

101 Questions to Ask in a Facilities Management Interview

A structured bank of 101 interview questions to test Facilities Management candidates' operational, leadership, safety and commercial judgement.



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01

Introduction

The questions in this guide cover the fundamentals of facilities management and the responsibilities and pressures FM professionals deal with every day. They are designed to test a candidate's skills, strategic thinking and overall approach to the work.

Whether you are hiring for an entry-level position or a senior FM leadership role, the right questions show you how a candidate thinks, prioritises and makes decisions, not just what their CV says they have done.

The 101 questions are grouped into five themes: general facilities management, leadership and management, operations and maintenance, health and safety, and budgeting and financial management.

02

How to Use This Guide

No interview needs all 101 questions. Treat this guide as a question bank and build a shortlist from it before you meet anyone, weighted towards the areas where the role carries the most risk.

- **Match questions to the level of the role.** Coordinators and assistant FMs need strong operational and compliance answers. Heads of Facilities and Directors should be tested hardest on leadership, stakeholders and finance.
- **Ask every candidate the same core questions.** A consistent set makes answers comparable and the final decision easier to defend.
- **Probe for evidence.** Follow up general answers with "What did you do?", "What happened?" and "What would you do differently?"
- **Score as you go.** Agree what a strong answer looks like before the interview and note your assessment straight after each response.

**Good
questions
reveal
judgement,
not rehearsed
answers.**



03

General Facilities Management

These opening questions explore a candidate's wider understanding of the profession. They cover competing priorities, the value FM brings to an organisation, sustainability, technology, compliance and the skills that separate capable facilities managers from the rest.

- 1** In your view, what is the biggest challenge in managing several responsibilities at the same time, and how do you handle it?
- 2** How does effective facilities management contribute to an organisation's overall success?
- 3** From your experience, what are the most significant challenges facing FM professionals?
- 4** How would you assess the effectiveness of a facilities management team?
- 5** What role does sustainability play in your approach to facilities management?
- 6** Can you give examples of how technology has changed the way you work in recent years?
- 7** What do you consider the essential skills of a successful facilities manager?
- 8** How would you approach ensuring health and safety compliance across an entire organisation?
- 9** What elements make up an effective maintenance strategy?
- 10** How have you improved energy efficiency in the buildings or premises you have managed?
- 11** Why is space planning important to an organisation's overall success?
- 12** How do you approach emergency preparedness and disaster recovery planning in your role?
- 13** Which trends do you expect to shape facilities management over the next few years?
- 14** How important are customer service skills in facilities management roles?
- 15** How do you balance cost control with maintaining high-quality facilities?
- 16** In what ways can facilities management improve employee wellbeing and productivity?
- 17** How does your approach differ when managing hard FM services compared with soft FM services?
- 18** How do you keep facilities services consistent across different locations?
- 19** Which key performance indicators (KPIs) do you find most useful in facilities management, and why?
- 20** Which other departments are most important to work with in achieving facilities management goals, and why?

LISTEN FOR CONTEXT

Strong candidates link their answers to the organisations they have worked for, including the building types, headcount and budgets involved. Generic answers to general questions tell you little.



**Ask for
evidence, not
opinions.**

04

Leadership & Management

Leadership and management capability is often the deciding factor in FM appointments, particularly at the senior end of the market. These questions focus on team motivation, conflict resolution, stakeholder relationships and strategic decision-making.

Together they help you judge whether a candidate can lead effectively, manage challenges and bring out the best in a team in a demanding facilities environment.

- 21** What do you believe are the most essential qualities for leading an effective facilities management team?
- 22** How do you motivate and manage your team so that people perform at their best?
- 23** What strategies have you used to improve team performance in previous roles?
- 24** Describe a time you had to deal with conflict in a team you managed. How did you resolve it?
- 25** Which methods of delegation have you found most effective in a management role?
- 26** Stakeholder relationships are central to FM. How do you build and maintain them?
- 27** How important is emotional intelligence in facilities management leadership, and how do you apply it?
- 28** How have you developed a strong workplace culture in previous roles?
- 29** Have you managed remote or hybrid teams? If so, what are the main challenges and how have you addressed them?
- 30** Can you share an example of how you have encouraged innovation within your team?
- 31** Adaptability is essential in FM. Tell us about a time you had to demonstrate it in a leadership role.
- 32** How have you actively developed your own leadership skills as a facilities professional?
- 33** How do you manage and meet the expectations of senior leadership?
- 34** What have you done to improve decision-making within the teams you have managed?
- 35** Difficult conversations are part of leadership. Give an example of how you handled one with an employee or stakeholder.
- 36** What role does mentoring play in developing future leaders within your team?
- 37** Accountability matters in FM. How do you establish and maintain it within your team?
- 38** How have you built and used your professional network as a facilities management professional?
- 39** From your experience, what common mistakes should people new to facilities management avoid?
- 40** Moving from a technical FM role into leadership calls for different skills. Describe your own transition and the steps you took to make it work.

