

Video Editor interview questions

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

What to expect

Video editor interviews mix a review of your technical setup and workflow with questions about how you handle creative feedback and deadline pressure. Many employers also ask you to talk through or demonstrate a showreel, so be ready to explain the choices behind specific cuts.

- **Technical/process:** Questions about your editing workflow, software proficiency and how you handle footage organisation, colour grading and export specifications.
- **Behavioural:** Questions about past projects, drawing out how you managed feedback, conflict or deadline pressure.
- **Scenario/judgement:** Hypotheticals about handling difficult footage, last-minute changes or client disagreements over creative direction.
- **Portfolio/showreel discussion:** A walkthrough of your reel where you explain editing decisions, not just show the finished product.

Expect an initial chat about your background and software experience, followed by a portfolio or showreel review where you talk through specific edits. This usually leads into behavioural and scenario questions about deadlines, feedback and collaboration, before wrapping up with logistics like availability and rate or salary expectations.

1. Walk me through your workflow from receiving raw footage to delivering a final export.

Why they ask

This checks whether you have a structured, professional process rather than an ad hoc approach, which matters for consistency and meeting delivery deadlines.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a step-by-step walkthrough in the order the work actually happens: import and organise, rough cut, fine cut, colour and sound, export and delivery checks.

Example answer

"I start by importing footage and audio into the project and organising everything into labelled bins by scene and take, so nothing gets lost later. I build a rough cut first, focused on story and pacing rather than polish. Once that structure is approved, I refine the fine cut, tightening transitions and matching pace to the brief. Then I move into colour correction and grading in DaVinci Resolve to get visual consistency across sources, followed by syncing music, dialogue and sound effects. Before export I check against the delivery specification, whether that's a broadcast format or a set of social media resolutions, and do a final review pass before sending it off."

2. Tell me about a time a director or client gave you feedback that changed the direction of an edit significantly.

Why they ask

Editors rarely have full creative control, so this probes how you handle feedback without becoming defensive or losing the project's quality.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: situation, task, action, result.

Example answer

"I was cutting a corporate video where the client had approved the initial brief, but after seeing the first cut they wanted a completely different tone, more energetic rather than reflective. My task was to

rework the edit without blowing the deadline. I went back to the raw footage, picked out higher-energy takes I hadn't used, restructured the sequence and adjusted the music choice to match the new tone. The client approved the revised cut on the next review and we delivered on the original schedule."

3. How do you approach colour grading when footage has come from several different cameras?

Why they ask

Mixed source footage is common in this role and tests whether you understand colour matching as a technical skill, not just an aesthetic add-on.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a technical explanation: identify the problem, describe the method, note the check you use to confirm consistency.

Example answer

"The main issue is matching exposure and colour temperature across sources so cuts don't visually jump. I start by colour correcting each clip to a neutral baseline, checking scopes rather than relying on my eye alone, then apply a grade on top for the overall look once everything is balanced. I do a final pass watching the sequence in full to catch any shots that still stand out and adjust those individually."

4. You're two hours from a hard deadline and the client asks for a substantial re-edit. What do you do?

Why they ask

This is a judgement-under-pressure scenario testing deadline management and communication, both called out as core to the role.

How to structure your answer

Answer by outlining your immediate priority, then your communication step, then how you'd manage the actual work under the time constraint.

Example answer

"First I'd clarify exactly what's changing and how much work it actually involves, since sometimes a request sounds bigger than it is. If it can't be done properly in the time left, I'd flag that immediately rather than quietly rushing it, and offer options: deliver a slightly later but correct version, or a version that covers the essential change now with refinements to follow. Then I'd work through the highest-impact changes first so that even if we run out of time, the most important fix is in."

5. What's your experience across different editing software, and do you have a preference?

Why they ask

The role list several tools (Premiere Pro, Final Cut Pro, DaVinci Resolve, After Effects, Avid Media Composer), so employers want to know your actual proficiency versus familiarity.

How to structure your answer

Answer directly: state your primary tool, your working knowledge of others, and a reason tied to the type of work you've done.

Example answer

"Premiere Pro is my primary tool, I'm fast in it and comfortable with more complex sequences and multi-cam edits. I also work regularly in DaVinci Resolve for colour grading, since I think its colour tools are stronger, and I've used After Effects for motion graphics and simple visual effects work when a project needs it. I can pick up Avid or Final Cut Pro if a production requires it, since the underlying editing logic is the same."

6. Talk me through a piece from your showreel and why you made the editing choices you did.

Why they ask

This tests creative judgement and whether you can articulate the reasoning behind cuts, not just produce a polished result.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a narrated walkthrough: what the brief was, what problem the footage presented, and what specific choice you made and why.

Example answer

"This piece was a short promotional video where the raw footage ran long and the story wasn't clear in order. I restructured the sequence so it opened with the strongest visual moment rather than following chronological order, which gave the piece a stronger hook. I also trimmed a few interview answers that repeated the same point, so the final cut stayed tight and kept the pacing moving toward the call to action at the end."