Sap Basis Interview Questions And Answers 2013

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MASTERING THE CORE: A DEEP DIVE INTO SAP BASIS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM 2013

The world of SAP Basis administration has always been the backbone of any successful SAP implementation. For professionals looking to validate their expertise or newcomers aiming to break into the field, understanding the type of questions asked in interviews is crucial. While technology evolves, the foundational knowledge required to manage SAP landscapes remains remarkably consistent. Revisiting a classic collection of **sap basis interview questions and answers 2013** offers a unique perspective. It not only tests your memory of core concepts but also helps you understand the bedrock principles that still govern modern SAP systems. This article serves as a

comprehensive guide, exploring these questions in detail, providing clear answers, and offering insights that are relevant for any SAP Basis professional, whether you are preparing for a new role or simply refreshing your skills.

The year 2013 was a significant period for SAP. The market was transitioning heavily towards SAP HANA and the Business Suite on HANA, but the vast majority of enterprises were still running mature SAP ERP 6.0 systems on classic databases like Oracle, DB2, and SQL Server. Consequently, interview questions from that era focused heavily on the practical, day-to-day administration of these systems. They emphasized a deep understanding of the SAP NetWeaver stack, particularly the Application Server ABAP (AS ABAP) and the Java stack. By studying these questions, you gain a robust understanding of system architecture, user management, transport management, and performance tuning—skills that remain indispensable today. Let's explore some of the most pivotal topics that defined **sap basis interview questions and answers 2013**.

1. Understa

nding the SAP System Architecture

A foundational area of any interview, then and now, is the architecture of an SAP system. Interviewers in 2013 wanted to ensure candidates could differentiate between the various layers of the system and explain how they interact.

Q: Explain the difference between a Central System and a Distributed System in SAP.

Answer: In a Central System (often referred to as a "standalone" system), all SAP instances—the Central Instance (CI) and the Database Instance (DB)—run on a single physical or virtual server. This setup is simple to manage but offers no high availability or load balancing. A Distributed System, on the other hand, separates these components. The Central Instance runs on one server, and the Database Instance runs on another, dedicated server. Furthermore, you can add additional Application Servers (also known as Dialog Instances) to handle user load. This architecture provides better performance,

scalability, and the ability to implement high-availability solutions like failover clusters for the database.

Q: What is a System Landscape? Describe a typical three-system landscape.

Answer: A system landscape is a structured set of SAP systems used to manage the lifecycle of development, testing, and production. The standard, recommended landscape includes three tiers:

- **Development (DEV):** This system is where developers create and test new programs, configurations, and customizations. It typically has its own client(s) for development work and is not used by end-users for real business processes.
- **Quality Assurance (QAS):** This system is a controlled environment where finalized changes from DEV are transported. It is used for integration testing, user acceptance testing (UAT), and system testing before changes go live. It should mirror the production system as closely

as possible.

- **Production (PRD):** This is the live system where real business transactions are carried out. It is the most critical system and requires strict change control, performance monitoring, and backup procedures. Changes arrive in PRD only through a controlled transport path from QAS.

This three-system landscape, a staple of **sap basis interview questions and answers 2013**, remains the gold standard for managing changes safely and reliably.

2. SAP System Installation and Patching

Installation and patching are core operational tasks. Questions in this area test a candidate's procedural knowledge and attention to detail.

Q: What is the purpose of SAPinst?

Answer: SAPinst is the standard, graphical installation tool used by SAP Basis administrators to install and upgrade SAP systems. It replaced the older,

more complex sapdba tool. SAPinst guides the admin through the entire process, from selecting the system type (e.g., ABAP, Java, or dual-stack) to configuring database parameters and starting the system. It is used for central instances, dialog instances, and database instances. Knowing how to navigate SAPinst was a key competency tested in **sap basis interview questions and answers 2013**.

Q: How do you apply an SAP Support Package Stack (SPS)?

Answer: Applying a Support Package Stack is a multi-step process that ensures the system is up-to-date with the latest fixes and enhancements. The general procedure involves:

1. **Preparation:** Check the system prerequisites, review the SAP Notes associated with the SPS, and ensure enough free disk space on the system drives.
2. **Download:** Download the required files from the SAP Support Portal using the Maintenance Optimizer (MON) or by downloading the SPS archive directly.
3. **Pre-requisite Checks:** Run the SAPinst tool in "Update" mode. It will check the system's current

patch level and ensure all dependencies are met.

