

Interviewing

Sample Interview Questions

SAMPLE QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED

Behavior/Accomplishments

1. Describe the project that best exemplifies your analytic skills.
2. In what ways did you disagree with your last company?
3. What is your current greatest weakness?
4. We are looking at several candidates. What makes you unique?
5. Tell me about the planning processes you have found most useful.
6. Looking back at college, what were your greatest challenges?
7. Why did you select the school/college/university you attended?
8. Why have you been successful in this profession?
9. What's the most important lesson you've learned in life?
10. What causes pressure or stress for you?
11. How does your prior experience support this position?
12. Describe situations where:
 - your work was criticized;
 - your ideas were criticized;
 - your style or personality was criticized.
13. Please give me an example of a time when you sought the advice of others?
14. How has your work contributed to the overall function of your department and mission of the company?
15. How does your experience to date qualify you for this position?
16. What has been your greatest life achievement?
17. Describe your three greatest strengths.
18. Describe your three most significant accomplishments.
19. How have you successfully worked with difficult people?
20. Tell me about a time you didn't succeed at a task and the impact it had on you.

10 Commonly Asked Questions

1. *Tell me about yourself....*
2. *Why did you leave your last job?*
3. *What are your strengths?*
4. *What are your weaknesses?*
5. *What is your work/management style?*
6. *What are your future career plans?*
7. *Why are you interested in our company?*
8. *How did you get along with your last manager?*
9. *How would your peers/subordinates/manager describe you?*
10. *What are your salary requirements?*

Communication

1. How do you rate yourself as a presenter? Why?
2. How might you improve your communication skills?
3. Cite examples of accomplishments where you have been an excellent communicator.
4. How do you keep subordinates, colleagues, bosses, and clients informed?
5. Give me an example of putting your foot in your mouth professionally.
6. Do you communicate most by phone, voice mail, memo, or face-to-face?

Culture / Work Environment

1. What did you like least in your last position?
2. Why do you want to work here?
3. Are you interested in sports?
4. Are you presently geographically mobile? In the future?
5. What was morale like at your last company?
6. Would you prefer a start-up or a more mature company? Why?
7. What is the worst thing you have heard about our company?
8. What is least appealing about this position?
9. What are your expectations of a new company?
10. What is most appealing in this position?
11. What was it like working at your last company?
12. Do you prefer to work for a small, medium or large company? Why?

General (or ambiguous)

1. Why should I consider a candidate from outside the company?
2. What else should I know about you?
3. If your credibility were questioned, how would you react?
4. What has been your experience with recruiting, interviewing, selection and hiring?
5. Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
6. Why should we hire you?
7. How have personal business, family, and health limited your contribution or effectiveness as an employee?
8. What can you do for us?
9. What is the least relevant position (to the current opportunity) you have ever held?
10. Describe your perception of the responsibilities of a _____?
11. What aspects of your last job did you consider most crucial?
12. Describe yourself.
13. If you were in our shoes, what kind of person would you select for the job?
14. What is your greatest weakness with respect to this position?
15. What will this position offer you that others have not?
16. What do people criticize about you? Are their concerns valid?
17. What have you learned about life so far?
18. What is your understanding of our company's products, services, revenues, problems, people, image, and history?

19. How do you see yourself today?
20. What special recognition have you received over your career?
21. What have you liked best about your most current company?
22. How do your partner and/or children impact your career considerations?
23. What stirs your emotions?
24. If you had an open choice of career and companies, where would you go?
25. What is your present situation?
26. What are the key indicators of exemplary performance in your area?
27. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would that be?
28. Who had the most influence on your career? On your life? Why?

Change Management

1. Why do you feel you can help/change our organization?
2. Do you take calculated risks?
3. Tell me why you made each change in your career.
4. How do you cope with change?
5. What has been your experience with downsizing, restructuring, or expansion?

Interpersonal

1. What difficulties do you experience in getting along with others?
2. What kinds of people do you like to work with?
3. How have you changed since high school?
4. Who is the best subordinate you have worked with and why? Who was the worst and why?
5. Tell me why you would be a good team player.
6. How would your friends describe you?
7. Describe the kind of individuals who are difficult for you to work with.
8. How have you changed since college?
9. How would you rate your effectiveness in relating to others? Do you feel it is a natural talent for you?
10. What causes you to be short fused or impatient with others?
11. What challenges do you face getting along with others?
12. What personal characteristics are necessary for success?
13. Tell me about your character.
14. What qualities do you look for in a friend?
15. Tell me about your closest friends - their personalities, interests, occupations.
16. How would your family and friends describe you?
17. How would your last boss describe you?
18. Describe your personality.
19. Describe your overall relationship with most bosses you have worked with.
20. Describe your personal style, work style, management style.
21. Who was the best colleague you have worked with and why? Who was the worst?
22. What makes you effective in small groups?
23. We are not sure about how you will fit into our organization. Tell us about your personality, style, and interests.

