



Pan-Canadian Health Promoter Competencies' Toolkit: Sample Interview Questions

Introduction

The following questions are provided as an aide to organizations/managers who may have less experience in recruiting health promoters. As with any recruitment effort, interview questions need to be tailored to the expectations for the position, position-level and context. Not all of the sample questions provided here would necessarily be used in a single interview.

Overall, the package of interview questions should:

- Confirm the candidate's education, training, and experience listed in the resume
- Assess the candidate's orientation to population health promotion practice
- Provide information about the candidate's past performance and accomplishments
- Indicate the candidate's compatibility with the culture of your organization (e.g., pace, style, settings)
- Offer insights into the reasons behind the candidate's desire to change jobs
- Responses to key questions should be probed further and confirmed through subsequent reference checks.

Presentation

The intent is to have candidates develop a short (e.g., 10 minute) presentation addressing a relevant health promotion issue for an appropriate target audience (e.g., Director, Senior Management Team, Board, etc.). Possible topics include:

- A recent problem or issue that your organization was asked to address
- Identifying and providing rationale for a particular issue to be an organizational priority.

The topic and audience should be appropriate for the intended position.

Sample Question:

A new set of priorities will be developed for the Regional Health Authority/Regional Council. You are requested to position a current health promotion issue to be an Authority/Council priority. Develop a 10 minute presentation outlining the issue selected and the rationale as to why it should be a priority. You will then present this at the interview.

Following the presentation – questions:

1. *Why did you select this issue?*
2. *What was the rationale you used to completing this analysis?*
3. *If your position was declined, how would you refute against the decision? What other information or supports could you use to advocate on your behalf.*

Marking scheme:

Content (looking for 15 elements):

- provides/sets background context
- used a policy analysis lens
- assessed partnerships/ key stakeholders
- reviewed literature
- relevant issue for public health
- used evidence in rationale
- identified methodology to collecting information
- analysis includes political lens
- analysis includes media/ public opinion lens
- provides recommendations
- demonstrates understanding of issue
- identifies who is audience of interest
- demonstrates understanding of Authority/Council Priority
- rationale is well thought out
- identified indicators to use for Authority/Council Priority
- provided statistics to rationalize why is an issue
- used guiding documents/standards from relevant sources (e.g., legislation, standards, etc.) in rationale
- outlined consequences if nothing is done on issue (i.e., status quo)
- looked at what was currently being addressed to identify what was missing – or built on an existing priority area
- took other issues into consideration to determine if any synergies
- other

Presentation (looking for 6 elements):

- information is organized (e.g., logical progression)
- eye contact with audience, acknowledges listeners
- clear verbal communication
- body language demonstrates confidence
- professionalism of presentation and presenter
- presents a positive image of the organization
- conveys enthusiasm for project
- summary of recommendations provided
- innovative approach
- within time limit

Education and Experience

Please describe the educational background, training, skills and experience which you believe are most relevant to this position.

Marking scheme:

Use the following as a guide and accept related responses not on this list. Responses should focus on items most relevant to the position. Looking for 8 elements (note: tailor to position):

- relevant education (post-secondary, Masters)
- additional training/ work experience in health promotion
- experience with target population
- worked with variety of stakeholders
- relationship building
- experience in population-health program planning and evaluation
- experience in health promotion strategies (e.g., policy, environmental supports, health communication, social marketing, advocacy)
- project management experience
- knowledge in applicable legislation, standards, policy
- report writing, council reports
- multidisciplinary team experience
- leadership experience
- experience in SDOH
- computer skills
- other

Social Determinants of Health and Health Inequities

Differences in social determinants of health contribute to population health inequities.

