

Behavioral Interview Questions

Adaptability

- Tell us about a situation in which you had to adjust to changes you had no control over. How did you handle it?
- What do you do when priorities change quickly? Give one example of when this happened.

Ambition

- Describe a project or idea that was implemented primarily because of your efforts. What was your role? What was the outcome?
- Give an example of an important goal that you set in the past. Tell me about your success in reaching it.
- How many hours a day do you put into your work? What were your study patterns at school?
- Give an example of going above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- What is the riskiest decision you have made? What was the situation? What happened?
- What kinds of challenges did you face in your last job? Give an example of how you handled them.
- What projects have you started on your own recently? What prompted you to get started?
- What have you done to become better qualified for your career?
- When you disagree with your manager, what do you do? Give an example.

Analytical Thinking

- Give a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Give me an example of when you took a risk to achieve a goal. What was the outcome?
- Tell us about a job or setting where great precision to detail was required to complete a task. How did you handle that situation?

- Share a time when you had to analyze information and make a recommendation. What kind of thought process did you go through? What was your reasoning behind your decision?

Building Relationships

- What, in your opinion, are the essential ingredients in guiding and maintaining successful business relationships? Give examples of how you made these work for you.
- Building good relationships at work is very important, but sometimes it doesn't always work. If you can, tell about a time when you could not build a successful relationship with a difficult person. Why do you think this was the case?
- Tell us about a time when you built rapport quickly with someone under difficult conditions.
- Give a specific example of when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem, and what was the outcome? How would you assess your role in diffusing the situation?

Business Systems Thinking

- Describe how your position contributes to your organization's/unit's goals. What are the unit's goals/mission?

Caution

- Have you ever worked in a situation with unclear rules and guidelines? Tell me about it. How did you feel about it? How did you react?

Communication

- Describe a situation when you strengthened a relationship by communicating effectively. What made your communication effective?
- What kinds of communication situations cause you difficulty? Give an example.
- Give me an example of when you successfully communicated with another person, even when that individual may not have liked you.
- Have you ever had to "sell" an idea to your co-workers or group? How did you do it? Did they "buy" it?
- Tell us about a time when you and your current/previous supervisor disagreed yet still found a way to get your point across.

- Tell us about a time when you had to present complex information. How did you ensure that the other person understood?
- Tell us about a situation when you had to speak up or be assertive to get a point across that was important to you.
- What kinds of writing have you done? How do you prepare written communications? What are the most challenging documents you have written?
- Provide examples from your work or personal experience showing your “salesmanship” in convincing a resistant customer to purchase a product or utilize your services.
- What challenges have occurred while you were coordinating work with other units, departments, or divisions?

Conflict Resolution

- Describe when you took personal accountability for a conflict and initiated contact with the individual(s) involved to explain your actions.

Customer Orientation

- How do you go about establishing rapport with a customer? What have you done to gain their confidence? Give an example.
- What have you done to improve relations with your customers?
- How do you handle problems with customers? Give an example of when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem, and what was the outcome? How would you assess your role in diffusing the situation?
- Tell me about a time when you went out of your way to give excellent service to a customer.
- Tell me about when you knew your customers were not serviced timely. How did you handle this?
- Describe a time when you lost a customer. What did you learn from this, and what would you do differently in the future?
- Describe a process or system you improved so customers would be better served.
- How would you define guest/customer satisfaction?
- Have you ever contacted a customer or client to seek feedback about a product or service you delivered? What did you learn? What did you change?
- How do you address complaints from a customer or client?
- Have you ever developed a solution due to a customer or client’s suggestion? If yes, what was it?

Decision Making

- Discuss a significant decision you have made regarding a task or project at work. What factors influenced your decision?
- Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick to decide.
- Everyone has made poor decisions or done something that turned out wrong. Has this happened to you? What happened?
- How do you go about developing information to make a decision? What steps do you take to ensure your decisions are correct/effective? Give an example.
- What kind of decisions do you make rapidly? What types take more time? Give examples.
- Tell us about a time when you had to defend a decision you made even though other important people were opposed to your decision.
- Tell us about a time when you had to defend a decision inconsistent with your supervisor's point of view.
- How do you involve your manager or others when making decisions?
- What was your most challenging decision in the last six months? What made it difficult?
- Give us an example of when you had to "think outside of the box" when making a difficult decision.

