

Advertising Executive interview questions

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What to expect

Advertising Executive interviews mix process questions about how you run a campaign with behavioural questions about client relationships, and most employers include a practical element such as walking through a campaign you have managed or responding to a client scenario on the spot. Expect to talk about numbers in a qualitative way: how you judged performance, what you changed, and how you explained it to a client.

- **Process and workflow:** Questions that check you understand the campaign lifecycle from brief to report and know where your role sits against creative, media and client stakeholders.
- **Behavioural:** Questions about past client relationships, competing deadlines and campaigns that did not go to plan, usually answered with a specific story.
- **Scenario and judgement:** Hypothetical client situations such as a budget cut, a delayed creative approval or a complaint about results, testing how you reason under pressure.
- **Technical and campaign analytics:** How you read performance data, choose channels and use platforms such as Google Ads, Meta Ads Manager and Google Analytics.
- **Client-facing communication:** How you present, push back and build trust with clients who may not be comfortable with marketing data.
- **Commercial and budget:** How you set, track and defend a campaign budget, and how you handle scope changes without losing the relationship.

Typically two to three rounds. The first is a recruiter or talent screen covering your background, notice period and salary expectations. The second is with the hiring manager and often an account director or senior executive, covering your campaign experience and client approach in depth. From there you may be asked to walk through a campaign you have managed, respond to a written client scenario, or present a short view on how you would approach a live brief for one of their clients. Agency roles often include a portfolio or case study walkthrough, and some employers add a short conversation with a client-side or cross-functional stakeholder before an offer.

1. Walk me through how you take a client brief and turn it into a running campaign.

Why they ask

This is the core process question for the role. The interviewer wants to see that you can move from a vague client request to a clear brief, a coordinated production, and a measurable result without losing anyone along the way.

How to structure your answer

Give a chronological walk-through with clear stages: discovery, brief, internal coordination, production, launch, monitoring and reporting. Name what you produce at each stage and who you involve, so the interviewer can see the handoffs.

Example answer

"First I get clear on what the client actually wants to change, because 'more awareness' and 'more enquiries' lead to very different campaigns. I sit down with them and ask about their audience, their offer and what success looks like in terms they would recognise. From there I write a brief setting out the objective, the target audience, the key message and the channels we think will reach them, then I take it to the creative and media teams to pressure-test. We agree a timeline and how the budget splits across channels, creative comes back with concepts, and I review those against the brief before anything goes to the client. Once it is live I check performance weekly, and at the end I pull it together

into a report covering what worked and what I would change next time."

2. Tell me about a time a campaign underperformed and what you did about it.

Why they ask

Advertising Executives are judged on how they respond when results disappoint. The interviewer is checking whether you spot problems early, diagnose them honestly and communicate with the client before they have to ask.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: the situation and the campaign objective, the task you owned, the action you took to diagnose and correct course, and the result in plain terms such as enquiries, leads or client retention rather than percentages.

Example answer

"We were running a lead generation campaign for a client and after the first few weeks the volume of enquiries was well below what we had forecast. Rather than wait for the monthly report, I pulled the data by channel and found most of the spend was going to a placement that was reaching the right audience but at the wrong time of day. I took the findings to the client with two options: reallocate into the channels already working, or pause and rebuild the targeting. We reallocated and adjusted the schedule, and over the following weeks the campaign recovered to roughly the enquiry volume we had promised, though it took longer than planned. The client stayed with us for the next year, and I now build a mid-campaign check into every account I manage."

3. A client wants to cut the budget partway through a campaign while results are still coming in. How do you handle it?

Why they ask

This is a common real situation and tests commercial judgement, client management and whether you can hold a position without becoming defensive.

How to structure your answer

Show your reasoning in order: understand the reason for the cut, present the current picture honestly, propose the least damaging option, then confirm the change and reset expectations in writing.

Example answer

"I would not agree or push back straight away. I would ask what is driving the cut, because it is usually something specific: a change in their business, a budget cycle, or doubt about whether the campaign is working. Then I would come back with a clear picture of where we are, what we have learned so far and what cutting now would do to the results we are on track to deliver. If the cut still has to happen, I would rather protect the channels that are performing and reduce or pause the weaker ones than spread the reduction evenly across everything. I would confirm the change in writing and reset the targets so we are both clear on what the smaller budget can realistically achieve."

4. How do you decide where to put a client's media budget across channels?

Why they ask

The role sits across strategy and media, so the interviewer wants to hear a structured commercial approach rather than a preference for one platform.

How to structure your answer

Answer with a framework: start from the objective and audience, narrow to channels that can reach them, size the budget against realistic costs, then build in a review point. Close with how you would adjust once live data arrives.

Example answer

"I start from the objective, because a brand campaign and a lead campaign justify very different splits. Then I look at where the audience actually spends time and which channels can reach them at a cost that makes sense for the client's margins. If it is a client with a smaller budget, I would rather run two channels properly than spread across five and learn nothing. I set an expectation up front about how much we need to spend before the data means anything, and I plan a review point at around the halfway mark so we can move money toward whatever is working. I also keep some budget in reserve, because the best performing placement is often not the one we expected at the briefing stage."

5. How would you explain campaign results to a client who is not comfortable with data?

Why they ask

Advertising Executives spend as much time translating as they do analysing. The interviewer is testing whether you can make a report useful without hiding the parts the client needs to hear.

How to structure your answer

Describe your approach to structure and language first, then how you handle a difficult result, then how you close the loop with a recommendation.

Example answer

"I lead with the headline: did we do what we set out to do, and what does that mean for their business. Then I show two or three numbers that support it, not a full dashboard export. I use plain language and comparisons they already understand, such as how many enquiries came in compared with the previous period, rather than opening with impressions and click-through rates. If something did not work, I say so early and explain what I have already changed. I finish with what I would do next and what I need from them, so the meeting ends with a decision rather than a pile of charts."

6. Tell me about a time you had to manage competing deadlines across several client accounts.

Why they ask

Advertising Executives juggle multiple accounts, and the interviewer wants evidence that you prioritise on impact rather than noise and communicate early when something has to move.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR, and be specific about the competing pressures, the decision you made about priorities, how you communicated it, and what the outcome was for both clients.

Example answer

"I was managing several accounts when two campaigns landed in the same week: one had a fixed launch tied to a client's event, and the other had a creative amends round that was already running late. I mapped what genuinely could not move against what could, and found only the launch date was immovable. I told the second client directly that their amends would take an extra two days, gave them a revised date and explained what I was doing in that time. I brought in a colleague to review the creative on the launch campaign so it still went out on time. Both campaigns ran, the launch hit its date, and the second client told me afterwards that being told early was what mattered to them."