



CANDIDATE INSTRUCTIONS: STORE WALK (STORE MANAGER RECRUITMENT)

PART 1: TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW DAY

STORE WALK AND PRESENTATION PREPARATION



1 Hour

Store Walk: Complete the store walk at your chosen store.



30 Minutes

Presentation Preparation: Prepare to present your findings of the store walk to an observer on the interview day.

PART 2: COMPLETED ON THE INTERVIEW DAY

INTERVIEW DAY



5 Minutes

Store Walk: Presentation preparation time.



10 Minutes

Store Walk: Sharing your ideas and answers to the store walk questions.



15 Minutes

Store Walk: Questions from the observer based on your store walk presentation, in which they will explore your views further.



45 Minutes

Interview: 4 core skills are assessed (provided in advance), plus a scenario based question (not provided in advance).



OVERVIEW OF THE EXERCISE

This exercise is designed to assess your level of commercial awareness, your understanding of Co-op's Food Stores and the communities they are based in, your ideas and suggestions about how they are currently run, and any improvements that could be introduced.

TASK: COMPLETE A STORE VISIT

Before coming to the interview day you need to visit a Co-op Food Store. Please ensure the store you visit is part of the Co-op Group as there are a number of independent Co-ops which are run differently and use different systems and processes. You can find your local Co-op store by visiting the website, www.coop.co.uk.

The instructions that follow provide more information about what you need to do as part of the visit, but essentially the purpose is to gather information about the store, so that you can formulate your own ideas and share these with an observer at the interview day.

ARRANGING YOUR VISIT

- Please contact your preferred store directly to arrange a convenient time
- Please note you must arrange a time for the visit that is convenient both for you and for the store in question

AT THE INTERVIEW

At the interview day you will be invited to present your ideas from the store visit to an observer, to discuss these and to respond to any questions they may have.



INSTRUCTIONS

STORE VISIT

When you arrive in store, please let the Store Manager know that you have arrived and introduce yourself

As part of your visit to the store, you will have access to both the store itself and also any 'back of house' facilities, such as store rooms or warehouses. It is important to consider both aspects of the store when formulating your ideas

You will have the opportunity to walk around the store on your own, make observations and speak to the colleagues and customers. You can make notes about your observations.

We suggest that you spend no more than **1 hour** in store collecting information and no more than **30 minutes** analysing the information you have gathered and preparing how you will present your ideas back

THE TASK

As you walk around the store, please consider the following points:

- What do you think is working particularly well in store?
- How well do you think it is functioning operationally?
- How are colleagues performing in store
- What do you think could be improved?
- Please describe the customer experience
- What do you think are the top 3 pieces of feedback that customers may provide about the store?
- How would you make sure the store reflects the needs of the community it serves?
- Colleague and customer feedback

In your responses, you can refer to all aspects of the store and how it runs.

PREPARING FOR SHARING YOUR IDEAS

Following on from your visit to the store, you should prepare how you are going to share your ideas with the observer. You can share your ideas however you wish, and **do not** need to prepare a formal presentation.

Please note that laptops/projectors will not be available at the assessment event, so you will need to bring 3 hard copies of any visual aids you feel support the discussion.

Please do not spend more than **30 minutes** preparing for the meeting with the observer.

AT THE INTERVIEW YOU WILL:

- Present your views and ideas in response to the questions provided
- Participate in a question-and-answer session where the observer will explore your views further



CANDIDATE BRIEF: CASE STUDY SCENARIO

Real-life Scenario

The Store Manager leads the overall operation of the Co-op food store, ensuring it is safe, legal, commercially successful, and delivers excellent customer service. They are responsible for managing staff, driving sales and profit, maintaining stock and store standards, and aligning team activities with Co-op's strategic goals and community focus.

Your task

Your task is to review the fictional store information provided below and prepare a 30-Day plan detailing what you would do in your first month as Store manager to improve your store performance and increase profitability. Your plan should consider:

- What your key priorities will be in the coming weeks
- How you will address the current challenges faced by the store
- Who you will need to speak to or work with to achieve your objectives (internally or externally)

You will have 10 minutes on the day to share your ideas with the interviewer. This is a verbal presentation only. There is no requirement to prepare slides or formal materials. However, you are encouraged to make and bring any notes that will help you structure your plan and ensure you cover all the areas you wish to discuss.

Store Information

- The store has experienced a spike in controllable waste over the past month. Checks have revealed poor rotation of fresh food and frequent scanning errors on markdown stock.
- Recent customer feedback highlights the helpfulness of staff, and the food-to-go range and lunchtime deals are popular. However, customers have mentioned short-dated products, slow service during busy periods and disappointment when promotional items are unavailable.
- While employees describe a positive team culture, there are concerns about understanding and confidence with new processes, particularly around waste routines and product markdowns.
- The store has seen a rise in online orders and there have been challenges balancing online order picking with serving in-store customers.
- Co-op's business strategy this year is focused on building closer community relationships and increasing Co-op Membership. Head Office have recently launched a local supplier initiative.

P&L Statement last month

Category	Actual (£)	Budget (£)	Variance (£)
Net Sales	413,569	422,094	(8,525)
Cost of Goods Sold	(271,505)	(271,129)	(376)
Sales Margin	142,064	150,965	(8,901)
Waste	(2,347)	(3,918)	1,571
Loss/Shrink	(17,254)	(15,683)	(1,571)
Payroll	(38,825)	(38,225)	(600)
Store Controllable Costs	(585)	(1,182)	597
Utilities and Rent	(5,561)	(4,948)	(613)
Net Profit	77,492	87,009	(9,517)