

Interview Worksheet

Interviewing candidates

These SEO-specific interview questions can help you get the insight you need to make the best decision when it comes to adding a new SEO Manager to your agency's team.

**Tell me about a time you _____
(insert SEO task/responsibility)**

If you're looking for an experienced candidate, you'll want to know that they've handled tasks and responsibilities similar to what you're expecting your new hire to handle.

What are some of your favorite SEO tools and how do you use them?

Experienced SEOs will likely have go-to solutions in their toolkit. If they can't name any SEO tools, this could indicate inexperience.

Where do you go to learn about / stay up-to-date with SEO?

There's no teacher quite like experience, but seasoned SEOs will likely follow industry publications and thought leaders to stay current on the latest developments.

Are you familiar with and do you adhere to [Google's Webmaster Guidelines](#)?

See if they can provide a few examples from the guidelines and explain why Google doesn't condone certain "SEO" activities.

How would you handle _____ (insert common scenario they'd face)?

Give your candidate an example scenario – one they'd commonly face in this role – to gauge their problem solving and ability to tackle the common challenges of the job.

What SEO achievement are you most proud of?

Their proudest moment in SEO will likely be the one of the most challenging problems they've solved, so the candidate's answer to this question will help you gauge their experience level.

You're chatting with an executive who says they don't believe that SEO works and it's not worth their time or money. How would you convince them otherwise?

It's important for agency SEOs to be able to tie SEO metrics to real business impact, so this question will help you gauge how well your candidate understands the big picture.

You encounter someone who says they don't understand how search engines work. They're not technically savvy but are genuinely curious. If you only had a minute to help them understand, what would you tell them?

As the adage goes, "If you can't explain something simply, you don't know it well enough." This will not only help you assess your candidate's knowledge of search engines, but will also provide insight into how ready they are to speak about SEO to your clients.

What are your thoughts on ranking signals? The most important ones, how you use them to optimize websites, etc.

You're looking for someone who understands ranking signals holistically – that they are weighted differently depending on query intent.

What role (if any) does user experience play in SEO?

You're looking for someone who understands that SEO is as much about people as it is about search engines. The best SEOs understand that Google's goal in ranking websites is to provide an exceptional user experience.

Tip!

Consider having them perform a test project*, such as an SEO audit, to help you better assess their skills.

** You may want to consider paying the candidate for their time on this test project.*

Note:

While this document outlines SEO-specific questions to ask your potential new hire, don't forget to ask questions about their work experience, soft skills, and why they want to work with your agency. Depending on the structure of your agency, these more generic questions may be handled by an HR manager.