

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### Initial Questions

- What is your primary reason for leaving your current company, and how could joining the University of New Mexico/this department fill that need?
- What do you think this department would do for your career?
- If you were to accept this position with us today, how would you explain that to a prospective employer 5 years from now?
- What does career growth mean to you?

### Behavioral Questions by Job Competency

#### ➤ Professional Knowledge/Continuous Learning

- Describe some times when you were not very satisfied or pleased with your performance. What did you do about it?
- Describe a situation where your professional/technical expertise made a significant difference.
- Describe a time in which you took initiative rather than waiting to be told what to do.
- Tell me about a situation in which you had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it?
- What standards have you set for yourself in your current position? How well have you done about meeting these standards?
- What, in your opinion, are the key ingredients in guiding and maintaining successful business relationships? Give me examples of how you have made these work for you.
- Tell me how you keep your job knowledge current with the ongoing changes in the industry.
- Describe how something you learned made a significant difference in your career.
- Give me an example that illustrates how other people have used you as a resource for knowledge in your field.
- Tell me about a recent project for which you have volunteered. What was it and what was your role? What was the final outcome?
- Tell me about recent classes/certifications/tests you have taken. When did you take them? How do they relate to the job for which you are applying?
- Tell me about a specific process/procedure/policy where you have made specific recommendations for change. What was your role? What happened?

#### ➤ Communication/Recognition

- Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.
- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa). How did you handle the situation? What obstacles or difficulties did you face? How did you deal with them?
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communication skills in order to get an important point across.
- Describe a time when you found it necessary to tactfully but forcefully say things that others did not want to hear.
- Give me an example of an instance when you were particularly effective in a talk you gave or a seminar you taught.
- Have you ever been criticized or confronted in front of others? How did you respond? Would you do anything differently? Did it change the way you critique others?
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.

- Can you tell me about a job experience in which had to speak up in order to be sure that other people knew what you thought or felt?
- Tell me about a particular training class/orientation/presentation you participated in. When/how often do you do these? Who/how many were in the audience?
- Tell me about a time when you had to deliver an important message/sensitive message to someone. How did you do it? What happened?
- When did you last work in a team? What was that team? What was your role? What happened? Based on this experience and others, would you prefer to work on a team or individually to complete a project?
- Tell me about a time when you had to argue a case or support a decision. What was it? What did you say? What was the outcome?

### ➤ **Team Work/Collaboration/Partnering**

- What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific.
- Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or guide others to a compromise.
- Tell me about a particular case you worked on that entailed you review several issues from different fields i.e. Benefits, Employee Relations, Compensation, and or Employment. What were the issues? What did you do? What was the final outcome?
- Describe a time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
- Give an example of a time in which you were able to build motivation in your co-workers or subordinates at work.
- Explain a time when you have needed to be patient with a co-worker or volunteer. Why did you need to be patient? Did it affect your work? What have you learned from the situation?
- Tell me about a time when, if it hadn't been for teamwork, your goal might not have been achieved.
- Describe a time you helped resolve a conflict between co-workers or volunteers. What was the conflict and how did you resolve it?
- Give me an example of a situation when you were able to gain commitment from others to really work as a team.
- Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with a classmate or colleague who was not doing their share of the work. How did you handle it?
- 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?
- Tell me about a time 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 me about a time when you had to work with someone who had a different idea or perspective. What was the issue? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when there was massive deliverable or a high volume of work in your department. What was the issue? What did you do? What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you had to work with a group of people and everyone had a different opinion. What did you do? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with others who were having a disagreement. What did you do? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when someone came up with an idea that was better than yours. What did you do? What happened?

### ➤ **Diversity**

- Can you describe a time when you were particularly perceptive regarding a person(s) or group's feelings and needs?
- By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations, and environments.
- Describe a time when you made an intentional effort to get to know a new employee.
- What experiences have you had working with people of different backgrounds? Can you describe a specific situation where you worked with a diverse group to complete an assigned task? What was your role? What was the result?