Problem Solving

1. How do you resolve conflict?
2. What decisions are most difficult for you? And why?
3. What decisions have you made that you would do differently today?
4. What kinds of decisions or recommendations have you been called on to make?
5. Tell me about your most difficult decision.
6. How have you improved your decision-making ability over the years?
7. What kinds of decisions are easy to make? Which are the most difficult?
8. What are some of the things you and your boss disagreed on?
9. How would you handle this problem? (After interviewer describes problem)
10. How would you structure this job?
11. How do you go about making very tough decisions?
12. How do you handle conflict with others?

Salary

1. What were you making at your last job?
2. What has been your salary history?
3. What would be an adequate reward for your efforts?
4. Have you ever been refused a salary increase?
5. What are your financial needs?
6. What is the minimum salary you would accept?
7. Assuming we make you an offer, what do you see as your future?
8. How do you feel about leaving the benefits at your old company?
9. Have you ever had financial difficulties?
10. What is more important - money or the job itself? Why?

Management / Leadership

1. Describe your biggest leadership challenge.
2. How would your subordinates describe your performance standards?
3. Do you manage closely or with a loose rein?
4. What have your experiences been with terminating or removing subordinates?
5. How do you get the best performance from an employee?
6. What interferes with your management effectiveness?
7. How would your boss describe your standards of performance?
8. Describe your standards of performance.
9. How would your subordinates describe your experience in delegation?
10. Explain your role as a team leader, team member, and team player.
11. What aspects of your last job did you consider most crucial?
12. What extracurricular activities were you involved in during college?
13. What are some things your boss or supervisor did that you disliked or did not agree with?
14. What kinds of leadership roles have you held?
15. Describe the ideal boss.

16. How did your boss rate your performance?
17. How could your boss have done a better job?
18. What could management have done in the past to help you function more effectively?
19. What would you do if a subordinate were always late?
20. How would you handle two direct reports that were arguing?
21. How would you handle an employee cheating on an expense account?
22. How would you handle laying off a top performer in the company?
23. What style of leadership did your last company support?
24. Describe the role of a manager.
25. How do you elevate the performance of a subordinate?
26. When your boss puts extreme pressure on you how do you generally respond?
27. How has your management style changed over your career?
28. How do you distinguish management skills from leadership skills?
29. How have you handled subordinates' poor decisions?
30. Have you ever issued edicts? For what reasons? What resulted?

Values

1. What values drive you in your professional career?
2. How will you know when you have found the right job, the right company and the right boss for you?
3. What values drive you in your personal life?
4. Have you ever had to lie in the workplace?
5. Have you done the best work you are capable of? If not, why?
6. What do you want out of life?
7. How do you measure success?
8. Under what circumstances do you deem it appropriate to lie?
9. How would this job meet your long and short-range goals?
10. What has been the most significant disappointment in your life?
11. How do you personally define success?
12. Have you ever left a position because standards of quality were below yours?

Work Style

1. Can you take instructions without feeling defensive, hurt or upset?
2. How do you show initiative?
3. Tell me about your energy level—describe a typical day.
4. How do you respond to pressure in the workplace?
5. How do you feel you could contribute to the company?
6. Do you prefer working alone or with others?
7. What have you done that shows your initiative?
8. In your last job, what percentage of time did you work alone? Work with others? Work as a team? Where did you find your greatest satisfaction?
9. How do you feel about evening or weekend work?
10. How do you feel about a job that requires a great deal of paperwork and report writing?
11. What hours are you accustomed to working?

12. Do you prefer working under pressure or with adequate time to plan, organize, and execute?
13. What makes you effective in large groups?

Motivation

1. What are the 3 most important things to you in a new position?
2. How did you get your last job?
3. What are the pluses and minuses of your last job?
4. Why have you changed jobs so frequently?
5. Why do you want to get into the _____ field?
6. What has been your toughest professional challenge?
7. What professional experience has been most valuable to you?
8. What event has had the greatest influence on your career?
9. How long a period of time would you commit to the company?
10. What has brought you here today?
11. What have you learned from the jobs you have held?
12. What have you done during this period of unemployment?
13. Do you feel the progress you've made in your career is indicative of your ability?
14. What special recognition have you received over your career?
15. What other positions are you looking at and what about each is appealing?
16. Tell me why you made each change in your career.
17. How did your boss get the best out of you?
18. Are you willing to go wherever a company might send you?
19. What makes you tick?