

ROYAL QHSE INSTITUTE

FIELD-READY INTERVIEW GUIDE

ONSHORE CRUDE OIL HSE OFFICER INTERVIEW MASTER BOOK

49 questions • practical answers • scenario thinking • field discussion



CRUDE OIL | PROCESS PLANT | REFINERY | TERMINAL

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

01	Think like an HSE Officer Do not only define a term. Explain what you would check, what you would control, who you would communicate with and when you would stop the job.
02	Answer from the field Interviewers usually want to hear how you apply the control at the worksite, not just a textbook definition.
03	Use the 6-step answer pattern Identify → Assess → Control → Communicate → Verify → Report / Follow up.
04	Never bluff experience If a requirement is client-specific, say that you will verify the approved procedure, standard or facility requirement.

THE INTERVIEWER IS LISTENING FOR

- Hazard awareness and practical risk control
- Permit-to-work and isolation discipline
- Process-safety thinking, not only PPE
- Clear communication and stop-work confidence
- Emergency response and calm decision-making
- Evidence-based incident investigation
- Understanding of the difference between a document and a field control

REMEMBER

A strong answer sounds like: "I would first make the situation safe, verify the critical control, communicate with the responsible person, follow the approved procedure, and document the outcome."

THE 49-QUESTION INTERVIEW MAP

01 Tell me about yourself and your HSE experience in onshore oil and gas.	02 What are the major hazards in a crude-oil onshore facility?	03 What is Process Safety Management and why is it important?
04 What is HIRA or risk assessment?	05 Explain the hierarchy of controls with an oil-and-gas example.	06 What is a Permit to Work system?
07 What checks do you perform before hot work?	08 What is LEL and why is it important?	09 What is H2S and how do you respond to an H2S alarm?
10 What is confined-space entry?	11 How do you conduct gas testing?	12 Explain Lockout/Tagout or energy isolation.
13 What is line breaking and what are its hazards?	14 What is SIMOPS and why is it important?	15 What is Management of Change?
16 What is a JSA/JHA and how do you conduct it?	17 How do you conduct a toolbox talk?	18 What is a safety observation or near miss?
19 How do you investigate an incident?	20 What is root cause analysis?	21 What are the main lifting hazards onshore?
22 What do you check during a crane inspection?	23 What are the requirements for scaffolding?	24 What are work-at-height controls?
25 What are the main excavation hazards?	26 What is confined-space rescue?	27 What PPE is required in a crude-oil facility?
28 How do you control chemical handling?	29 How do you prevent fire and explosion in crude-oil facilities?	30 What is an Emergency Response Plan?
31 How do you conduct a fire drill?	32 What is electrical safety and LOTO?	33 What is hazardous-area classification?
34 What is ALARP?	35 What is a safety critical element?	36 What is mechanical integrity?
37 What is a pressure test and what precautions are required?	38 How do you control vehicle and mobile-equipment hazards?	39 What is dropped-object prevention?
40 How do you manage heat stress?	41 How do you control noise exposure?	42 How do you manage environmental risks from crude oil?
43 What would you do if you found an oil leak?	44 What would you do if a supervisor asks you to allow unsafe work?	45 What is Stop Work Authority?
46 What documents do you review before a high-risk job?	47 How do you handle an unsafe condition found during inspection?	48 What is the difference between personal safety and process safety?

49

What is a good answer to a scenario question?

Tell me about yourself and your HSE experience in onshore oil and gas.

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 I am an HSE professional focused on controlling workplace hazards and supporting safe execution of oil and gas activities.

02 I understand that crude-oil facilities combine process, mechanical, electrical, chemical, fire and occupational hazards.

03 My duties include site inspections, risk assessments, toolbox talks, permit monitoring, emergency preparedness and incident reporting.

04 I work closely with supervisors and workers so safety controls are practical and understood before work starts.

05 I believe an HSE officer should be visible in the field, communicate respectfully and challenge unsafe conditions immediately.

06 In an interview, I would explain my real projects, responsibilities and achievements honestly without claiming experience I do not have.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

Be practical. Start with life safety, then critical controls, communication and verification.

WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain your actual experience, then connect it to the job.

