

# Interview Preparation Guide

Updated January 2026

**Sainsbury's**  
Good food for all of us



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# Our Purpose And Priorities

Offering delicious, great quality food at competitive prices has been at the heart of what we do since our first store opened in 1869. And, today, inspiring and delighting our customers with tasty food remains our priority.

Our focus on great value food and convenient shopping, whether in-store or online is supported by our brands – Argos, Nectar, Habitat, Tu, Sainsbury's Bank and Smart Charge.

With an updated purpose – **making good food joyful, accessible and affordable for everyone, every day** – our strategy focuses on four key outcomes:

- **First choice for food**
- **Loyalty everyone loves**
- **More Argos, more often**
- **Save and invest to win**

## Purpose

We make  
**good food**  
**joyful, accessible and affordable**  
**for everyone, every day**

## Outcomes

**First  
Choice  
For Food**

**Loyalty  
Everyone  
Loves**

**More Argos,  
More Often**

**Save &  
Invest  
To Win**

## Valued Behaviours

**Own  
It**

**Make It  
Better**

**Be  
Human**

[Click here to read more about our strategy](#)

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# Interview and Assessments Overview

Click on the relevant box below to find out more detail on the assessment overview for the type of role you have applied for.

**People Manager  
(excluding Sainsbury's Bank)**

**Store Support Centre  
Retail  
Logistics**

**Non-People Manager  
(Individual Contributor)  
and all roles in Sainsbury's  
Bank**

**Graduates**

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# Leadership Performance Expectations

Our **Leadership Performance Expectations** are the building blocks for Next Level Leaders.

If you are applying for a People Manager position (i.e. a role which has line management responsibility), you will be interviewed against our **Leadership Performance Expectations**. This is applicable to all People Managers (excluding Sainsbury's Bank).

You will be asked a set of competency –based questions aligned to these expectations and asked how you would respond to hypothetical scenarios. During the interview, you will also be asked a role specific technical question. You can expect to be asked two questions per each Leadership Performance Expectation.

Depending on your grade there might be more than one interview.



[Skip to best practice advice](#)

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# Our Individual Contributor ‘Valued Behaviours’



Own it

set the outcomes and hold ourselves and others to account; remove the blockers

Accountability

say it in the room and when we make a decision, stand by it

Courage

put the “bigger picture” first and continually prioritise

Decision making & prioritisation



Make it better

encourage experimentation and fast failure, finding opportunities to simplify and save

Experimentation & fast failure

adapt to changing demands

Change agility

be curious and look for diverse input

Curiosity

seek and give honest feedback early and often; as leaders, coach with care and directness

Feedback & Coaching



Be human

show vulnerability and make everyone feel welcome and heard

Empathy & vulnerability

create connections built on trust

Building relationships

walk in the shoes of our customers

Customer connection

Our ‘**Valued Behaviours**’ reflect how all our colleagues need to show up each day for us to deliver against our purpose and priorities. We call them ‘Valued Behaviours’ as they’re focused on the actions we all need to take, and to highlight that we’re each responsible for making a difference for our customers and colleagues. The Valued Behaviours are a common DNA that everyone should live by.

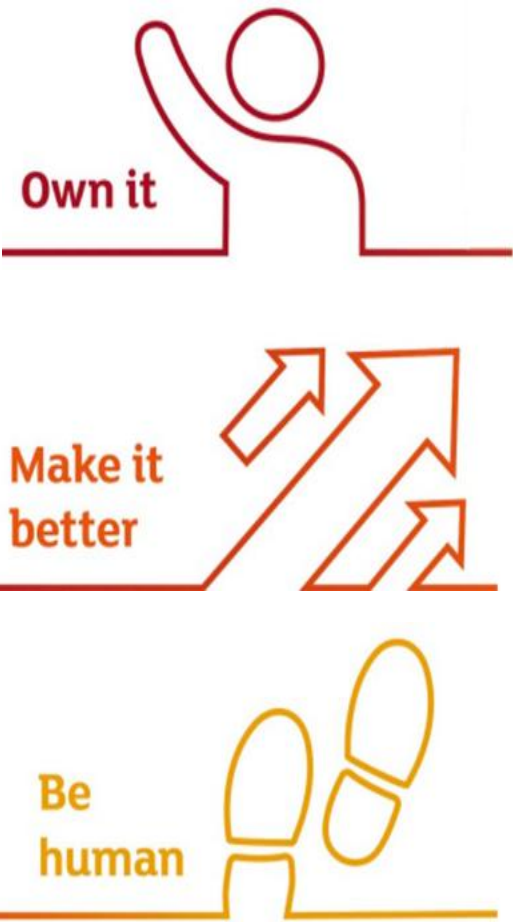
If you are applying for an individual contributor role (i.e. a role with NO line management responsibilities), you will be interviewed against our Valued Behaviours. This is also applicable to all roles in the Sainsburys Bank.

