

Supply Chain Professional interview checklist

Supply chain hiring usually runs as an HR screen, a functional round with a supply chain or planning manager that often includes an Excel or inventory case, sometimes an ERP-based task, and a final round with a business head and HR.

10 QUESTIONS TO PRACTISE OUT LOUD

1. What is the bullwhip effect, and how can a company reduce it?

What it checks: Whether you understand how small changes in consumer demand get amplified up the supply chain, and the practical ways to reduce it.

2. Tell me about a time you reduced excess or slow-moving inventory.

What it checks: Whether you can tackle inventory problems with analysis and cross-functional work, recovering cash without harming service.

3. Why are you interested in a supply chain role in our industry?

What it checks: Whether you understand the specific supply chain challenges of their industry and link them to your experience and interests.

4. How do you calculate safety stock and the reorder point for an item?

What it checks: Whether you can set inventory parameters with a sound method that links service level, demand variability and lead time.

5. Describe a time you negotiated a better deal with a supplier.

What it checks: Whether you negotiate with preparation and data, seeking value beyond price while keeping the supplier relationship healthy.

6. Are you willing to work from a plant or warehouse location rather than the head office?

What it checks: Whether a fresher accepts the on-ground postings that most supply chain careers start with, and sees their value.

7. What is the economic order quantity, and when is it not a good guide?

What it checks: Whether you know the classic inventory model and its assumptions, and can judge when real conditions make it misleading.

8. Tell me about a stockout that affected customers and what you learned from it.

What it checks: Whether you take ownership of supply failures, find root causes and change processes so they are not repeated.

9. What salary are you expecting for this supply chain planning role?

What it checks: Whether your expectation is reasonable and explained by your experience, and whether you discuss it calmly and flexibly.

10. What is ABC and XYZ analysis, and how do you use the results?

What it checks: Whether you can segment inventory to focus attention and set different policies, rather than managing every item the same way.

TIPS FOR THIS INTERVIEW

- Practise safety stock, reorder point, EOQ and inventory turnover calculations on paper, because case rounds often include a quick numerical.
- Be ready to show Excel skills live: pivot tables, lookups, SUMIFS and simple charts on a dataset of items, demand and stock.
- Know the ERP you have used, such as SAP, Oracle or another system, and be clear about which transactions and reports you worked with.
- Prepare stories about a stockout, an excess inventory problem, a supplier negotiation and a disruption, each with numbers and what you changed afterwards.

THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm the time, venue or video link and the interviewer's name
- ☐ Plan your route and leave time for traffic, or test your camera, microphone and internet
- ☐ Keep copies of your resume, ID proof, certificates and photographs in a folder
- ☐ Iron your clothes and charge your phone and laptop
- ☐ Do one final run-through of your introduction, then stop and rest

ON THE DAY

- ☐ Arrive 15 minutes early, or log in 5–10 minutes early for a video call
- ☐ Greet everyone politely, including the receptionist or coordinator
- ☐ Listen to the full question, pause, then answer in a clear structure
- ☐ Take brief notes of names and key points
- ☐ Ask your prepared questions and confirm the next steps before you leave