What are the major hazards in a crude-oil onshore facility?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Major hazards include fire and explosion from flammable hydrocarbons, toxic exposure such as H₂S, pressure release and process upsets.

02 Other hazards include rotating equipment, electrical energy, hot work, confined spaces, lifting, vehicles and work at height.

03 Crude oil and process chemicals can also create skin, inhalation, environmental and chemical exposure hazards.

04 Stored energy, steam, hot surfaces and unexpected equipment startup can cause serious injuries.

05 Process safety hazards can affect many people and the facility, including major fires, explosions and toxic releases.

06 My approach is to identify credible hazards, verify critical controls and make sure work is authorized before it starts.

KEY WORDS

Hydrocarbon • Fire • Pressure
• Toxic exposure

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: identify the major hazard first, then the barrier that prevents the worst consequence.

What is Process Safety Management and why is it important?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Process Safety Management is a systematic approach for preventing major incidents involving hazardous processes and chemicals.

02 It connects process knowledge, hazard analysis, operating procedures, training, mechanical integrity and emergency planning.

03 In a crude-oil facility, process safety helps prevent loss of containment, fire, explosion and toxic releases.

04 An HSE officer should understand the difference between personal-safety controls and process-safety barriers.

05 I verify that critical equipment, alarms, isolation systems and operating safeguards are maintained.

06 OSHA's PSM framework addresses management of hazards associated with highly hazardous chemicals.

KEY WORDS

Barriers • Integrity • MOC • Emergency

INTERVIEW MINDSET

Be practical. Start with life safety, then critical controls, communication and verification.

WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: process safety is about preventing major incidents, not only personal injury.

What is HIRA or risk assessment?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 HIRA means Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, used to identify hazards before work is performed.

02 I first understand the job steps, location, equipment, people involved and interaction with other activities.

03 Then I identify hazards, assess likelihood and severity, and determine required controls.

04 I use the hierarchy of controls, starting with elimination and engineering controls before administrative controls and PPE.

05 The assessment must be reviewed when scope, conditions, equipment or people change.

06 I make sure workers understand the controls through a toolbox talk or pre-job briefing.

KEY WORDS

Hazard ID • Risk • Controls • Review

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: risk assessment must reflect the real job and real conditions.

Explain the hierarchy of controls with an oil-and-gas example.

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 The hierarchy starts with elimination, followed by substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls and PPE.
- 02 Eliminating a hazardous manual task is stronger than controlling it only with PPE.
- 03 Engineering controls can include fixed guarding, closed drainage, gas detection, ventilation or remote isolation.
- 04 Administrative controls include procedures, permits, training, restricted access and work scheduling.
- 05 PPE is important but should normally be the last layer rather than the only control.
- 06 In an interview, explain that stronger controls remove or reduce the hazard at its source.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is a Permit to Work system?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 A Permit to Work is a formal authorization process used to control hazardous or non-routine work.

02 Common permits include hot work, cold work, confined-space entry, excavation, electrical work, work at height and line breaking.

03 The permit confirms that hazards, isolations, gas testing, precautions, responsible persons and work boundaries were considered.

04 Before work begins, I verify that the permit matches the actual job and site conditions.

05 If conditions change, the work should stop and the permit should be reassessed or revalidated.

06 The permit is not a replacement for risk assessment; it is one part of a broader control system.

KEY WORDS

PTW • Authorization • Isolation
• Controls

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What checks do you perform before hot work?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 I verify the approved hot-work permit, risk assessment, job scope and isolation requirements.

02 The area is checked for flammable gases, vapors, liquids, combustible materials and hydrocarbon sources.

03 Gas testing is performed with suitable calibrated equipment at the required locations and frequency.

04 Fire extinguishers, hose or other required fire protection must be available, with a competent fire watch when required.

05 Nearby drains, pits, vessels, tanks and openings must be considered because vapors can travel and accumulate.

06 If readings or conditions become unsafe, I stop the job and notify the responsible person.

KEY WORDS

Hot work • Gas test • Fire watch • Extinguishers

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is LEL and why is it important?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 LEL means Lower Explosive Limit, the minimum concentration of a flammable gas or vapor in air that can support combustion.

02 Below the LEL, the mixture is generally too lean to ignite, but that does not automatically mean the atmosphere is safe.