- 1. Please explain your understanding of social determinants of health and health inequities using a population health example.*
- 2. What are the basic categories of activity that a public or population health organization can do to using a population health report address social determinants of health? Please provide an example for each category of activity.*

Marking scheme:

Understanding (2 marks)

Definition – Social determinants of health: the social conditions in which people live and work. Examples include:

- Income and Income Distribution
- Education
- Unemployment and Job Security
- Employment and Working Conditions
- Early Childhood Development
- Food Insecurity
- Housing

- Social Exclusion
- Social Safety Network
- Health Services
- Aboriginal Status
- Gender
- Race
- Disability

Categories of action (6 marks)

Definition – health inequity: inequalities in health that are deemed to be unfair or stemming from some form of injustice. (note: use judgement if responses do not align with following scheme)

- Assess and report on the health of populations
 - a. describe the existence and impact of health inequalities and inequities
 - b. describe effective strategies to address them
- Modify/orient public health interventions to reduce inequities
 - a. E.g., incorporate consideration of inequities in the planning of programs
 - b. E.g., utilize health equity assessment tools
 - c. E.g., assess disparities in results (e.g., immunization rates by group/neighbourhood)
- Engage in community and multi-sectoral collaboration to address health needs of populations through services and programs
 - a. E.g., addressing gaps in existing services (early childhood; marginalized populations; etc.)
- Lead/participate with other stakeholders to address healthy public policies and supportive environments
 - a. Multiple examples possible (early child development; built environment; neighbourhood remediation; social policy (e.g., minimum wage; day care policy; etc.)

Sensitivity to Ethnocultural Diversity

The Authority/Region serves a significantly diverse population. A key health promotion concern is [condition], especially among [population]. Please describe two complexities that need to be taken into consideration when working with ethnocultural diversity in order to effectively develop policy/programming for the prevention of [condition].

Marking scheme:

Looking for 6 elements:

- language/communication
- understanding of population
- assumed need
- recognition of heterogeneity within population groups
- dignity of client/ group served is preserved/ respected reach
- staffing that reflects diversity of community being served
- examples provided to justify complexities
- other

Relationship Development

Multi-sector relationship building is an important component to this position. Describe a time when you had to seek out a collaborative opportunity and what approaches did you use to make it successful for both parties.

Marking scheme:

Relevant example - Looking for 6 elements:

- look at opportunities to align agendas
- set up meetings
- honesty and integrity when problem solving
- learned about their agenda
- obtain buy-in
- speak to synergies
- active communication
- identify differences and look for compromises
- obtain trust
- confirm comprehension
- role clarification
- document through project charter/ terms of reference
- follow-up on how relationship is working
- other

Project Management

Scope creep is a subtle process that can result in a project moving in a completely different direction. Drawing upon your experience, explain what are some tools or strategies that you have used (or you would use) to effectively manage a project from development to completion.

Marking scheme:

Seeking 8 elements:

- has a clear scenario/example to draw upon
- develop project plan with the team (buy-in and understanding of vision of project)
- project charter
- project objectives
- project sponsor to oversee approvals and ensure vision is clear for project
- explicit process to make changes to project plan
- logic model
- work plan / GANT chart - timelines
- milestones
- define in and out of scope
- critical path
- project meetings – regular scheduled
- RACI – role clarity
- communication –regular updates
- other

Judgement

Tell me about a time when you had to make a critical decision in your supervisor's absence. How did you handle it?

Marking scheme:

Seeking 6 elements:

- relevant example
- determined implications of not making a decision
- identified options
- analyzed options – pros/cons
- sought advice/guidance from another supervisor/mentor
- sought opportunity to delay decision
- sought opportunity to provide provisional answer pending confirmation
- documented situation and decision for review with supervisor when became available
- other

Inter-Sectoral Collaboration

Version 1:

The pursuit of healthy public policies frequently requires collaborating with a range of stakeholders from different sectors. Describe a public policy issue that you have been involved with and how you engaged or mobilized other stakeholders to pursue policy change.

Version 2:

The pursuit of healthy public policies frequently requires collaborating with a range of stakeholders from different sectors. How would you engage or mobilize other stakeholders to pursue policy change for [insert policy issue].

Marking scheme:

Possible options for the policy issue for version 2 above include:

- A public policy issue that your organization has recently addressed
- Tanning bed bylaw
- Menu labelling bylaw
- Official plan amendment (land use planning policy)
- Policy to include health criteria in environmental assessments
- Food and physical activity policy for child care facilities.

Responses - Looking for 6 elements:

- relevant example
- relevant range of stakeholders
- relationship development/ build trust
- stakeholder analysis (e.g., power, interest, attitude)
- situational assessment (environmental scan; SWOT analysis)
- identified policy objective
- obtain buy-in
- identified approach and roles for public health and other stakeholders
- identified opportunities to reward stakeholder involvement
- other