

Cable Jointer interview questions

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What to expect

Cable jointer interviews are practical and safety focused. Employers want to see that you can prepare and joint a cable end to standard, test it properly, and work inside permit and switching systems without cutting corners. Expect questions that walk through real jobs, probe fault finding, and test how you handle pressure on an outage.

- **Process and method:** Step-by-step questions about how you prepare, joint, terminate and test a cable, and how you sequence a job from isolation to energisation.
- **Technical and diagnostic:** Questions about test results that do not look right, cable faults, and how you work through possible causes in order.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions about permits, switching, proving dead, rescue and CPR, and what you do when someone pressures you to skip a step.
- **Behavioural:** Tell me about a time questions covering hazards you have raised, rework you have corrected, and how you work with crews and network controllers.
- **Tools and equipment:** Questions about hydraulic crimping, cable pulling winches, test sets and fault locators, including maintenance and fault reporting.
- **Working conditions:** Questions about outdoor, underground and at-height work, travel, after-hours outages and how you manage fatigue.

Most interviews start with a short conversation about your trade background and licences, then move into technical and process questions about jointing and testing. There is usually a safety scenario or two, and often a walkthrough of a recent job from switching sheet to handback. Some employers add a practical or site based assessment, or a short toolbox talk, before making an offer. You will usually meet a supervisor or network operations representative alongside a recruiter or hiring manager, and there is time at the end for your questions.

1. Walk me through how you joint and terminate a high voltage cable end, from isolation through to energisation.

Why they ask

This is the core of the job. The interviewer wants to hear a safe, ordered sequence and check that your steps match their standards and permit system.

How to structure your answer

Use a numbered walkthrough: isolation and permit, prove dead, set up, prepare the end, fit the joint or termination, rebuild insulation and screen, test, record, handback. Name the checkpoints where you stop and verify.

Example answer

"First I confirm the isolation and permit with the network controller, check the switching sheet against the plan, and prove the cable is de-energised with an approved tester. I set up the work area with the right barriers and rescue equipment, then strip the outer sheath, armour and bedding to the marked dimensions. I remove the insulation screen and semiconductor layer without nicking the conductor, and measure the screen cut back again against the jointing instructions. I slide on the joint body and connector, crimp with the correct die, then rebuild the insulation and screen to profile. Once the joint is closed I run insulation resistance and continuity tests, and where the job calls for it a partial discharge test. I record the results, clean up, and hand back to the controller for energisation only when the paperwork and the readings are both clear."

2. Tell me about a time you identified a safety hazard on a cable jointing job and what you did about it.

Why they ask

Safety and compliance awareness is non-negotiable in this trade. The interviewer is checking that you speak up and follow the process rather than working around a problem.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR. Set the scene briefly, describe what you noticed, explain the action you took and who you told, then give the result and what changed afterwards.

Example answer

"We were jointing in a pit on a main road and the traffic control had been set up for the morning, but by early afternoon a delivery truck had knocked over two cones and the signage was no longer readable from the approach. I stopped the joint preparation and told the crew to stand clear while I called the supervisor. We re-set the traffic control with extra signage and a spotter before any more cable work started, which meant we lost part of the afternoon but kept the public and the crew clear of the pit. Since then I check the traffic control at the start of every pit job and again after any break, not just when the job begins."

3. You finish a joint and the insulation resistance reading is lower than expected. What do you check, and in what order?

Why they ask

Fault finding is a big part of the role. They want to see diagnostic reasoning, not guesswork, and they want to hear that you stop rather than energise something doubtful.

How to structure your answer

Give a diagnostic sequence: confirm the test setup, isolate the cause, inspect, retest, and escalate. Explain your reasoning at each step and finish with what you would report.

Example answer

"I would not energise anything until I understood the reading. First I check the test set, the leads and the connections, because a poor earth or a damp test lead can give a low reading on its own. If the setup is sound, I check the conditions: moisture in the pit, contamination on the termination, or a joint that has been sitting open. Then I inspect the work I have just done, looking at the screen cut, the semiconductor layer and the crimp for a nick or a gap. If I find a problem I strip it back and rebuild it, and if I cannot find the cause I escalate to the supervisor and the network controller before any switching for energisation. I record the readings and the actions in the job notes either way."

4. How do you work through a switching sheet and network plan before you start a job?

Why they ask

Reading plans and specifications and following switching procedures are listed tasks for this role. The interviewer wants to know that you can plan a job from documents rather than from memory.

How to structure your answer

Describe your preparation routine step by step: read the plan, mark up the sheet, confirm the cable identity, check the permit conditions, and brief the crew.

Example answer

"I read the plan and the switching sheet together and mark up the cable I am working on, including the pits and the adjacent services. I check the cable identity on site against the plan and the markers before I touch anything, because a misidentified feeder is the fastest way to hurt someone. I confirm the permit conditions, the isolation points and the proving dead method with the controller, then brief the crew on the job steps, the hazards and the rescue plan. If anything on the plan does not match what I see in the pit, I stop and query it before work starts rather than adjusting on the fly."

5. A crew member wants to skip a step to beat the outage window. What do you do?

Why they ask

This tests judgement under pressure, which is where cable jointing accidents and rework happen. The interviewer wants to hear that you hold the standard without turning it into a confrontation.

How to structure your answer

Explain your immediate action, how you speak to the person, what you escalate, and how you protect the job. Show judgement rather than a rigid rule recital.

Example answer

"I would stop the job and take the person aside rather than argue in front of the crew. I would ask what is driving the time pressure and explain what that step protects, whether it is the screen cut, the crimp or the test. If the outage window genuinely will not cover the job, that is a conversation for the supervisor and the network controller, not something we solve by cutting a corner. In most cases there is a way to re-sequence the work or hand back part of the section, and that keeps everyone safe and the cable reliable. I would follow up afterwards so the same pressure does not come up on the next outage."

6. What experience do you have with hydraulic crimping and cable pulling equipment, and how do you look after it?

Why they ask

Plant and equipment operation is a core skill, and tool condition directly affects joint quality. The interviewer wants evidence you maintain and report equipment properly.

How to structure your answer

Describe the equipment you have used, the checks you run, how you match dies and settings to the job, and what you do when something is not right.

Example answer

"I have used hydraulic crimping tools on low voltage and high voltage connectors and terminations, and cable pulling winches for underground pulls, including setting up rollers and monitoring tension on longer runs. Before each job I check the tool, the dies and the hose for damage and leaks, and I confirm the die matches the connector and the crimp chart. On pulling jobs I check the winch, the rope and the anchors, and I keep people clear of the line. If a tool is not pulling full pressure or a die is worn, I tag it out and report it rather than pushing through, because a bad crimp or a damaged cable is a fault waiting to happen. I log equipment faults so the workshop can pick them up."