

Territory Manager interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for territory manager roles focus on how you plan a patch, manage existing accounts, and use data to drive decisions. Employers want to know you can work autonomously, handle negotiation, and keep CRM records accurate.

- **Process:** Questions about how you plan a call cycle, prioritise accounts, and structure your week.
- **Behavioural:** Questions that ask for examples of growing an account, handling a difficult customer, or managing competing priorities.
- **Scenario:** Questions that put you in a pricing negotiation or a product demonstration and ask you to reason through your approach.
- **Technical:** Questions about CRM use, sales forecasting, and analysing data to identify opportunities.
- **Client-facing:** Questions about how you build relationships on the road and handle objections during a visit.

Typically a phone screen with a recruiter or internal talent team, then a face to face interview with the state or national sales manager. Some employers include a short role play or case study, and a few may ask you to do a drive along to see how you interact with customers.

1. Walk me through how you plan your call cycle for a territory.

Why they ask

They want to see if you can organise a patch efficiently, prioritise high value accounts, and stick to a routine.

How to structure your answer

Process walk-through: start with how you review account data, then set visit frequency by tier, map the route to reduce travel, and explain how you adjust for new opportunities or seasonal peaks.

Example answer

"I start by pulling a list of all accounts and sorting them by sales volume and growth potential. A tier accounts get visited fortnightly or monthly, B tier every six to eight weeks, and C tier quarterly or by phone. I use mapping tools to group visits geographically so I am not doubling back. I block out one day a week for new business or follow up calls. Every Friday I review what came out of the week and adjust the next cycle. If a customer has a specific issue, I can slot them in sooner."

2. Tell me about a time you turned around a declining account.

Why they ask

This tests your ability to diagnose problems, build trust, and recover revenue.

How to structure your answer

STAR: describe the account and the decline, your specific actions to understand the cause and rebuild the relationship, and the measurable outcome.

Example answer

"I had a wholesale customer whose orders had dropped by half over six months. I visited them and found out our delivery times no longer suited their receiving hours. I worked with our warehouse to shift their delivery to a morning slot and also reviewed their product mix, suggesting they range a smaller pack size that sold better in their store. Over the next quarter their orders returned to previous levels and they added two new lines."

3. A key customer demands a discount beyond your authority. What do you do?

Why they ask

They want to see how you handle pressure, negotiate within limits, and protect margin.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: acknowledge the request, explore the reason behind it, offer alternatives within your authority, and know when to escalate.

Example answer

"I would first thank them for being upfront and ask what is driving the request, whether it is a competitor quote or their own margin pressure. I would explain what I can do, such as a volume rebate or a trial price on a new line, without going beyond my authority. If they still need more, I would say I need to take it to my sales manager and come back with an answer by a set time. I would never promise something I cannot deliver."

4. How do you use CRM and sales data to forecast for your patch?

Why they ask

They want to know you are disciplined with data and can give reliable forecasts to your manager.

How to structure your answer

Technical: describe the tools you use, the data you look at, and how you turn it into a forecast, including how you handle uncertainty.

Example answer

"I log every visit in Salesforce straight after the call, including what was discussed, any orders, and competitor activity. At the end of each week I review the pipeline and compare it to my monthly target. I use Excel to look at seasonality and historical order patterns, so I can forecast with a margin of error. If a big account is uncertain, I flag it to my manager early rather than waiting for month end."

5. How would you approach a product demonstration to a customer who is sceptical about a new range?

Why they ask

This tests your preparation, product knowledge, and ability to handle objections in a client facing setting.

How to structure your answer

Scenario: outline your preparation, how you open the demonstration, how you handle scepticism, and how you close for a trial or order.

Example answer

"I would prepare by learning the new range inside out and thinking about what this customer typically sells. I would open by asking what they look for in similar products, then show how the new range fits that need. If they are sceptical, I would acknowledge their concern and offer evidence, such as samples, trial pricing, or a case study from a similar store. I would aim to close with a small initial order so they can test it without risk."

6. Describe a time you had to manage competing priorities across multiple customers.

Why they ask

They want to see your time management and stakeholder skills when you cannot be everywhere at once.

How to structure your answer

Behavioural STAR: describe the situation with competing demands, how you decided what to prioritise, what you communicated to each customer, and the result.

Example answer

"I had three key accounts all needing urgent attention in the same week, one with a delivery issue, one wanting a quote for a tender, and one with a product complaint. I ranked them by urgency and impact: the delivery issue could lose sales immediately, so I went there first. I called the other two, explained the situation and gave them a firm time I would be with them. I also asked our internal support team to start the quote for the tender while I was on the road. All three were resolved by the end of the week and none of them felt ignored."