Delegation

- Do you consider yourself a macro or micro manager? How do you delegate?
- What was the biggest mistake you have had when delegating work? The biggest success?

Detail-Oriented

- Do you prefer to work with the "big picture" or the "details" of a situation? Give me an example of an experience that illustrates your preference and when you displayed this.
- Have the jobs you held in the past required little attention, moderate attention, or a great deal of attention to detail? Give me an example of a situation that illustrates this requirement.
- Tell us about a situation where attention to detail was necessary for accomplishing an assigned task.
- Tell us about a challenging experience you had in working with details.

- We are seeking employees who focus on detail. What means have you used to keep from making mistakes?

Employee Development

- Tell us about a training program that you have developed or enhanced.

Evaluating Alternatives

- Have you ever had a situation where you had several alternatives to choose from? How did you go about choosing one?
- How did you review the information? What process did you follow to reach a conclusion? What alternatives did you develop?
- What kinds of decisions are most difficult for you? Describe one.

Flexibility

- What do you do when facing an obstacle to an important project? Give an example.
- How have you adjusted your style when it was not meeting the objectives or people were not responding correctly?
- Have you ever had a subordinate or co-worker whose performance was consistently marginal? What did you do? How did this help?

Follow-up and Control

- How did you keep track of delegated assignments?
- How do you evaluate the productivity/effectiveness of your subordinates? How do you get data for performance reviews?
- How do you keep track of what your subordinates are doing?
- What administrative paperwork do you have? Is it useful? Why/why not?

Initiative

- Give me an example of when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done.
- What kinds of things within your job position get you the most excited? Least excited?
- Give me examples of projects/tasks you started on your own.
- What changes did you develop at your most recent employer?
- What sorts of projects did you generate that required you to go beyond your job description? (What things did you do at school that exceeded expectations?)

Interpersonal Skills

- What have you done in past situations to contribute toward a teamwork environment?
- Describe a situation in which you were able to effectively “read” another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their needs/values.
- Describe a recent unpopular decision you made and what the result was. How did you react or respond to this situation?
- Tell us about the most difficult or frustrating individual you have ever worked with and how you managed to work with them.

Innovation

- Describe a situation when you demonstrated initiative and took action without waiting for direction. What was the outcome?
- Describe when you came up with a creative solution/idea/project/report to a problem in your past work.
- Give me an example of when you took a risk to achieve a goal. What was the outcome?
- Sometimes, we must break out of the routine, standardized way of doing things to complete the task. Give an example of when you successfully developed such a new approach.
- Tell us about a problem that you solved uniquely or unusually. What was the outcome? Were you satisfied with it?
- Tell us about your suggestion to improve how job processes/operations work. What was the result?
- When was the last time you thought "outside of the box," and how did you do it?

Integrity

- Describe a time when you were asked to keep information confidential. Was this ever challenging?
- Tell us about a specific time when you had to handle a tricky problem that challenged fairness or ethical issues.
- Trust requires personal accountability. Can you tell me about a time when you chose to trust someone? What was the outcome?
- We work with a great deal of confidential information. Describe how you would have handled sensitive information in a past work experience. What strategies would you utilize to maintain confidentiality when pressured by others?

- What would you do if you knew a coworker was doing something dishonest or unethical?
- What would you do if someone asked you to do something unethical?

Introducing Change

- Have you ever had to introduce a policy change to your work group? How did you do it?
- Have you ever met resistance when implementing a new idea or policy in a workgroup? How did you deal with it? What happened?

Leadership

- Give an example of your ability to build motivation in your co-workers, classmates, or subordinates at school, work, or within outside committees.
- Have you ever had difficulty getting others to accept your ideas? What was your approach? Did it work?
- Have you ever been a group member where two members needed to work better together? What did you do to get them to do so?
- What is the most challenging group you have had to cooperate with? Please describe how you handled it. What was the outcome?

Listening

- When is listening important on your job? When is listening difficult?
- What do you do to show people that you are listening to them?
- Give an example of a time when you made a mistake because you did not listen well to what someone had to say.