You will be asked a set of competency-based questions aligned to these behaviours and be asked how you have and would respond to scenarios. During the interview, you will also be asked a role specific technical question.

[Skip to best practice advice](#)

# Our Graduate ‘Valued Behaviours’

Our Valued Behaviours describe how we work together to achieve great outcomes for our customers and each other. They guide the day-to-day actions expected of all colleagues, including individual contributors across the business. For graduates, we’ve tailored these behaviours to reflect what we need from you as you start your career with us, how you show up, collaborate, and grow in your role.



|                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Accountability</b><br>You stay motivated and keep pushing to achieve great results for customers and the team.                                                    |
| <b>Decision making &amp; prioritization</b><br>You are proactive and confidently make decisions. You step in to keep things moving, even when things feel uncertain. |
| <b>Curiosity</b><br>You are eager to learn — whether that’s about our organisation, our customers, or how things work behind the scenes.                             |
| <b>Change Agility</b><br>You adapt quickly to shifts in priorities and stay positive and flexible in times of change                                                 |
| <b>Feedback &amp; Coaching</b><br>You take ownership of your development journey, share learning openly, and support others to do the same.                          |
| <b>Empathy &amp; Vulnerability</b><br>You bring people on board in a respectful and effective way, acting as a catalyst to help turn ideas into action.              |
| <b>Building Relationships</b><br>You work brilliantly with others, sharing ideas and using everyone’s strengths to get the best results.                             |

# Best-practice advice

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# Interview Preparation Tips

Here are some things you may wish to consider when preparing for your interview with us:

## Research our brand

Check out the corporate and careers sites, social media and even the news. Learn about our history, values and reputation – this will help to guide your answers and to reflect your interest and industry knowledge. You'll find some useful links at the end of this guide.

## For Individual Contributors think about our Valued Behaviours

Think about situations you've been in that demonstrate positive behaviours, especially involving work experience, team effort, leadership, initiative and service delivery.

## For People Managers think about our Leadership Performance Expectations

Think about situations when you have championed the customer, moved mountains to deliver results, connected the dots across the business and markets and led fearless teams, which have outperformed expectations.

## Follow the STAR method and be prepared

Create short descriptions for each situation and be prepared to share specific details following STAR method – be specific about events and avoid generalising. Be confident in your responses. Avoid embellishing upon or omitting any important parts of the story.

## Think of different examples

Think about all your skills and previous experience. This will help you to provide various examples and try not to recount the same situation over multiple questions.

## Re-read your CV

Make sure you can talk confidently about your career and experience as the hiring manager might want to discuss some of the things on it in more detail with you.