03 Gas testing identifies flammable atmospheres before and during activities that could create an ignition source.

04 Hot work, confined-space entry and certain process activities may require specific atmospheric testing.

05 Acceptable alarm and permit limits depend on the site procedure and applicable requirements.

06 I never treat a gas reading as a one-time formality because conditions can change.

KEY WORDS

LEL • Gas testing • Ignition control • Permit

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is H2S and how do you respond to an H2S alarm?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Hydrogen sulfide is a toxic and flammable gas that can be present in some crude-oil and gas operations.

02 It is dangerous because high concentrations can rapidly impair a person's ability to escape.

03 On an alarm, I follow the emergency procedure, stop work, move to the designated safe area and proceed to muster.

04 I use the required personal gas monitor and escape equipment according to training and site procedure.

05 I would not enter a contaminated area to rescue someone unless trained, equipped and authorized as part of the response team.

06 After the emergency, the event is reported, investigated and controls are reviewed before normal work resumes.

KEY WORDS

H2S • Gas detector • Muster • Escape

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is confined-space entry?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 A confined space is generally large enough to enter, has restricted entry or exit and is not designed for continuous occupancy.

02 Examples in oil and gas include storage tanks, vessels, pits, sumps and some process equipment.

03 Potential hazards include toxic gases, oxygen deficiency, flammable atmospheres, engulfment, heat and mechanical energy.

04 Before entry, the space must be assessed, isolated as required, tested and controlled under the approved procedure.

05 Entry permits, trained entrants, an attendant, communication and rescue arrangements are normally required for permit spaces.

06 OSHA notes that petroleum tanks and similar spaces can present serious atmospheric hazards requiring testing and monitoring.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

How do you conduct gas testing?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 I confirm the correct instrument, calibration or bump-test status and the gases that need to be monitored.

02 Testing is performed by a competent person at representative locations, considering gas density and movement.

03 Typical parameters include oxygen, flammable gas percentage and toxic gases such as H₂S.

04 For confined spaces, the atmosphere is tested before entry and monitored as required by the permit and risk assessment.

05 Readings, time, location and tester details are recorded according to the site system.

06 If the atmosphere becomes unsafe, I stop the activity, remove personnel as required and follow the emergency procedure.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

Explain Lockout/Tagout or energy isolation.

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Energy isolation prevents unexpected startup or release of hazardous energy while people work on equipment.

02 Sources can include electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, thermal, pressure and chemical energy.

03 I identify all energy sources, isolate them, lock and tag isolation points and verify that the equipment is safe.

04 Stored energy is released or restrained and zero-energy verification is performed where required.

05 The isolation boundary must be understood by the work team and controlled through the approved permit or isolation system.

06 Work must not begin simply because someone says the equipment is off; isolation must be verified.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

Be practical. Start with life safety, then critical controls, communication and verification.

WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is line breaking and what are its hazards?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Line breaking means opening or disconnecting a process line, vessel connection or equipment that may contain hazardous material or energy.

02 Major hazards include pressure release, toxic or flammable chemicals, hot fluids, stored energy and unexpected flow.

03 Before breaking the line, I verify correct equipment, isolation, depressurization, draining, venting and flushing.

04 Gas testing and suitable PPE are selected based on the material and task risk assessment.

05 The work area is controlled to protect people from splash, spray, vapor and line-of-fire exposure.

06 If isolation cannot be positively verified, the job should not proceed until the issue is resolved.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is SIMOPS and why is it important?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 SIMOPS means simultaneous operations where different activities take place at the same time and can affect each other.

02 Examples include hot work near hydrocarbon operations, lifting over an active area or excavation near live services.

03 I review the work schedule and identify interactions that could create additional risk.

04 Controls may include separation, sequencing, restricted areas, additional permits and communication.

05 Conditions must be reassessed when another activity starts, stops or changes.

06 The goal is to prevent one job from defeating the controls of another job.

KEY WORDS

Interaction • Separation • Communication • Reassess

INTERVIEW MINDSET

Be practical. Start with life safety, then critical controls, communication and verification.

WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is Management of Change?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Management of Change is a formal process for evaluating and controlling changes that could affect safety, health, environment or process integrity.

02 Changes can involve equipment, chemicals, process conditions, procedures, software, organization or temporary modifications.

