

Interview Questions

Get-To-Know-You Questions

- What have you accomplished in the past that makes you particularly qualified for this position?
- What motivated you to be interested in this position?
- How would your last supervisor describe you?
- What aspects of your last job did you really like?
- What are some job responsibilities you do not like?
- How do you know when you have done a good job?
- What is your overall philosophy when managing or supervising others?
- How would you describe your basic leadership style?
- What is your long-term career objective?
- What areas do you need to further develop in order to meet your career goals?

Competency Questions

General:

- What do you find difficult in your current job?
- What tasks or activities do you find interesting?
- What do you spend most of your time doing?
- What excites you about this new role?
- What worries you about it?

Communication

- Discuss a time when you had to assert yourself or speak up in order to get a point across that was important to you.
- Have you had to “sell” an idea to your co-workers, classmates or group? How did you do it? Did they “buy” it?
- How do you ensure that someone understands what you are saying? Tell me about a time when you had to use these skills in the workplace.
- Describe a situation where you missed important details that were communicated to you. What was the outcome? How did you resolve the situation?
- Describe an example of when you jumped into a task or project before you fully understood the entire concept.
- Give me an example of a time when you were unclear about the directions given to you for a work assignment. What did you do to clarify the directions? What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you had to make a presentation to a large group.
- Tell me about a time when you were required to give a presentation and it did not go as planned. What happened? What contributed to the problem? What would you do differently?
- Describe the last written communication you had with your boss.
- Tell me about a time in which you chose to write your message versus talking to the person directly and that decision turned out to be a mistake. How did you know it was a mistake? What did you do to resolve the situation? What did you learn as a result?

Interpersonal Skills

- Tell me about your relationship with a co-worker with whom you work well.
- Describe the most difficult working relationship you've had with an individual. What specific actions did you take to improve the relationship? What was the outcome?
- Think about a difficult boss, professor or other person. What made him or her difficult? How did you successfully interact with this person?
- Tell me about a time when you were able to establish rapport with a "difficult" person. How did you go about it? What were the results?
- Describe a situation in which you developed an effective win/win relationship with a stakeholder or client. How did you go about building the relationship?
- Describe a time that politics at work affected your job. How did you handle it?

Motivation

- Give me an example of a significant professional goal you met. How did you achieve it? What were the obstacles? How did you overcome them?
- Tell me about a performance standard that you have set for yourself. How are you working towards meeting that standard?
- Describe a situation in which you persevered with an idea or a plan even when others disagreed with you.
- All jobs have their frustrations and problems. Describe examples of specific job conditions, tasks or assignments that have been dissatisfying to you.
- How have you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you did not want to do?

Initiative

- Give me an example of when you were given a project and did more than was required in order to exceed someone's expectation.
- Tell me about a project you initiated. What did you do? Why? What was the outcome? Were you happy with the result?
- Describe for me two improvements you have made in your job in the past six months.
- Tell me about a suggestion you made to improve the way job processes/operations worked. What was the result?
- Tell me about a situation where you attempted to improve something and you were met with resistance. How did you handle the situation?
- Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do? What was the result? What do you wish you had done differently?

Stress Management

- Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
- Describe a project or goal that caused you frustration.
- Describe a situation in which you were under pressure and you feel you handled it well.
- How do you know when you are under stress?
- Whom do you go to for support when you are stressed or under pressure at work? Why and how is this person instrumental in alleviating your stress?
- Describe a situation in which you had to exercise a significant amount of self-control.
- Describe a time when stress from your personal life threatened to interfere with your work. What did you do?

Problem Solving/Analytical Skills

- Describe a difficult problem that you tried to solve. How did you identify the problem? How did you go about trying to solve it?
- Describe a major project that you worked on where things did not go exactly as planned.
- Tell me about a time when you had to identify the underlying causes of a problem.
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a difficult situation.
- Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventative measures.

- Tell me about a time when your manager was unavailable and you had to solve an immediate problem. What did you do and what was the outcome?
- Give me an example in which you failed to come up with a solution to a problem. What caused the failure? What would you do differently next time?
- Tell me about a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
- What steps do you follow to study a problem in order to fully understand the situation?

Decision Making

- Tell me about a difficult decision you had to make. What information led you to make the decision that you made? What other possible solutions were there? What was the final outcome?
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic to make a decision.
- Recall for me a time when you had to choose between several alternatives. How did you evaluate each alternative?
- Tell me about a time when you made a decision and then felt you had to defend your decision to co-workers or staff.
- Describe a situation in which a prompt and accurate decision on your part was critical. What did you consider in reaching your decision?
- Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision without all the information you needed. How did you handle it? Why? Were you happy with the outcome?
- Tell me about a situation where you made a poor decision and had to live with the consequences.
- Tell me about a decision you made in the past that later proved to be wrong. Why was it wrong? What would you do differently now, if anything, in making that decision?

Teamwork

- Tell me about a time when you had to rely on a team to get things done.
- Think of a time when you worked effectively in a team situation. Describe how you felt about the contributions of the others on the team.
- Give me an example of one of the most significant contributions you made as a member of a high performing team. What, in your opinion, made it a high performing team?
- Tell me about one of the toughest teams/groups you've had to work with. What made it difficult? What did you do?
- Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What should you have done to improve the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you were on a team, and one of the members wasn't carrying his or her weight. What did you do to try to prevent this?
- Gaining the cooperation of others can be difficult. Give a specific example of when you had to do that, and what challenges you faced. What was the outcome? What was the long-term impact on your ability to work with this person?
- Tell me about a team for which you were the leader. How did you promote the effectiveness of your team? What were the results?

Time Management/Organization

- Walk me through last week. Tell me how you planned the week's activities and how the schedule worked out?
- Tell me about a project that you planned. How did you organize and schedule the tasks? How did you develop your action plan?
- We often have multiple tasks to accomplish in a day. Tell me about a time when you had to handle many competing priorities. How did you plan your time? What were the results?
- We all have had times when we just couldn't get everything done on time. Tell me about a time when this happened to you.
- Tell me about a time when you were given a deadline by someone of higher authority that could not possibly be met. How did you handle it?
- Describe a time when you missed a deadline. What was the result and what did you learn from the experience?

- Tell me about a time when you rushed to complete a project and sacrificed quality for efficiency.
- Describe a time when you had to make a difficult choice between your personal and professional life.

Impact:

- What would you expect to achieve in the first three months in the role?

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