Motivating Others

- How do you get subordinates to work at their peak potential? Give an example.
- How do you manage cross-functional teams?
- Have you ever had a subordinate whose work was always marginal? How did you deal with that person? What happened?
- How do you ensure that your co-workers and subordinates are motivated?

Motivation

- Describe a situation when you were able to have a positive influence on the actions of others.
- How would you define "success" for someone in your chosen career?
- Tell us about an important goal that you set in the past. Were you successful? Why?

Negotiating

- Have you ever been in a situation where you had to bargain with someone? How did you feel about this? What did you do? Give an example.
 - How did you prepare for it?
 - How did you present your position?
 - How did you resolve it?
- Describe the most challenging negotiation in which you were involved. What was the most difficult part? What were the results?

Organization & Planning

- Describe when you had to choose between your personal and professional life. How do you decide what gets top priority when scheduling your time?
- Give me an example of a project that best describes your organizational skills.
- What do you do when your schedule is suddenly interrupted? Give an example.
- Describe how you develop a project team's goals and project plan.
- How do you schedule your time? Set priorities? How do you handle doing twenty things at once?
- Tell me the steps you take to monitor the quality of your work in your current job.

Performance Management

- Give an example of when you helped a staff member accept change and make the necessary adjustments to move forward. What were the change/transition skills that you used? Give an example of how you have successfully empowered a person or a group to accomplish a task.
- How do you handle a subordinate whose work is not up to expectations? How do you coach a subordinate to develop a new skill?
- How do you handle performance reviews? Tell me about a difficult one.
- How often do you discuss a subordinate's performance with them? Give an example.
- Tell us about a specific development plan you created with one or more of your employees. What was the particular situation? What were the components of the development plan? What was the outcome?

- Provide an example of when you had to take disciplinary action with someone you supervised.
- Tell us about when you had to tell a staff member you were dissatisfied with their work.
- Tell us about a time when you had to use your authority to get something done. Were there any negative consequences?
- There are times when people need extra help. Give an example of when you could support a person you worked with.
- What have you done to develop the skills of your staff?
- When do you give positive feedback to people? Tell me about the last time you did. Give an example of how you handle the need for constructive criticism with a subordinate or peer.

Personality, Qualifications & General Questions

- What is one thing you would want to change about yourself?
- What is your passion in life?
- Explain what you know about the position thus far: expectations, pay rate, training period, etc.
- Explain how a typical workday looks for you.
- What does your resume/CV not let us know about you that you feel is imperative to know while selecting who should fill this position?
- We have hired people from your workplace/school, but they have yet to work out. What makes you different?
- How do you determine whether or not you want to work for a particular company?

Personal Effectiveness

- Tell us about a recent job or experience you would describe as a real learning experience. What did you learn?
- Keeping others informed of your progress/actions helps them feel comfortable. Tell us methods for keeping your supervisor advised of the status of projects.
- There are times when we are placed under extreme pressure on the job. Tell about when you were under such pressure and how you handled it.
- Tell us about when you took responsibility for an error and were held personally accountable.
- Tell us about a time when your supervisor criticized your work. How did you respond?
- You feel you are doing a good job, but others, including your boss, are telling you that you don't measure up. How would you respond? What would you do?
- Maintaining a positive attitude at work is essential when you have other things on your mind. Give a specific example of when you were able to do that.

- What have you done to further your professional development in the past five years?
- Provide an example from your work or personal experience illustrating how you maintained a positive attitude.
- Describe the workload at your current position. How do you feel about it? If you could change anything about it, what would you change and why?
- What will you contribute to this position?
- Tell me about your accomplishments or a professional assignment you've handled that qualifies you for this position and shows you have initiative and willingness to work.
- Describe the steps or methods you have used to define or identify a vision for your position.