03 The change is reviewed for new hazards, engineering controls, documentation, training and emergency implications.

04 Relevant drawings, procedures and operating information must be updated before implementation.

05 Temporary changes also need defined limits, responsible owners and a plan for removal or permanent resolution.

06 An HSE officer should make sure safety impacts are considered rather than treating change as only an engineering issue.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is a JSA/JHA and how do you conduct it?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 JSA or JHA breaks a job into steps and identifies hazards and controls for each step.

02 I involve the people who will perform the work because they understand practical task conditions.

03 For each step, I consider equipment, energy, chemicals, access, lifting, line of fire, environment and SIMOPS.

04 Controls are assigned before the job starts and communicated during the toolbox talk.

05 The JSA must be updated when the job changes or a new hazard is identified.

06 A good JSA helps the worker perform the job safely; it should not become paperwork only.

KEY WORDS

Job steps • Hazards • Controls
• Briefing

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

How do you conduct a toolbox talk?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 I start with the exact job, location, work scope and people involved.

02 I discuss the main hazards, critical controls, PPE, emergency arrangements and nearby simultaneous operations.

03 I ask workers questions to confirm understanding instead of only reading from a form.

04 Everyone should have an opportunity to raise a concern or identify a missed hazard.

05 Any change in conditions should be communicated and the JSA or permit reviewed when required.

06 I record attendance and key issues according to the company procedure.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is a safety observation or near miss?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 A safety observation identifies a safe or unsafe condition, act or behavior that can improve site safety.

02 A near miss is an event that could have caused injury, damage or loss but did not result in that consequence.

03 I encourage reporting because near misses can reveal weak barriers before a serious incident occurs.

04 The report should describe facts, location, activity, potential consequence and immediate corrective action.

05 I avoid blaming individuals and focus on conditions, systems and controls.

06 Trends should be reviewed to identify repeated hazards and improvement opportunities.

KEY WORDS

Protect • Evidence •
Investigate • Correct

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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How do you investigate an incident?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 First, I make sure injured people receive assistance and the area is made safe.

02 I preserve evidence where possible, identify witnesses and record factual information.

03 I establish what happened before, during and after the incident rather than immediately blaming a worker.

04 Root-cause analysis considers equipment, procedures, supervision, training, human factors and organizational conditions.

05 Corrective actions should address underlying causes and have responsible persons and due dates.

06 The final report should be factual, evidence-based and aligned with the company's notification procedure.

KEY WORDS

Protect • Evidence •
Investigate • Correct

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is root cause analysis?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 Root cause analysis is a structured method for identifying why an incident or failure occurred and why controls did not prevent it.
- 02 I start with facts and evidence rather than assumptions about the worker.
- 03 Methods can include the 5 Whys, fishbone analysis or other approved investigation techniques.
- 04 I consider immediate causes, contributing factors and underlying management-system weaknesses.
- 05 Corrective actions should target causes and strengthen barriers instead of simply repeating 'give training'.
- 06 The quality of the analysis depends on accurate evidence and involvement of people who understand the process.

KEY WORDS

Protect • Evidence • Investigate • Correct

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What are the main lifting hazards onshore?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 Lifting hazards include dropped loads, overloaded cranes, poor rigging, unstable loads and people entering the line of fire.
- 02 Other risks include poor ground conditions, overhead obstructions, wind, blind lifts and communication failures.
- 03 Before lifting, I verify the lifting plan, crane certification, operator competency and inspection status of accessories.
- 04 Load weight, radius, center of gravity, lifting points and crane capacity must be understood.
- 05 An exclusion zone should prevent unauthorized people from entering the suspended-load area.
- 06 If conditions change or communication is lost, the lifting operation should stop until safe.

KEY WORDS

Lift plan • Crane • Rigging • Exclusion zone

INTERVIEW MINDSET

Be practical. Start with life safety, then critical controls, communication and verification.

WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What do you check during a crane inspection?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 I check crane inspection and certification status and confirm the operator is authorized and competent.
- 02 I look for structural damage, leaks, damaged wire rope, hook condition, safety devices and maintenance defects.
- 03 Ground stability, outrigger setup, working radius and overhead hazards must be considered.
- 04 Load charts and rated capacity must be available and understood for the planned configuration.
- 05 Lifting accessories need identification and valid inspection status as required by the procedure.
- 06 The inspection does not replace formal competent-person inspections required by law or company procedure.

