

Logistics Manager interview questions

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What to expect

Logistics manager interviews test your operational judgement, your comfort with systems and data, and how you handle the daily pressure of moving goods. Employers want to know you can plan routes, manage inventory, negotiate with carriers and keep customers informed when something goes wrong.

- **Process and systems:** Questions that ask you to walk through how you plan routes, schedule shipments or manage inventory in a WMS or TMS.
- **Behavioural:** Questions that ask for a real example of resolving a delay, negotiating a contract or improving a KPI.
- **Scenario:** Questions that put you in a live disruption, such as a carrier failure or stock shortfall, and ask what you would do.
- **Technical and data:** Questions about ERP, WMS, TMS, Excel and how you use on-time delivery or inventory turnover data.
- **Safety and compliance:** Questions about WHS, Chain of Responsibility, load restraint and dangerous goods.
- **Stakeholder and people management:** Questions about coordinating warehouse teams, transport providers and customers.

The process usually starts with a phone or video screen with a recruiter or hiring manager. If you progress, you meet the operations manager, site lead or a panel that may include a warehouse supervisor. Some employers ask you to review a delivery schedule or an inventory report as a short exercise, and you may tour the distribution centre or meet the transport team. Expect a mix of process questions, behavioural examples and at least one scenario about a disruption.

1. Walk me through how you plan delivery routes and schedule shipments when you have tight customer deadlines and limited fleet capacity.

Why they ask

This is a core process question. The interviewer wants to hear your method, the data you use and how you prioritise when capacity is tight.

How to structure your answer

Use a step-by-step walk-through. Start with how you review orders and deadlines, then explain how you group deliveries, check vehicle availability and use your TMS or route planning software. Finish with how you communicate the plan to drivers and customers.

Example answer

"I start by pulling the order book and separating firm deadlines from flexible ones. I check which vehicles and drivers are available, then group deliveries by suburb or region so I am not sending trucks across each other. I use our TMS to test a few route options and look at loading times, weight limits and any known road closures. If capacity is still tight, I speak to the customer service team about which orders can move to a later run, and I confirm revised times with the customer. Before dispatch, I brief drivers on the sequence and any priority drops, and I keep a live view of progress so I can adjust if a vehicle runs late."

2. Tell me about a time you resolved a supply chain disruption. What happened, what did you do, and what was the outcome?

Why they ask

Behavioural question. They want evidence you can stay calm and solve problems when a delay or stock shortfall hits.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR. Set the situation and task, describe your actions in order, then give the result, including what you learned or changed.

Example answer

"A key supplier missed a shipment that was due into our warehouse, and a major retail customer had a fixed delivery window. My task was to keep the order on track without paying for a full expedited load. I checked stock at our other distribution centre, arranged an internal stock transfer, and booked a partial load with a backup carrier. I also called the customer early to explain the change and confirm the revised delivery time. The order arrived within the window, and the customer kept the promotion on schedule. After that, I added a secondary supplier to our approved list for that product line and set a trigger in our WMS to flag low stock earlier."

3. You notice stock levels of a key product are falling short of forecast and a major customer order is at risk. What do you do?

Why they ask

Scenario question. They want to see your judgement under pressure and how you balance customer needs, cost and internal constraints.

How to structure your answer

Use a judgement under pressure structure. Assess the situation, prioritise the customer, list your immediate actions, then explain how you would prevent it next time.

Example answer

"First I confirm the numbers: check current stock, inbound purchase orders and the customer's required delivery date. I prioritise the major order and see if I can reallocate stock from another site or switch a less urgent order to a later dispatch. If the shortfall is real, I contact the customer early with the facts and options, such as a partial delivery now and the balance later. I also speak to procurement about expediting the next inbound shipment. In the longer term, I review the forecast with sales and set a safety stock level or a reorder point in the WMS so the same product does not fall short again."

4. How do you monitor on-time delivery and inventory turnover, and what tools do you use to spot issues early?

Why they ask

Technical and data question. They want to know you are comfortable with KPIs, ERP, WMS, TMS and spreadsheets.

How to structure your answer

Explain your reporting routine, the systems you use, the specific metrics you watch and how you act on exceptions.

Example answer

"I start each day with a dashboard from our TMS that shows on-time delivery by carrier and by route. I also run an inventory turnover report from the WMS, looking at slow movers and items that are close to stockout. I use Excel to pull the data together and compare it against the previous week so I can see trends rather than one-off delays. If a carrier's on-time percentage drops, I check the root cause, such as a late pickup or a recurring depot issue, and raise it in our weekly review. If inventory turnover slows for a product line, I work with sales and procurement to adjust order quantities or run a promotion to clear excess stock."

5. Describe how you negotiate with a transport provider when you need to control costs without hurting service.

Why they ask

Behavioural and negotiation question. They want to see you can manage supplier relationships and budgets.

How to structure your answer

Use a structured example. Explain the situation, your preparation, how you negotiated and the outcome for both cost and service.

Example answer

"We had a carrier whose rates had risen, and our freight budget was under pressure. I prepared by pulling six months of data on volume, lane, on-time delivery and accessorial charges. I asked for a meeting and walked through the lanes where they were strong and the lanes where we had alternatives. I proposed a revised rate card for our top lanes in exchange for a longer contract and more consistent volume. We agreed on a lower linehaul rate for those lanes, and the carrier kept a guaranteed share of our regional work. Service stayed steady, and I now review the rate card every quarter so we are not caught by a sudden increase."

6. How do you ensure your team follows safety and compliance requirements, such as load restraint and Chain of Responsibility obligations?

Why they ask

Safety and compliance question. Logistics managers are accountable for legal duties and safe operations, so they probe your knowledge and leadership.

How to structure your answer

Use a compliance leadership structure. Explain the legal framework, your routine checks, training and how you respond to incidents.

Example answer

"I start by making sure everyone knows the Chain of Responsibility applies to the whole supply chain, not just the driver. I run regular toolbox talks on load restraint, fatigue management and dangerous goods, and I include WHS checks in our daily warehouse walk. I review transport documents and load plans before dispatch, and I make sure drivers have the right licences and equipment. If I see a breach, I stop the task, record it and retrain the person involved. I also keep a compliance calendar for audits and vehicle inspections so nothing is left to chance. The goal is a culture where people speak up early rather than waiting for an incident."