

# Professional Organiser interview questions

careertips.com.au: common questions and what they're really testing

## What to expect

Interviews for professional organiser roles focus on your ability to work with clients, solve spatial problems, and use practical tools. You may be asked to demonstrate your approach or discuss past experiences.

- **Process:** Questions that ask you to walk through your method for assessing a space, planning a system, or managing a project.
- **Behavioural:** Questions that ask for specific examples from your past, such as a time you helped a resistant client or handled a complex move.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical situations that test your judgement, creativity, and client-handling skills under pressure.
- **Technical:** Questions about the software, tools, and systems you use to stay organised and to help clients maintain order.
- **Client-facing:** Questions that explore your communication style, empathy, and ability to manage emotional or sensitive situations.
- **Safety and ethics:** Questions about confidentiality, insurance, police checks, and safe work practices in clients' homes.

The interview process often begins with a phone or video screen, then moves to a face-to-face or practical assessment. You might be asked to organise a small area, present a plan, or role-play a client conversation. Some employers include a follow-up interview with a senior organiser or business owner.

## 1. Walk me through how you would approach a new client's home for the first time.

### Why they ask

This assesses your systematic approach, client care, and ability to set expectations.

### How to structure your answer

A step-by-step walk-through: initial contact, assessment, plan, execution, follow-up.

#### Example answer

*"First, I would schedule a consultation to understand the client's goals, pain points, and any constraints like budget or time. I would ask them to give me a tour of the space and explain how they use it. Then I would identify zones for sorting: keep, donate, discard, and relocate. I would create a simple plan with priorities and timelines, and get their agreement before starting. On the day, I would work alongside them, making decisions together and setting up storage systems with clear labels. Finally, I would schedule a follow-up check-in to help them maintain the new systems and adjust as needed."*

## 2. Tell me about a time you helped a client who was resistant to decluttering.

### Why they ask

Tests empathy, persuasion, and your ability to work with resistance without conflict.

### How to structure your answer

STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

#### Example answer

*"I once worked with a client whose late mother's belongings filled an entire room. She wanted to keep everything but felt overwhelmed. My task was to help her create a usable space without forcing her to*

*part with meaningful items. I started by asking her to tell me stories about a few objects, which built trust. I suggested we sort items into categories: display, store, and share with family. I introduced the idea of a memory box for the most precious pieces. Over several sessions, we cleared enough space to create a comfortable reading nook. She told me she felt lighter and could finally enjoy the space."*

### **3. A client has a room full of items they insist on keeping, but there is no space. How do you handle it?**

#### **Why they ask**

Tests judgement under pressure, creativity, and client-facing negotiation.

#### **How to structure your answer**

Acknowledge feelings, explore options, suggest compromises, focus on function.

#### **Example answer**

*"I would start by acknowledging that these items are important to them and that it is their home. Then I would ask questions to understand what each item means and how often it is used. I would suggest we measure the available storage and consider vertical space, under-bed storage, or a small rental unit. If they are open, I might propose a trial: store some items out of sight for a month and see if they miss them. I would also suggest digitising photos or documents. The goal is to find a solution that respects their attachment while making the room functional. I would never force a decision; I would guide them to one they feel good about."*

### **4. What software or tools do you use to keep yourself and your clients organised?**

#### **Why they ask**

Assesses your technical proficiency and ability to recommend systems.

#### **How to structure your answer**

List and explain relevance, give examples of how you use them.

#### **Example answer**

*"I use Trello for project management, creating boards for each client with lists for assessment, sorting, and follow-up. Notion is great for building custom checklists and sharing progress with clients. For scheduling and documents, I rely on Google Workspace and Microsoft 365. I also use Asana for larger estate clearances where I need to coordinate with removalists and charities. With clients, I often set up a shared Google Calendar for maintenance reminders. The key is to choose tools that are simple enough for the client to keep using after I leave."*

### **5. How do you handle a client who becomes emotional during a declutter session?**

#### **Why they ask**

Explores emotional intelligence and boundary management.

#### **How to structure your answer**

Acknowledge, pause, reframe, maintain boundaries.

#### **Example answer**

*"If a client becomes emotional, I would pause the sorting and acknowledge their feelings. I might say, 'This is clearly difficult, and it's okay to take a break.' I would offer a cup of tea and listen without judgement. Then I would gently reframe the goal: we are not throwing away memories, we are finding a respectful way to keep them. I would suggest we focus on a different area or come back to that item later. It is important to maintain boundaries: I am there to support, not to be a therapist. If the emotion seems deep, I might suggest they speak with a counsellor. My role is to create a safe, non-judgemental space."*

## **6. What steps do you take to ensure safety and confidentiality when working in a client's home?**

### **Why they ask**

Tests responsibility, professionalism, and understanding of legal obligations.

### **How to structure your answer**

A checklist of practical measures: insurance, police check, protocols.

### **Example answer**

*"Before any job, I ensure I have current public liability insurance and a recent police check. I discuss confidentiality and agree that I will not share any information about their home or belongings. In the home, I conduct a quick risk assessment: checking for trip hazards, heavy items, or pets. I use safe lifting techniques and ask for help with large furniture. I keep client information secure, using password-protected devices and locking physical files. If I am working with a client who has hoarding behaviour, I follow a harm-reduction approach and may coordinate with a mental health professional. Safety and trust are the foundation of this work."*