KEY WORDS

Lift plan • Crane • Rigging • Exclusion zone

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What are the requirements for scaffolding?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Scaffolding should be erected, altered and dismantled by competent and authorized personnel.

02 It must be suitable for the intended load and configuration, with adequate foundations, bracing, ties and safe access.

03 Platforms should be properly decked and protected with guardrails and toe boards where required.

04 Scaffolds must be inspected by a competent person according to the site procedure.

05 Tagging or status identification should clearly communicate whether the scaffold is safe to use.

06 Users must not modify scaffolding or remove components without authorization.

KEY WORDS

Competent • Inspect • Tag • Safe access

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What are work-at-height controls?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 I first consider whether the task can be performed from ground level or another safer position.

02 If height work is necessary, I verify suitable platforms, guardrails, access and fall-prevention systems.

03 Where personal fall protection is required, equipment must be suitable, inspected and connected to an approved anchorage.

04 Open edges, floor openings, ladders, fragile surfaces and dropped-object hazards must be controlled.

05 Rescue arrangements are important because a fallen worker may remain suspended or inaccessible.

06 IOGP identifies working at height as a life-saving control area and emphasizes suitable fall protection.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What are the main excavation hazards?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 Excavation hazards include collapse, falling materials, underground services, hazardous atmospheres, water and vehicle movement.
- 02 Before excavation, I verify authorization, drawings, service detection and the approved excavation risk assessment.
- 03 Protective systems such as sloping, benching or shoring are selected according to ground conditions and requirements.
- 04 Safe access and egress must be provided and spoil or equipment controlled near edges.
- 05 Barricading, signage and traffic controls protect people from falling or entering the excavation.
- 06 Conditions can change due to rain, vibration or nearby work, so the excavation must be reassessed.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is confined-space rescue?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 Confined-space rescue is a planned response for retrieving a person from a hazardous or difficult-to-access space.
- 02 The rescue plan must be developed before entry and match the space, hazards, access and available equipment.
- 03 Rescuers must be trained and equipped for expected atmospheric, fall and other hazards.
- 04 An untrained person should never enter a hazardous confined space simply to rescue a colleague.
- 05 Communication, retrieval systems, breathing equipment and medical support are selected based on the risk assessment.
- 06 Oil-and-gas confined spaces can contain serious atmospheric hazards, so rescue planning is essential.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What PPE is required in a crude-oil facility?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Basic PPE normally includes safety helmet, safety footwear, eye protection, suitable work clothing and task-appropriate gloves.

02 Additional PPE may include hearing protection, face shield, chemical protection, respiratory protection, fall protection or flame-resistant clothing.

03 PPE selection should be based on the hazard assessment and chemical or process information.

04 Where hydrocarbon or H₂S hazards exist, the facility may require specific personal gas detection or escape equipment.

05 PPE must be inspected, maintained, correctly fitted and replaced when damaged.

06 PPE is important but should not replace elimination, engineering and other stronger controls.

KEY WORDS

Hydrocarbon • Fire • Pressure
• Toxic exposure

INTERVIEW MINDSET

Be practical. Start with life safety, then critical controls, communication and verification.

WATCH OUT

Do not give an unsupported client-specific limit. Explain that you will verify the approved procedure.

STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

How do you control chemical handling?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 I review the Safety Data Sheet and understand chemical hazards, required PPE, storage and emergency response.
- 02 Containers should be correctly labelled and compatible with the chemical being stored.
- 03 Chemical storage should control incompatibilities, ignition sources, leaks and environmental exposure.
- 04 During transfer, I check hoses, connections, containment and grounding or bonding where required.
- 05 Spill kits and response procedures should be available for credible spill scenarios.
- 06 Workers should be trained in chemical hazards and safe handling requirements before the work.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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How do you prevent fire and explosion in crude-oil facilities?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 The main strategy is to prevent hydrocarbon release, control ignition sources and maintain effective fire-protection barriers.