Persuasion & Sales

- Describe a situation in which you positively influenced the actions of others in a desired direction.
- Have you ever had to persuade a group to accept a proposal or idea? How did you go about doing it? What was the result?
- Have you ever had to persuade a peer or manager to accept an idea you knew they would not like? Describe the resistance you met and how you overcame it.
- Using metaphors, analogies, or stories to make your point is sometimes helpful in selling an idea. Give a recent example of when you were able to do that successfully.
- Tell us when you used facts and reason to persuade someone to accept your recommendation.
- Tell us about a time when you used your leadership ability to gain support for what initially had strong opposition.
- Describe how you prepare for a sales call for a new client.
- How do you go about making cold calls?
- Tell us about your most difficult sales.
- Tell us about your sales volume over the past three years. How has it improved? What have you done to influence it?
- Sell me this pen.

Presentation

- What kinds of oral presentations have you made? How did you prepare for them? What challenges did you have?

- Tell us about the most effective presentation you have made. What was the topic? What made it difficult? How did you handle it?
- How do you prepare for a presentation to a group of technical experts? How would you describe your presentation style in general?
- Provide an example of a situation where you had to present complex information to a diverse audience and ensure your team members and others understood the information clearly.

Problem-Solving

- Describe the most demanding working relationship you've had with an individual. What specific actions did you take to improve the relationship? What was the outcome?
- Have you ever been unaware of a problem or obstacle you had not foreseen? What happened?
- Give an example of when you did something completely different from the plan or assignment. Why? What happened?
- What are some of the problems you have faced? Between business developers, project leaders, departments, peers, etc. How did you recognize what they were?

Problem Resolution

- Describe a situation where you had a conflict with another individual and how you dealt with it. What was the outcome? How do you feel about it?
- Describe when you faced problems or stressors that tested your coping skills. What did you do?
- Describe when you facilitated a creative or unique approach/solution to a problem.
- Give an example of when you "went to the source" to address a conflict. Do you feel trust levels were improved as a result?
- Tell us about your recent success with a challenging employee/co-worker.
- Tell us about when you identified a potential problem and resolved it before it became severe.
- Sometimes, negotiation and compromise are the only ways to resolve a defense or conflict. Give an example of when you could fix a problematic situation by finding common ground.

Project Management

- Tell us about a time when you influenced the outcome of a project by taking a leadership role. Tell how you informed those involved of the progress using a specific project example.

- How do you get people not under your authority to do work on your project?
- How do you keep your team from feeling overwhelmed when various projects are equally important?

Relate Well

- How do you typically deal with conflict? Can you give me an example?
- Tell us about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
- What would your co-workers (or staff) say is the most frustrating about your communications with them?
- How would your co-workers describe your work style/habits?
- Describe a situation where you had to confront a person or issue. What did you do? What were the results?
- Give me an example of when a company policy or action hurt people. What, if anything, did you do to mitigate the negative consequences to people?

Removing Obstacles

- Have you ever dealt with a situation where communications were poor? Where there was a lack of cooperation? Lack of trust? How did you handle these situations?
- What do you do when a subordinate comes to you with a challenge?
- What have you done to help your subordinates be more productive?

Resolving Conflict

- Tell us about a time when you had to help two peers settle a dispute. How did you go about identifying the issues? What did you do? What was the result?

Resource Management

- Tell us about when you organized or planned a successful event.

Scheduling & Time Management

- Describe the most challenging scheduling problem and how you resolved it.
- How do you assign priorities to jobs?

- How do you go about making job assignments for yourself and others?
- When all have been overloaded, how do your people meet job assignments?
- Give us an example of how you stay organized when juggling multiple tasks.
- Describe a situation that required you to do several things simultaneously. How did you handle it? What was the result?
- Which of your current assignments do you consider to have required the most significant amount of effort in planning/organization? How have you accomplished this assignment? How would you assess your effectiveness?
- Tell me about when you could not meet a specific deadline and why that happened.

Self-Assessment

- Can you recall an example of when you were less than pleased with your performance?
- In what ways are you trying to improve yourself? If there were one area you've always wanted to improve upon, what would that be? Why?
- What do you consider to be your professional strengths? Give me a specific example using this attribute in the workplace.
- What was the most useful criticism you ever received?
- What are you most proud of professionally? What are you most proud of personally?
- Please tell me how the quality of your work impacts others around you. Give me an example.

