

Vending Machine Attendant interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for vending machine attendant roles focus on reliability, practical servicing skills and how you handle a route on your own. Employers want to know you can work unsupervised, keep machines running, and deal with customers and site contacts politely.

- **Process questions:** How you plan a route, restock machines, reconcile cash and report faults. These test your organisational habits and ability to work efficiently.
- **Behavioural questions:** Past examples of reliability, handling stock discrepancies, or dealing with a difficult customer or site issue. They show how you actually work under normal pressure.
- **Scenario questions:** What you would do if a machine is broken into, a cash shortage appears, or you are running late. These probe judgement and adherence to procedure.
- **Safety and compliance questions:** Manual handling, driving safety, hygiene and food safety. Employers need to know you follow WHS rules and site requirements.
- **Technical or hands-on questions:** Common faults you can fix yourself, how you use diagnostic tools, and when you escalate to a technician. These test practical vending machine knowledge.

The interview is usually a single session with a supervisor or operations manager, often on site or at the depot. It may start with general questions about your driving record and availability, then move to how you would run a route and handle common problems. Some employers include a practical walk-through of a machine or a short driving assessment. You may also meet a team member who does the same role.

1. Walk me through how you would plan and run your vending route for the day.

Why they ask

This tests whether you can organise a route, prioritise tasks and work efficiently without close supervision.

How to structure your answer

A walk-through answer: start with checking the route sheet and stock, then describe the order of sites, how you prioritise low-stock machines, and how you finish with cash reconciliation and reporting.

Example answer

"First I check the route sheet and load the van with the right stock, making sure I have enough of the fast sellers. I plan my stops to avoid backtracking, and I start with the sites that open early, like offices before staff arrive. At each machine I check stock levels, restock what is low, clean the machine, and test the coin and card systems. I note any faults and fix what I can on site, like a coin jam. I collect cash and record it on the route sheet. At the end of the day I reconcile the cash, flag any machines that need a follow-up repair, and reload the van for the next day."

2. Tell me about a time you had to work unsupervised and keep to a schedule.

Why they ask

Vending attendants often work alone on the road, so employers want evidence you can manage your own time and stay productive.

How to structure your answer

STAR: describe the situation, the task, the actions you took, and the result. Keep it focused on how you stayed on track.

Example answer

"In my last job I covered a route on my own when a colleague was away. I had to service a set number of machines and still finish by a certain time. I planned my day, skipped non-essential chat at sites, and kept a steady pace. I also called ahead to one site to let them know I would be a bit later than usual. I finished all machines on time, and the site manager commented that nothing was missed. I learned to build small buffers into my route planning."

3. You arrive at a machine and find it has been broken into and cash is missing. What do you do?

Why they ask

This checks your judgement under pressure, your honesty and whether you follow company procedure rather than improvising.

How to structure your answer

Judgement under pressure: secure the scene, report immediately, follow company procedure, and avoid touching anything that could be evidence.

Example answer

"First I would make sure I am safe and not disturb anything. I would not touch the machine beyond what is necessary. I would take a photo if allowed and note the time. Then I would call my supervisor straight away and follow the company's incident procedure. I would also let the site contact know so they are aware. I would fill out an incident report as soon as I could, and I would not try to fix the machine until I got the go-ahead."

4. What common vending machine faults can you fix yourself, and when do you escalate?

Why they ask

Employers need to know you can handle routine problems without a technician, but also that you know your limits.

How to structure your answer

A practical, layered answer: name simple faults you can handle, describe how you diagnose them, and state clearly when a job needs a technician.

Example answer

"I can usually clear coin jams, replace a worn bill acceptor, reset a machine that has frozen, and fix simple dispensing issues like a product stuck on the shelf. I use the diagnostic tester or the machine's error code to work out what is wrong. I carry basic tools and spare parts. If it is a compressor fault, a major electrical issue, or a board failure, I escalate to a technician and mark the machine out of order. I also log the fault so the next person knows."

5. How do you make sure you are working safely when you are lifting stock and driving between sites?

Why they ask

This role involves manual handling and driving, so employers must confirm you understand WHS obligations and safe work practices.

How to structure your answer

A safety-first answer: cover manual handling, vehicle checks, and hygiene. Mention Australian WHS obligations.

Example answer

"I follow safe manual handling: I use a hand truck for heavy loads, keep my back straight, and do not overload. Before driving I do a quick vehicle check, and I stick to road rules and take breaks on longer routes. For hygiene, I clean and sanitise machine interiors and wash my hands or use sanitiser"

between sites. I also report any hazards, like a damaged machine or a trip hazard at a site, and I follow the company's WHS procedures."

6. How would you handle a site manager who is upset that a machine was empty or out of order?

Why they ask

This is a client-facing role, so employers want to see you can stay calm, listen and resolve issues politely.

How to structure your answer

A customer-service structure: listen, apologise, explain, act, follow up.

Example answer

"I would listen to their concern without getting defensive, apologise for the inconvenience, and explain what happened if I know. I would check the machine right away and restock or fix it if I can. If I cannot fix it on the spot, I would tell them when a technician will come and give them a contact. I would follow up later to make sure it is resolved. I would also let my supervisor know so we can adjust the route or stock if that site needs more frequent visits."