02 Hot work must be authorized and controlled with gas testing and fire-protection measures.

03 Electrical equipment in hazardous areas must be suitable for the classified area.

04 Good housekeeping reduces combustible accumulation and maintains emergency access.

05 Process alarms, shutdown systems, fire detection and fixed suppression systems must be maintained as critical safeguards.

06 Workers must know alarms, muster locations, escape routes and the facility fire-response procedure.

KEY WORDS

Hydrocarbon • Fire • Pressure
• Toxic exposure

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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What is an Emergency Response Plan?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 An Emergency Response Plan defines how an organization responds to credible emergencies and protects people, assets and the environment.
- 02 It identifies alarms, communication methods, emergency roles, muster points, evacuation routes and response resources.
- 03 Scenarios may include fire, explosion, toxic-gas release, major spill, medical emergency and loss of containment.
- 04 Drills test whether personnel understand responsibilities and whether the response system works.
- 05 After drills or events, observations should be recorded and corrective actions tracked.
- 06 The plan must be site-specific and aligned with facility hazards and applicable requirements.

KEY WORDS

Alarm • Muster • Response • Report

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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How do you conduct a fire drill?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 I review the emergency plan and define the scenario, alarm, response roles and expected actions before the drill.

02 Personnel respond to the alarm, stop work safely and proceed to the designated muster location.

03 Supervisors or wardens account for personnel and communicate missing or unaccounted people.

04 Emergency teams demonstrate the response appropriate to the scenario while maintaining control.

05 Observers record response time, communication, equipment readiness and unsafe behavior.

06 Afterward, I conduct a debrief and track corrective actions until they are closed.

KEY WORDS

Alarm • Muster • Response • Report

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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What is electrical safety and LOTO?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Electrical safety starts with identifying electrical hazards, maintaining equipment and using competent authorized personnel.

02 Electrical work may involve shock, arc-flash, fire and unexpected energization hazards.

03 LOTO or the approved electrical isolation process prevents equipment from being energized during work.

04 Isolation must be verified before work and only authorized personnel should perform switching or electrical tasks.

05 Temporary electrical systems require suitable protection, inspection, grounding and environmental controls.

06 Damaged cables, plugs, panels or exposed conductors should be removed from service and reported.

KEY WORDS

Isolate • Lock • Tag • Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is hazardous-area classification?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Hazardous-area classification identifies locations where flammable gas or vapor may be present and where ignition control is required.

02 The classification helps determine what type of electrical and other equipment is suitable for the location.

03 Sources of release, ventilation and the likelihood and duration of a flammable atmosphere are considered.

04 An HSE officer should understand area-classification drawings and verify that equipment is appropriate.

05 Temporary work such as hot work or non-rated equipment use requires specific controls and authorization.

06 Exact zone or class requirements depend on the applicable standard and facility design.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is ALARP?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 ALARP means reducing risk to a level that is as low as reasonably practicable.

02 It does not mean every risk is eliminated because some residual risk can remain in complex operations.

03 The organization should implement reasonable controls that provide proportionate risk reduction.

04 In oil and gas, ALARP thinking is often applied to major accident hazards and safety barriers.

05 I consider engineering controls, operational controls, feasibility and severity of consequences.

06 Final risk decisions must follow company risk criteria and applicable legal requirements.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is a safety critical element?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 A safety critical element is equipment, system or component whose failure could contribute to a major accident or limit its consequences.

02 Examples can include emergency shutdown systems, fire detection and protection, pressure protection and critical isolation systems.

03 These elements require defined performance standards, inspection, testing and maintenance.

04 An HSE officer should understand which barriers are safety critical and ensure work does not compromise them.

05 Defects or overdue tests on critical safeguards should be escalated through the process-safety system.

06 The exact list is facility-specific and should come from approved asset documentation.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is mechanical integrity?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Mechanical integrity means maintaining process equipment so it remains fit for intended service.