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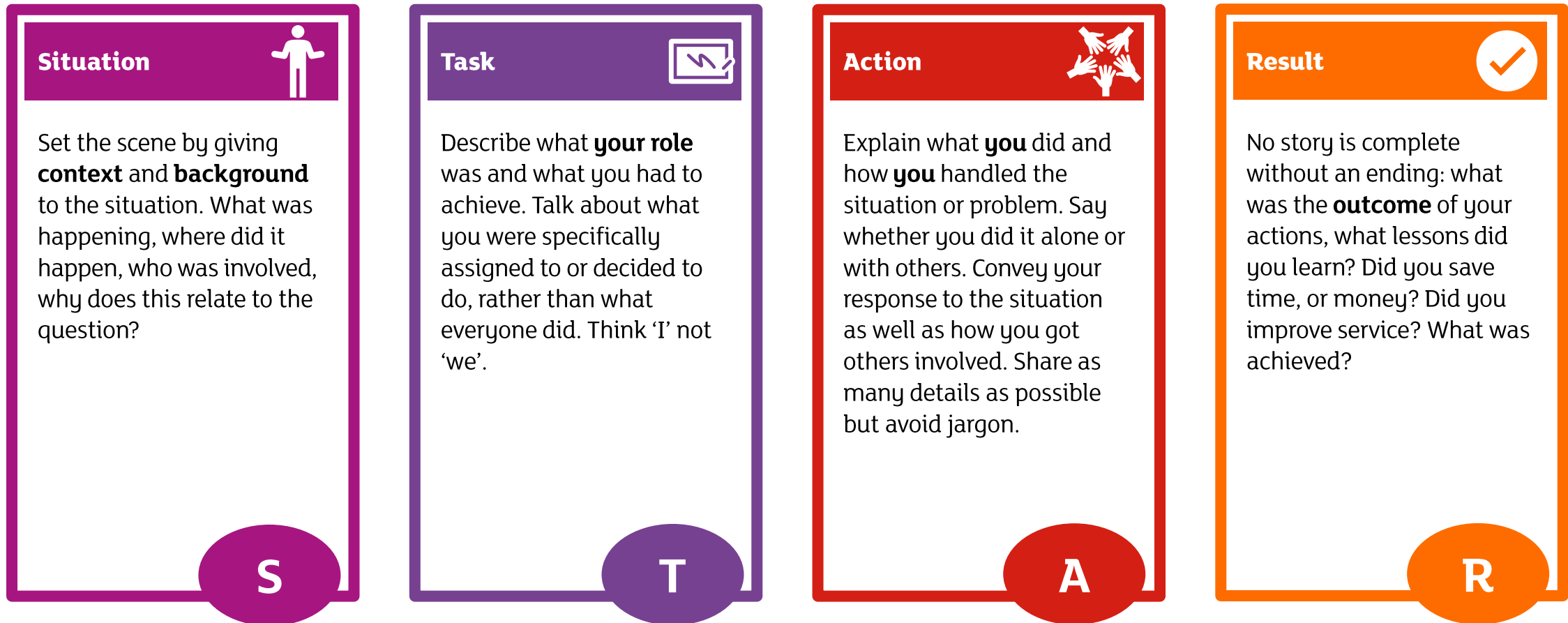
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# Using The STAR Method

For the competency-based interview questions, we recommend using the **STAR** method. This approach creates a simple, engaging story that brings out all the relevant details in your example. Here's what each part means:



# Key Recommendations



## **Give yourself enough time to log on or get to your location**

We use Microsoft Teams to hold our virtual interviews, so make sure your device can access this before your interview. If you're interviewing at one of our business locations, make sure you know where you're going and plan your travel.



## **Turn up ready**

This means being practiced and well prepared. Trust us, you'll feel confident and more at ease if you do.



## **Take your time**

Breathe. Relax. Listen to the questions you're asked and then take a few moments to think about what you want to say or what example you're going to use. Try to answer the questions fully and don't be afraid to ask for clarification.



## **And finally, be yourself**

This is the big one. We want to meet the real you! And we really want you to do well.



## **What support is available for applicants with a disability/long-term health condition?**

We want to be a truly inclusive employer, where every colleague can fulfil their potential. So, if you need support, please get in touch with your recruiter.

# What happens next



## After the interview

We'll get back to you as soon as we can, to let you know how it went and what happens next.



## Further assessment

You might be invited for a second interview or a further assessment stage. This tends to be for corporate roles and could include an exercise like a presentation or a case study.



## Decision time!

Our recruitment team, or the store/site you've applied to, will quickly let you know the outcome if you've been successful.

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# Useful Information

You can learn more about us by exploring the links below:

|                                                                                   |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |   |  |
| <a href="#">Corporate website</a>                                                 | <a href="#">Brand website</a>                                                      | <a href="#">Nectar website</a>                                                                                                                                          | <a href="#">Brand website</a>                                                       |
| <a href="#">Careers website</a>                                                   |                                                                                    | <a href="#">Nectar360 website</a>                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                     |
| <a href="#">Brand website</a>                                                     |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                     |
| <a href="#">Sainsbury's LinkedIn page</a>                                         |  |  <b>Smart Charge</b>                                                                 |                                                                                     |
| <a href="#">Sainsbury's Tech LinkedIn page</a>                                    | <a href="#">Brand website</a>                                                      | <a href="#">Brand website</a>                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                     |

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