

Interview Questions

General

- Tell us a little bit about yourself
- What are your future career plans?
- In what school activities have you participated?
- How did you select your university? Choose your major?
- In what type of position are you most interested?
- Why do you want to work for our company?
- How will this job contribute to your career goals?
- Where do you want to be in 5 years?
- What courses did you like best? Least?
- What kind of supervision do you prefer?
- Why did you choose your major in college?
- What are your major strengths? Weaknesses?
- How would a colleague or previous supervisor describe you?
- What benefits would you bring to our organization?

| What skills are interviewers looking for? | Behavioral-Based Questions <i>Past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior</i> |
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| Leadership | Describe an example of a situation in which you had to use your leadership skills |
| Decision Making | Give me an example of a time when you had to make a split-second decision |
| Teamwork | Describe a project in which you worked in a team. What was your role? What were the results |
| Initiative | Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead |
| Organization | Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks |
| Motivation | Tell me about a situation when you had to learn something new in a short time. How did you do this? |
| Problem Solving | Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem Give me an example of when something you tried to accomplish failed. |
| Communication | Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way. |

Use STAR stories in behavioral interviews to illustrate the skills you possess that are desirable to an employer in a particular position.

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| S <i>Situation/</i> T <i>Task</i> | Describe a specific event or situation. Give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. Draw from campus, work, or community experiences. |
| A <i>Action</i> | Describe the action you took. If you are describing a group project, focus on your role. |
| R <i>Results</i> | What did you accomplish? What did you learn? |

Questions to End the Interview

Typical questions include:

- What is the top priority of the person who accepts this job?
- What are the reporting relationships for this position?
- What are the traits and skills of people who are the most successful within the organization?
- Will you please describe a typical day for someone in this position?
- Is there a specific training program, or is it more learn by doing?
- What convinced you to come work here? What keeps you here?
- What do you think is the greatest opportunity facing the organization in the future?

Questions to gain information:

- Based on everything we've talked about, are there any concerns you have about my ability to do the job or regarding my fit with the organization?
- Is there any additional information I can provide that would be helpful as you make a decision?
- May I ask how I stand relative to my competition?
- What is the next step in your interview process?

Forbidden Questions:

- My goal is to make money. Fast. What are my chances for rapid, upward movement in the company? (Better: I'm very motivated to succeed and willing to do what it takes to move up in the organization. Would you please tell me more about advancement opportunities?)
- Won't you just give me a try? I promise I'll do a great job. I'm not sure why no one believes me, but I swear you won't be sorry. (Better: I'd really like this opportunity and feel strongly that I would be an asset to this organization. Are there any concerns I can address right now?)
- I ran out of time and didn't get around to studying your competition, but I thought of a cool idea that might work. Do you want to hear it? (Better: "Can you please give me more insight into your competitors?" After response, if appropriate, "Given the competitive picture, I had an idea and wonder what you think...?")

Ditch the Flip-Flops: Ace Your Job Interview Fresh Out of College, Sylvia I. Landy, Keystone Three LLC, 2007

Interview Resources

Books in the Career Center Library

Ditch the Flip-Flops: Ace Your Job Interview Fresh Out of College, Sylvia I. Landy, Keystone Three LLC, 2007

The Quick Interview and Salary Negotiation Book, J. Michael Farr, JIST Works, 1994

Dressing Smart for Men (Women): 101 Mistakes You Can't Afford to Make...and How to Avoid Them, JoAnna Nicholson, Impact Publications, 2003

Crisp: Preparing for the Behavior-Based Interview: How to Get the Job You Want, Terry L. Fitzwater, Crisp Learning

Internet

UCR Career Center, <http://careers.ucr.edu/students/interviewing.htm>

Quintessential Careers, <http://www.quintcareers.com/>

CareerTV, <http://www.careertv.com>