“

The CV shows where someone has been. The interview shows how they lead.

**Every FM
appointment
is a **risk**
decision.**



05

Operations & Maintenance

These questions examine the core of operations and maintenance: maintenance strategy, asset management, compliance, contractor and vendor relationships, and sustainability.

Effective operations keep buildings efficient, minimise downtime and extend the life of assets. Establish whether a candidate can improve maintenance practice, manage risk and raise performance, and has done so in practice.

- 41** Talk us through the maintenance strategies you have found most effective in facilities management.
- 42** How do you decide when to use reactive maintenance and when to use planned preventive maintenance?
- 43** Describe a maintenance emergency you have dealt with and how you resolved it.
- 44** What steps do you take to keep building systems operating at peak efficiency?
- 45** How do you manage contractors and service providers to ensure consistency, quality and reliability?
- 46** What strategies have you used to extend the lifespan of equipment and assets?
- 47** Have you dealt with deferred maintenance? How did you address it?
- 48** How do you prioritise maintenance tasks when a facility has several competing demands?
- 49** What experience do you have of running a helpdesk or ticketing system, and how do you keep it efficient?
- 50** When outsourcing maintenance services, what key factors do you consider to make the arrangement succeed?
- 51** How have you ensured compliance with building legislation and regulations at the premises you have managed?
- 52** What are the biggest challenges you have faced in managing HVAC systems, and how did you resolve them?
- 53** What process do you follow when developing an asset management plan?
- 54** How do you manage cleaning and caretaking services effectively?
- 55** How has technology improved your approach to maintenance, and which tools do you rely on most?
- 56** What steps do you take to reduce downtime in critical building systems?
- 57** How do you build and maintain an effective vendor management strategy for maintenance services?
- 58** How do you make sure security systems and protocols stay up to date?
- 59** Have you managed a historic or listed building? What particular challenges did it present?
- 60** Can you give examples of how you have built sustainability into day-to-day FM operations?

TEST REAL DELIVERY

Ask for specifics on the sites, systems and contracts behind each answer. Candidates who have genuinely managed assets and suppliers can describe the detail without hesitation.



**Structure
turns
interviews
into **better**
decisions.**

06

Health & Safety

Health and safety is one of the highest priorities in facilities management, so it is vital to gauge a candidate's experience in depth. These questions explore compliance, risk mitigation and the wellbeing of employees and visitors.

- 61** Which key health and safety regulations do you expect to comply with in this role?
- 62** How do you approach carrying out a thorough risk assessment?
- 63** What are the most common workplace hazards you have encountered, and what did you do to mitigate them?
- 64** How do you make sure the premises you manage comply with fire safety regulations?
- 65** What is your experience of emergency preparedness? Give an example of an emergency situation you have handled.
- 66** How have you created and maintained a strong health and safety culture in the workplace?
- 67** What health and safety training do you consider essential for staff, and how do you put it in place?
- 68** Talk us through the process you follow for handling workplace accidents and incident reporting.
- 69** How do you ensure good air quality and ventilation in a facility, particularly when occupants raise health concerns?
- 70** What is your approach to managing hazardous materials?
- 71** What are the key elements of an effective evacuation plan, and how would you go about developing one?
- 72** Mental health and wellbeing are increasingly important in the workplace. How do you build them into your role?
- 73** How do you make sure facilities are accessible and inclusive for all employees and visitors?
- 74** How do you manage safety risks in busy public buildings, where hazards may arise more often?
- 75** What do you see as your responsibilities following a serious accident in the workplace?
- 76** Have you carried out a health and safety audit? What steps do you take to make it effective?
- 77** How do you manage lone worker safety, and what measures have you put in place to protect people working on their own?
- 78** Which recent advances in workplace health and safety technology have you introduced or found particularly useful?
- 79** How do you balance strict safety requirements with the practical and financial needs of the business?
- 80** What is your approach to ensuring compliance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations?

CHECK THE DETAIL

Confident answers on compliance should reference the relevant legislation, the records kept and how actions were followed through. Vague reassurance is a warning sign in a safety-critical role.

**Hire for how
they **think**
under
pressure.**



07

Budgeting & Financial Management

These questions examine the financial side of facilities management, including budgeting, cost control, financial planning and risk management.

Strong financial oversight underpins operational efficiency, cost savings and sound investment in facilities. It is important to establish whether a candidate can make informed financial decisions that support the organisation's wider objectives.

