

Sample Interview Questions

The following are sample questions you may be asked during an interview. It is always wise to prepare for the “tell me about yourself” question which is generally the first question asked. When responding to that question, focus on skills and experiences related to the position you are interviewing for. Be concise and do not offer a step-by-step history starting with where you were born. Remember, anything on your résumé is fair game for a question, so be ready to describe and give examples of the skills and experiences you have highlighted.

Sample Questions (General):

1. Tell me about yourself
2. Why are you interested in this position? This company?
3. What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
4. Describe your ideal job
5. Why did you choose your major?
6. Why did you choose this career field?
7. What are your short/long-term career goals?
8. What does success mean to you?
9. What do you do to improve your knowledge and skills in the field?
10. Why did you quit your last job?
11. What has made you stand out among your peers in your past work experience?
12. How did you prioritize multiple projects in your last job?
13. How do you prioritize multiple projects?
14. How do you work under pressure?
15. How has your previous work experience prepared you for this position?
16. What skills would you bring to our company?
17. Which classes did you most like in college? Why?
18. Describe any innovative projects you have been involved in developing
19. Where do you hope to be in five years? Ten?
20. What leadership activities have you been involved in?
21. Do you have any volunteer experience? If so, tell me about it
22. How would a supervisor you have worked with describe you?
23. How would your co-workers describe you?
24. Why should we hire you instead of the other people we are interviewing?

Behavior-Based Interviewing

Some employers focus on behavior-based questions, which are based on the premise that the best predictor of future success is past performance. These questions require you to share specific examples of times you have used particular skills.

Frame responses to behavior-based questions using the **STAR** technique:

S – Describe a Situation you were involved in

T – Explain the Task you needed to accomplish or problem to be solved

A – Describe the Action you took and the specific skills you utilized

R – What was the Result?

Sample Behavior-Based Questions (General):

1. Describe a time when you saw a problem as a potential opportunity. What did you do?
2. Describe your ability to listen and be responsive. Can you give me an example?
3. Tell me about a time you were especially creative in solving a problem
4. Tell me about a time you were frustrated with the performance of a group that you belonged to. What did you do? What was the outcome?
5. Tell me about a time you had to make an important decision quickly even though you did not have all the information you wanted
6. Tell me about a time you utilized your leadership ability to gain support for an idea that initially had strong opposition
7. Give an example when you were faced with a stressful situation. How did you handle it? What was the outcome?
8. How do you schedule your time and set priorities? Give me a specific example of how you have done so in the past
9. Describe a situation where you demonstrated initiative. What was the outcome?
10. Give an example of how you have handled criticism in the past

Teaching Questions:

1. How do you evaluate your own teaching performance?
2. Give me one or two examples of things that you discovered about yourself while student teaching that you would like to improve
3. What needs and/or expectations do you have of the school administration?
4. Why do you want to work for our district?
5. What is your educational philosophy? Classroom management philosophy?
6. How do you reinforce self-esteem in students?
7. Describe how you accommodate different learning styles of the students in your classes
8. What procedures do you use to evaluate student progress besides using tests?
9. What do you feel is the most effective way to communicate with parents? How have you involved parents in the learning process?
10. How have you integrated technology into a curriculum you have taught?

Human Services/Psychology/Social Work Questions:

1. What kind of experience have you had with different populations (i.e., women, youth, terminally ill, elderly)?
2. Describe your fieldwork experience
3. What is your knowledge of disabilities?
4. What types of clients have you worked with?
5. What techniques do you use in crisis intervention work?
6. How do you ensure you maintain professional boundaries?
7. How do you relate to clients of different cultural backgrounds?
8. Describe a difficult client and how you dealt with the situation

Computer Science/Technology Questions:

1. How would you explain the internet to a grandparent who has never seen it before?
2. What should a professional software designer consider in the design and implementation of code?
3. What kind of technical publications (print or online) have you recently read?
4. If you could recommend one resource (book, web site, etc.) to a new software developer just out of school, what would it be?
5. Describe a technical problem you encountered. How did you implement the solution?

Business Questions:

1. What is your understanding of management accounting vs. financial accounting?
2. Which accounting systems/software are you familiar with?
3. Tell me about your experience working with accounts payable/receivable
4. What experience have you had working with payroll?
5. Brand X's market share has been declining lately. What are the key things you would look at to determine why?
6. Tell me about a company that you feel has been successful with a unique marketing strategy
7. What is an effective/ineffective advertisement you have seen recently and why?
8. You are a product. What is your slogan?
9. If I called a member of your current staff and asked them to tell me about you, what would they say?
10. How do you motivate/reward employees?
11. What is your definition of empowerment?
12. Tell me about a time when your manager made a decision you disagreed with. What actions did you take and why?
13. Why might a company choose debt over equity financing?
14. Where do you think interest rates will be two year from now?
15. When have you had to design new financial processes in a hands-on role?

Nursing Questions:

1. What was the last mistake you made and how did you correct it?
2. How do you work under pressure?
3. Describe your clinical or fieldwork experiences
4. What is your personal philosophy of nursing?
5. What types of patients have you worked with?
6. What do you know about our hospital/clinic/organization?
7. What are some strategies you use or plan to use in the future to stay current in your practice?
8. What kind of experience have you had with different populations (i.e., elderly, terminally ill)?
9. Describe a difficult patient and how you dealt with the situation

Communications Questions:

1. Describe one of your most successful oral presentations and what made it successful
2. What have you done to increase your effectiveness in making presentations?
3. Give me an example of the most serious communication problem you have had. What did you do about it?
4. Sometimes it's important to disagree with others to keep a mistake from being made. Tell me about a time when you were willing to disagree with another person in order to build a positive outcome
5. Tell me about a major conflict you had with a peer or customer that you were unable to resolve successfully. Why were you unsuccessful? What did you learn?
6. Would you rather write a report or give a verbal report? Why?
7. How has a degree in communications prepared you for this job?

Questions to Ask the Employer

1. What type of orientation is provided to new employees?
2. Are there any opportunities for mentorship within the organization?
3. What technology resources will be available to me?
4. What are your expectations for new hires within the first six months of the job?
5. How would my performance be evaluated and how often?
6. What would you see as the biggest opportunities and challenges of this position?
7. What type of training and support would be available to me if I were hired?
8. To whom would I report?
9. Do you offer tuition reimbursement for continued education or professional development?
10. What do you consider to be the organization's strengths and weaknesses?
11. Why do you enjoy working for this company?