4. **Queue Calculation:** SAPinst calculates the order in which the components and patches should be applied.
5. **Execution:** The tool then applies the patches. This can take several hours, depending on the system size and complexity. The system service is stopped during the process.
6. **Post-Implementation:** After the stack is applied, the system is restarted. The Basis administrator must perform post-implementation tasks, such as activating the patches and running reports like SPAM/SAINT for ABAP systems.

This process, though now often streamlined with SUM (Software Update Manager), was a core skill for any Basis admin in 2013.

3. User and Authorization Administr

ation

Managing user access is a critical security function. Interview questions from 2013 focused on the fundamental tools and concepts.

Q: What is the difference between a User Master Record and a Profile?

Answer: A **User Master Record** is a unique data object in the SAP system that defines a user's identity. It contains personal information like the user's name, password, default printer, login language, and validity dates. Crucially, it also contains the list of profiles assigned to the user. A **Profile** is a collection of authorizations that define what actions a user is allowed to perform. There are two main types: **Composite Profiles**, which are containers for other profiles, and **Single Profiles** or **Authorization Profiles**, which contain the actual authorization values. The user master record is "who you are," while the profile is "what you can do."

Q: Explain the concept of Authorization Objects and Fields.

Answer: An **Authorization Object** is a security check in the ABAP system. It protects specific activities or data. For example, the object

S_TCODE protects the ability to use transaction codes. Each object contains up to 10 **Authorization Fields**. These fields specify the allowed values. For instance, the object M_MATE_MAT (for material master data) might have fields like ACTVT (Activity) with values like 01 for Create or 02 for Change, and MATNR (Material Number) which might be set to a specific material or a wildcard *. An authorization is a specific combination of field values assigned to a user for a given object. This granularity is what makes SAP security so powerful and complex, a topic frequently explored in **sap basis interview questions and answers 2013**.

4. Transport Management System (TMS)

The Transport Management System is the nervous system of any SAP landscape. Interviewers always focus on its mechanics and control.

Q: What is a Transport Request and what are its components?

Answer: A **Transport Request** is a package that contains all the

changes made by a developer or configurator in a single logical unit. It is the primary object used to move changes through the system landscape. A transport request has two main parts:

- **Request (Header):** This is the top-level container that holds a short description of the change, the owner, and the status. It can contain multiple tasks.
- **Tasks:** These are sub-requests within the main request. Each developer who is working on the change will have their own task. When a developer releases their task, it becomes part of the request. When all tasks are released, the entire request is ready for export and import into the next system.

Q: How does a Transport Route work?

Answer: A **Transport Route** defines the path a transport request will follow from one system to another in the landscape. It is configured in the TMS. A typical route is DEV --(Export)--> QAS --(Import)--> PRD. The route is defined as a "forward" route. When a request is released in the source system (e.g., DEV), it is physically exported to a common transport directory (usually /usr/sap/trans).

The target system (e.g., QAS) can then import the request. The TMS ensures that requests are imported in the correct order and that dependencies are managed. Adhering to the defined routes is a basic operational discipline that was heavily emphasized in **sap basis interview questions and answers 2013**.

5. System Monitoring and Performance Tuning

Keeping an SAP system running efficiently is a constant task. Questions from this area test a candidate's diagnostic skills.

Q: What are the key areas you would monitor in an SAP system?

Answer: A Basis administrator should monitor several key areas to ensure system health. The primary ones include:

- **System Logs (SM21):** Check for critical errors, warnings, and lock problems.
- **User Sessions (AL08):** Monitor the number of active and idle users.
- **Update Requests (SM13):** Ensure update processes are running smoothly and not

stuck.

- **Job Logs (SM37):** Verify that background jobs have completed successfully and on time.
- **Database Performance (ST04):** Check SQL response times, buffer quality, and overall database load.
- **ABAP Runtime Analysis (ST05):** Identify expensive SQL statements and program bottlenecks.
- **Work Process Overview (SM50):** Observe the status of dialog, update, background, and spool work processes.

Q: What is a Work Process and what are its types?

Answer: A **Work Process** is a component of the SAP Application Server that executes a specific type of task. They are the actual workers that handle user requests. The main types are:

- **Dialog (D):** Handles interactive user requests from the SAP GUI.
- **Update (U):** Processes database updates that are not time-critical. (VB1, VB2 are sub-types).
- **Background (B):** Executes scheduled background jobs (ABAP

programs).

- **Spool (S):** Manages output requests (printing).
- **Enqueue (E):** Manages the lock table to ensure data consistency.

Configuring the right number of work processes for each type is a fundamental tuning parameter, a classic topic in **sap basis interview questions and answers 2013**.

6. Backup and Recovery Strategies