Do you consider yourself to be a good time manager? Share with me the planning system you use and show me how you use it.
- We have all had times where it was necessary to balance work and personal or family time. Give me an example of a time when you had too many things to do in both areas of your life and describe how you went about prioritizing your time.
- How much time do you spend getting organized on a daily basis? When do you do it? What impact do you think this habit has on your results?
- What is the difference between activity and results? How do you personally define this difference?

2. Customer Focus

This position requires the commitment to customer satisfaction.

- Give me an example of a time when you knew the customer was wrong but you had to accommodate their wishes. How did you handle it? What did you say? What did you do? How did you feel about it?
- Tell me about a situation where you were able to anticipate a customer's needs before the customer even brought up what they wanted.
- Describe a situation where you went over and above what was expected to exceed a customer's expectations. How did you feel about that? How comfortable would you feel about doing that regularly?
- In your view, what makes some customers more valuable than others? Should all customers be treated the same?
- Give me an example of when you had to go the extra mile to meet a commitment that someone else had made to a customer. What, specifically, did you do? How did you feel about having to meet a commitment made by someone else?
- Is there ever a time when a customer who is in error should be confronted? If so, give me an example of when that would be and how you would do that.



3. Interpersonal Skills

This position requires the ability to interact with others in a positive manner.

- Describe for me the most difficult business relationship you have ever had to deal with. Why was it so difficult? What did you do to make the relationship go more smoothly?
- What is the most stressful or difficult situation where you had to maintain your composure at work? What did you do to maintain the composure? How do you think you did? If you had it to do over, what would you do the same? Differently?
- What is your single biggest communication strength? How do you know? What is your greatest business success acquired as a result of this strength?
- Describe the most difficult, demanding person you have ever encountered. What made them so difficult? What did you do to better understand and relate to them?
- Give me an example of a situation when a personal relationship you had or developed was helpful in a business situation. How did you cultivate that relationship without appearing to be patronizing?
- Give me a specific example of a situation where you had to develop a productive relationship with someone whose point of view was different from your own. How did you go about sustaining the relationship?

4. Diplomacy and Tact

This position requires the capacity to treat others fairly, regardless of personal biases or beliefs.

- Give me an example of a time when you had to exhibit diplomacy while under pressure on the job. How did you do that?
- Give me an example of a time when you or someone you know set aside their personal agenda for the sake of larger, business-oriented issues? What did you think of that?
- How do you identify key stakeholders in a relationship? Give me an example of a time when you not only identified them but also maintained a positive relationship with a diverse group of people at all levels of an organization.
- Give me an example of a time when you overcame internal resistance or "politics" to an idea or project. How did you go about doing that?
- Is there ever a time when your personal agenda should supersede the needs of your organization? If so, when?
- Describe the most politically sensitive situation in which you ever found yourself. What were the three things you did to ensure that you maintained your position in that situation without offending anyone?



5. Leading Others

This position requires the ability to organize and motivate people to accomplish goals while creating a sense of order and direction.

- Who is the most effective leader you have ever seen? What made that person so effective?
- Would you consider yourself to be a leader? What is your philosophy of leadership?
- What do you believe are the attributes of an effective leader? How have you demonstrated these qualities? Where would you like to grow?
- Who was the worst leader you have ever encountered? What did they do that made them the worst?
- Who is a role model you have had in your life? What did that person do to justify being a role model? Would you do the same? How would you do it?
- If we asked your immediate subordinates to describe your leadership style, what would they say? In what areas would they make positive comments? Negative comments?

6. Teamwork

This position requires the ability to cooperate with others to meet objectives.

- Describe a team in which you have participated that you feel was effective. What made it a good team? Describe a team that was less effective. What was the difference between the two?
- What, in your opinion, is the most important thing to always remember when you are on a team? What is the worst mistake a person on a team can make?
- Have you ever seen someone violate a trust relationship with another team member? What was the trust issue that was violated? What was the result? How could it have been avoided?
- Give me an example of a group or team decision that was made and you felt that it was wrong or was something you disagreed with. How did you handle it? Were there others who agreed with you? What was the end result?
- List some things you think are important to remember in order to be a productive team member?
- What would you do if you were on a team and one of the members failed to meet the promises and commitments they had made to the others and did this consistently?

7. Problem Solving

This position requires the ability to identify key components of a problem to formulate a solution or solutions.

- Give me an example of a difficult problem you solved at work and describe how you went about solving it.



- What problem have you solved in your career that has provided you the greatest sense of fulfillment?
- Give me an example of a problem at work that you just couldn't solve. What did you do?
- Give me an example of how you approach a complex or difficult problem.
- How do you identify resources and data and go about organizing them when working on a project or problem?
- When confronted with a difficult or complex issue how do you prepare yourself with the right attitude and expectation?



Job Behaviors Questions

What Are Job Behaviors, and Why Are They Important?

Personalities or behaviors are easy to spot, simple to understand, and clearly above the surface. Understanding a candidate's natural and adapted Behavior styles is an integral part of determining whether he or she will be successful in the role you're hiring for. DISC is a well-known behavior assessment that's been studied and validated extensively over more than 100 years. DISC stands for:

- **Dominance:** describes a person's approach to *problems* and *challenges*
- **Influence:** describes a person's approach to *people* and *contacts*
- **Steadiness:** describes a person's approach to *pace* and *consistency*
- **Compliance:** describes a person's approach to *procedure* and *constraints*

The questions below will help you get an idea of how a candidate compares to the job benchmark for this specific position in terms of the top three behaviors (out of a possible twelve), required for success in the role.

1. Interaction

This job requires frequent communication and engagement with others.

- How do you handle frequent interruptions by other people? How about your response to people who ask you question after question?
- Are you more comfortable with details or people with the big picture or with bits of data?

2. Versatile

This job requires adapting to various situations with ease.

- Are you patient or impatient? Give me an example of how you handle slower-moving people. Would you consider yourself to be opinionated? Strong-willed? Explain.
- How important is it for you to be systematic? Describe a system you have set up, used and been successful with in any previous job you have had.

3. People-Oriented

This job requires building rapport with a wide range of individuals.

- How important is it for people to like you? Which is more important, being trusted or liked? Why do you say that?
- Do you stop and listen to others or express your opinions quickly? Give me examples and situations where both of these situations occurred. What was the outcome?