Selecting and Developing People

- What was your most significant success in hiring someone? Biggest mistake? Why?
- What have you done to develop your relationships and improve the skills of your subordinates?
- How do you coach an employee in completing a new assignment or task?

Setting Goals

- What goals have you met? What did you do to meet them?
- What goals did you miss? Why did you miss them?
- How do you involve people in developing your unit's goals? Give an example.
- Did you have a strategic plan? How was it developed? How did you communicate it to the rest of your staff?

Setting Performance Standards

- How do you go about setting goals with subordinates? How do you involve them in this process?
- How do you let subordinates know what you expect of them?
- What performance standards do you have for your unit? How have you communicated them to your subordinates?

Setting Priorities

- How do you track your work so it gets done on time?
- When given an important assignment, how do you approach it?
- It's 4:30pm on a Friday afternoon. Your supervisor gives you an assignment that needs to be finished by 8 am Monday. You have already made plans to be away for the entire weekend. What would you do?

Sound Judgment

- Describe a situation when you had to exercise a significant amount of self-control.
- When have you had to produce results without sufficient guidelines? Give an example.
- Give me an example of when you were responsible for an error or mistake. What was the outcome? What, if anything, would you do differently?
- How do you decide when something is "good enough" or needs to be as close to perfection as possible? When did you have to make this determination? Explain.

Strategic Planning

- Describe the steps/methods you used to define/identify a vision for your unit/position.
- How do you see your job relating to the organization's overall goals?
- Tell us an example of when you anticipated the future and changed current operations to meet future needs.

Stress Management

- What types of events cause you stress on the job?
- What was the most stressful situation you have faced? How did you deal with it?

- How do you typically react to change in the work environment?
- Tell me about a work 'nightmare' you were involved in. How did you approach the situation, and what was the outcome?

Teamwork

- Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or help others to compromise. What was your role? What steps did you take? What was the result?
- Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What would you have done to prevent this?
- Describe a team experience you found rewarding.
- Describe the types of teams you've been involved with. What were your roles?
- Describe your leadership style and a situation when you successfully led a group.
- Give an example of how you worked effectively with people to accomplish a significant result. Have you ever been a project leader? Give examples of problems you experienced and how you reacted.
- Some people work best as part of a group, while others prefer the individual contributor role. How would you describe yourself? Give an example of a situation where you felt you were most effective.
- What do you think makes a team of people work well together? What makes them work poorly together?
- What is essential for a team to be successful?
- Tell us about when you had to work on a team that did not get along. What happened? What role did you take? What was the result?
- Tell us about the most difficult challenge you faced working cooperatively with someone who shared different ideas. What was your role in achieving the work objective?
- Tell us about the most challenging situation when leading a team. What happened, and what did you do? Was it successful? Emphasize the "single" most important thing you did. What could you have done to be more effective?
- Tell us about your most influential contribution to a task group or special project team.
- What is the most challenging part of being a team member, not a leader? How do you handle this?
- When was the last time you disagreed with a peer? How did you resolve the situation?
- Tell me about a time that a team project failed. What do you believe were the reasons for this failure? What could you have done differently?

Toughness

- What was the most difficult decision you've had to make?
- What has been your major work-related disappointment? What happened, and what did you do?
- What is the most competitive situation you have experienced? How did you handle it? What was the result?

Variety

- How many projects do you work on at once? Please describe.
- When was the last time you made a critical decision on the spur of the moment? What was the reason and result?
- When was the last time you were in a crisis? What was the situation? How did you react?
- Which of your jobs had the most rapid change? How did you feel about it?
- What qualifications do you have that you feel would make you successful here?
- Why are you seeking a position within our company?
- What have you liked most/least in previous work positions?

Values Diversity

- Give a specific example of how you have helped create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged, and supported.
- Tell us about a time you successfully adapted to a culturally different environment.
- Tell us about a time when you intentionally tried to get to know someone from another culture.
- What have you done to further your knowledge/understanding of diversity? How have you demonstrated your learning?
- What have you done to support diversity in your unit?
- What measures have you taken to make someone feel comfortable in an environment that was uncomfortable with their presence?
- Provide an example of when you witnessed unfair treatment of another in the workplace. How did you handle this?