- 81** Talk us through how you create and manage a facilities management budget.
- 82** What cost-saving strategies have you introduced without compromising service quality?
- 83** How do you justify budget requests to senior management, particularly for major FM investments?
- 84** Have you faced unexpected expenses? How did you handle them while staying within budget?
- 85** What do you see as the biggest cost drivers in facilities management, and how do you manage them?
- 86** Can you give an example of a contract you negotiated to achieve best value?
- 87** How do you apply the principle of total cost of ownership (TCO) when making FM decisions?
- 88** How do you use financial data and analytics to support budgeting decisions?
- 89** What methods do you use to allocate the costs of shared facilities fairly across departments?
- 90** How do you track and measure return on investment (ROI) on facilities projects?
- 91** Which of the cost-saving initiatives you have led in FM have been the most effective, and why?
- 92** How do you ensure compliance with financial regulations?
- 93** In your experience, what are the advantages and disadvantages of leasing versus owning FM assets?
- 94** How do you calculate and manage the lifecycle costs of major building systems?
- 95** What financial risks should facilities managers be aware of, and how do you mitigate them?
- 96** How do you balance capital expenditure (CAPEX) and operating expenditure (OPEX) in FM budgeting?
- 97** Which financial KPIs do you track to assess the performance of FM operations?
- 98** Can you give an example of a strong business case you have built for an FM investment?
- 99** What approach do you take to accurate financial reporting and budget tracking in FM?
- 100** How do you assess and decide on the appropriate level of insurance cover for a facility?
- 101** What factors do you consider when forecasting the long-term financial needs of a facility?

“

Commercial judgement is now part of every senior FM role.



**In safety-
critical roles,
detail
matters.**

08

Turning Answers Into a Decision

Good questions only help if the answers are assessed consistently. Review your notes and scores while the interviews are still fresh.

- ✓ Did each candidate answer the same core questions?
- ✓ Were answers backed by specific examples and outcomes?
- ✓ Did the candidate show sound judgement on risk, safety and cost?
- ✓ Is their leadership style right for your team and stakeholders?
- ✓ Are there gaps you still need to test at a second interview or through references?

09

Making the Right Appointment

A well-planned interview gives you a clear view of how a candidate will perform once they are responsible for your buildings, people and budgets. Use these questions to test operational knowledge, leadership, safety and commercial judgement in proportion to what the role demands.

Maxwell Stephens has specialised in facilities management, estates and workplace recruitment since 2006, from our offices in London and Darlington. If you are planning an FM appointment and would like support defining the brief or assessing candidates, call us on 0207 118 4848 or email info@maxwellstephens.com.

**The right
questions
make the
right hire
likelier.**



THE EVIDENCE

What the Data Says

What the research shows about interviewing and the quality of hiring decisions.

0.42

Structured interviews have the highest mean validity of common selection methods (.42) in the Sackett et al. meta-analytic update.

Source: Sackett et al., Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2023

0.19

Unstructured interviews predict job performance far less well: a mean operational validity of .19, versus .42 for structured interviews.

Source: Sackett et al., Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2023

90%

90% of UK organisations use some form of selection interview; 52% use competency-based interviews.

Source: CIPD, Resourcing and talent planning report 2024

39%

Four in ten UK employers (39%) admit their staff's interviewing and assessment skills should be improved.

Source: Recruitment & Employment Confederation (REC), Hiring mistakes are costing UK businesses billions each year, 2017

95%

95% of candidates placed by Maxwell Stephens remain in role one year after appointment.

Source: Maxwell Stephens, 2026

Sources were checked in September 2026. Select a source to open the original research. Maxwell Stephens figures are drawn from our own published vacancies and placement records.

CASE STUDY

See It in Practice

Recruiting an Interim Head of Facilities for the Premier League

The Premier League appointed Maxwell Stephens on an exclusive basis to recruit an Interim Head of Facilities for a 12-month maternity cover, leading its Reception, Front of House, Post Room and Catering teams. The high-profile role attracted strong market interest, so we held initial screening interviews with more than 70 applicants, followed by detailed competency-based interviews assessing leadership capability, stakeholder management and cultural fit alongside technical FM expertise. We presented three candidates, all three were interviewed and two reached the final stage. The appointee integrated quickly and maintained continuity across all workplace services.

It shows how structured, competency-based questioning on leadership, stakeholders and operations narrows a large field to the candidates who can genuinely do the job.

[Read the full case study](#) · [Browse all case studies](#)

FROM THE BLOG

Related Reading

- [How to Conduct an Effective Facilities Management Interview](#)
- [Competency-Based Questions Explained](#)
- [How to Hire a Facilities Manager: A Complete Employer Guide](#)

MAXWELL STEPHENS INSIGHTS

Continue Reading

- [Facilities Manager Interview Questions Guide](#)
- [How to Interview Facilities Management Candidates Properly](#)
- [The Psychology of Great Hiring Decisions](#)

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