02 Equipment can include pressure vessels, piping, tanks, relief devices, pumps and compressors.

03 Inspection, testing, preventive maintenance and defect management are key parts of mechanical integrity.

04 Corrosion, erosion, fatigue, leaks and degradation can reduce reliability over time.

05 An HSE officer should understand how equipment defects can become process-safety risks.

06 Serious defects should be assessed and controlled before equipment operates outside its safe condition.

KEY WORDS

Barriers • Integrity • MOC • Emergency

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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What is a pressure test and what precautions are required?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 A pressure test checks the integrity of piping or equipment using a controlled test pressure under an approved procedure.
- 02 Before testing, the test boundary, equipment rating, isolation points, instruments and relief arrangements are confirmed.
- 03 Personnel must stay outside the defined exclusion zone because stored pressure can release large amounts of energy.
- 04 Only approved test equipment and calibrated gauges should be used as required.
- 05 Pressure is raised and released in a controlled manner with clear communication.
- 06 If a leak, abnormal pressure or equipment movement occurs, the test must stop and the area be controlled.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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How do you control vehicle and mobile-equipment hazards?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 I check driver competency, vehicle inspection, route planning, seat-belt use and site traffic rules.
- 02 Pedestrian and vehicle routes should be separated where possible with barriers or designated walkways.
- 03 Reversing should be minimized and controlled with visibility, alarms or a trained spotter where required.
- 04 Boom trucks, forklifts and cranes need controls for their operating envelope and nearby people.
- 05 Speed limits, parking, loading areas and blind spots should be managed.
- 06 If a vehicle or operator presents an unsafe condition, I stop the activity and escalate it.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

Close confidently: explain the control, verify it in the field, communicate clearly and escalate when needed.

What is dropped-object prevention?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Dropped objects include tools, materials, equipment components or unsecured items falling from height.

02 I inspect work areas for loose items, unsecured tools, poor storage and objects near edges.

03 Tool lanyards, toe boards, barriers, secondary retention and exclusion zones may be used according to risk.

04 During lifting, people should remain outside suspended-load and potential fall zones.

05 Housekeeping at elevated locations is important because small objects can cause serious injuries.

06 Where a dropped-object program exists, I follow its inspection and reporting requirements.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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How do you manage heat stress?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 I assess heat exposure, work intensity, clothing, humidity and available recovery arrangements.

02 Controls can include hydration, rest breaks, shaded or cooled areas, work scheduling and acclimatization.

03 Workers should know signs such as dizziness, weakness, headache, confusion and unusual fatigue.

04 Supervisors should monitor workers performing heavy tasks in hot conditions and adjust work when necessary.

05 Emergency arrangements must be available for serious heat illness.

06 Exact work-rest and hydration requirements should follow the site's occupational-health procedure and applicable regulations.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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STRONG CLOSING

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How do you control noise exposure?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 I identify high-noise areas and equipment such as compressors, pumps, generators and heavy machinery.
- 02 Engineering controls such as enclosure, isolation or maintenance should reduce noise at the source where possible.
- 03 Administrative controls can reduce exposure time, while hearing protection provides additional protection.
- 04 Noise surveys or monitoring should be performed where required to understand exposure.
- 05 Signs should identify designated hearing-protection areas.
- 06 Workers should be trained in correct use and care of hearing protection.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

Be practical. Start with life safety, then critical controls, communication and verification.

WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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How do you manage environmental risks from crude oil?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Environmental risks include oil spills, contaminated water, emissions, waste and soil contamination.

02 I verify tanks, pipelines, hoses, drains and transfer areas have appropriate containment and inspection controls.

03 Spill kits and emergency response equipment should be available where a spill could occur.

04 Waste should be segregated, labelled, stored and transferred through approved arrangements.

05 Any spill should be reported immediately according to the environmental emergency procedure.

06 Environmental incidents should be investigated to identify weaknesses in prevention barriers.

KEY WORDS

Hydrocarbon • Fire • Pressure
• Toxic exposure

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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What would you do if you found an oil leak?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 First, I assess immediate danger including fire, toxic exposure, pressure and slip hazards.
- 02 I keep personnel away and prevent ignition sources if safe to do so.
- 03 I notify the control room or responsible operations person according to procedure.
- 04 I do not attempt to repair process equipment unless authorized and competent.
- 05 The response team isolates the source, contains the spill and manages fire and environmental risks.
- 06 I document the observation and ensure corrective actions are tracked after the immediate response.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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What would you do if a supervisor asks you to allow unsafe work?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 I respectfully explain the hazard and the control that is missing.
- 02 If there is immediate serious risk, I stop or prevent the affected work according to my authority and procedure.
- 03 I communicate the issue to the responsible manager or permit authority if it cannot be resolved at the worksite.
- 04 I refer to the risk assessment, permit, procedure or applicable requirement rather than making it personal.
- 05 I help the team find a safe method so the work can continue when controls are adequate.
- 06 Safety intervention should be professional, factual and focused on protecting people and the operation.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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What is Stop Work Authority?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Stop Work Authority gives workers the ability and responsibility to stop work when an unsafe condition or loss of critical control is identified.

02 The objective is to prevent an incident before harm occurs.

03 When work is stopped, the concern should be communicated clearly and the hazard assessed without blaming the person.

04 The job restarts only after the unsafe condition is corrected and authorization is restored.

05 IOGP's Life-Saving Rules are intended as a final barrier and are not a replacement for a complete safety management system.

06 I would support a stop-work culture where legitimate safety concerns are treated seriously and professionally.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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What documents do you review before a high-risk job?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Depending on the task, I review the approved method statement, risk assessment or JSA and Permit to Work.

02 For high-risk work, I may also check lifting plans, confined-space plans, rescue plans, isolation certificates and drawings.

03 Equipment inspection certificates, competency records and Safety Data Sheets may also be required.

04 Emergency arrangements and SIMOPS controls should be checked where they affect the task.

05 I verify documents match actual site conditions and are current and approved.

06 Paperwork is useful only when the controls described are actually implemented in the field.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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How do you handle an unsafe condition found during inspection?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 I assess the severity and whether people are exposed to immediate danger.
- 02 For an immediate serious hazard, I stop the affected activity or establish controls according to my authority.
- 03 I inform the supervisor and responsible person and explain what must be corrected.
- 04 I record the finding in the inspection or observation system with clear evidence.
- 05 I follow up to confirm corrective action is completed and effective.
- 06 If the same issue repeats, I look for a systemic cause instead of treating each occurrence as isolated.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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STRONG CLOSING

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What is the difference between personal safety and process safety?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

01 Personal safety focuses on preventing injuries from hazards such as slips, falls, struck-by events and manual handling.

02 Process safety focuses on preventing major loss-of-containment events such as fires, explosions and toxic releases.

03 Process-safety barriers include pressure protection, emergency shutdowns, containment and critical isolation systems.

04 A facility can have good personal-safety performance and still have serious process-safety weaknesses.

05 An HSE officer in crude-oil operations needs to understand both areas.

06 Both require competent people, effective procedures, strong field controls and management attention.

KEY WORDS

Barriers • Integrity • MOC • Emergency

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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WATCH OUT

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STRONG CLOSING

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What is a good answer to a scenario question?

THINK FIRST

What is the hazard? What can go wrong? What is the critical control? Who must be informed?

- 01 First identify the immediate hazard and protect people from exposure.
- 02 Stop or suspend the affected activity when a critical control is missing.
- 03 Inform the supervisor, control room, permit authority or emergency team as applicable.
- 04 Apply the approved procedure, risk assessment, isolation or emergency plan rather than improvising.
- 05 After the immediate response, report the event and preserve relevant information.
- 06 Finally, support corrective action and verify the controls are effective before work resumes.

KEY WORDS

Plan • Control • Communicate
• Verify

INTERVIEW MINDSET

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STRONG CLOSING

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LAST-MINUTE INTERVIEW REVISION

If the interviewer asks a scenario question, use this simple sequence:

01	PROTECT Protect people and control immediate exposure.
02	STOP / CONTROL Stop the activity when a critical control is missing.
03	COMMUNICATE Inform the supervisor, control room, permit authority or emergency team.
04	VERIFY Check the permit, isolation, gas test, risk assessment or emergency plan.
05	RESPOND Apply the approved procedure with competent personnel.
06	REPORT Record the event, investigate when required and close corrective actions.

THE 10 TERMS YOU SHOULD NEVER FORGET

PTW Permit to Work	HIRA Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment
JSA/JHA Job Safety / Hazard Analysis	SIMOPS Simultaneous Operations
LOTO Lockout / Tagout	LEL Lower Explosive Limit
H2S Hydrogen Sulfide	MOC Management of Change
PSM Process Safety Management	SCE Safety Critical Element

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