- Describe the way you handled a specific problem involving others with differing values, ideas and beliefs in your current/previous job.
- How have you reacted to conversations between co-workers that were clearly offensive to non-participants?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with a group of diverse individuals i.e. different departments/different backgrounds. What issues came up in the group? What was your role? Would you prefer working with a diverse group or a homogeneous group?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with someone who wasn't familiar with the jobs or had problems with their skill level? What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with a group of diverse people with many ideas. How did the group decide what eventually was going to be done? What was your role?

### ➤ **Problem Solving/Negotiation**

- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
- Tell me about the most difficult challenge you faced in trying to work cooperatively with someone who did not share the same ideas. What was the difference in ideas? What was the outcome? What was the long-term impact on your ability to get things done working with this person?
- Give an example of a time that you came up with a solution to a challenge that your organization was facing. What was the challenge? What were the specific results? What role did others play in the solution?
- Give me an example of a problem you faced on any job you have had and tell me how you went about solving it.
- Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
- What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision? Give me an example of your approach and how it worked.
- We can sometimes identify a small problem and fix it before it becomes a major problem. Give an example of how you have done this.
- Recall a time from your work experience when your manager or supervisor was unavailable and a problem arose. What was the nature of the problem? How did you handle that situation? How did that make you feel?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with a customer who had a problem and it involved working with other offices? What did you do? What happened?
- Tell me about a time you worked with several people who wanted a different outcome than you. What did you do? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you were working with an individual and you realized the problem was greater than just the one issue. What did you do? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you faced a difficult work decision. What did you decide? How did you make the decision? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you had an upset customer? What did you do? What happened?

### ➤ **Relationship Building/Outreach**

- Can you tell me a time when you regularly dealt with a difficult customer? How did you handle it and what happened?
- What, in your opinion, are the key ingredients in guiding and maintaining successful business relationships? Give me examples of how you have made these work for you.
- Can you think of a time when you made a decision without including all the necessary players? What were the repercussions? How do you now ensure everyone is included?
- Describe a time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
- Tell me about a time when you had to develop a relationship with customers as part of your job. What type of customers were they. How did you develop the relationship?
- Tell me about your relationship with a particular customer.
- Tell me about a time when you were involved in a process on a strategic level.
- Tell me about a time when you saw a potential issue before it occurred.
- Tell me about a time when you helped a manager before he/she realized he/she needed help.

➤ **Quality**

- Tell me about a time when you made a mistake and learned from it.
- Has there been a time when you improved a process? What was it?
- Give me an example of a time when you were disappointed in your performance.
- Give me examples of projects/tasks you started on your own.
- Tell me about a time when you were not happy with your performance. Why? What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you weren't happy with a particular product or type of service that your department delivers? What did you do?
- Tell me about a time that you had to refer to the UNM Policies and Procedures to help a customer. What was it? What did you do?
- Tell me about a time you solved a customer's issue. What was it? What did you do?
- Describe to me the last project you worked on and your method for determining its completeness.

➤ **Service Orientation/Customer Service**

- Tell me about a recent situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer.
- Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to assist a customer.
- Provide me with an example of a time when you effectively "owned" a customer's problem – assisting with the resolution from start to finish.
- Give me an example of when you initiated a change in process or operations in response to customer feedback.
- Tell me about a recent customer that you gave advice to. What was the issue? What did you suggest? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with the customer in a partnership/consultant role?
- What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you received a complaint regarding either HR processes or services? What was it? What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you were unable to solve a customer's problem? i.e. The problem fell in someone else's jurisdiction or someone else had to approve.
- Give me a specific example of how you feel you have added value to the organization.
- Give me an example of a situation where you improved the level of customer service in your organization. What did you do to improve it? What was the outcome?
- Give me an example of when you were given special recognition or acknowledgement for going the extra mile to satisfy a customer.

➤ **Personal Attributes**

**Commitment**

- Describe a time when you had to overcome significant obstacles in order to achieve a goal.
- Tell me about a time when you overcame great obstacles to achieve something significant.
- Give me an example of when you achieved something by your persistence that others couldn't.

**Respect**

- Tell me about a time when you had to work on a team with someone you did not get along with. What happened?
- Tell me about a time when you had to resolve a difference of opinion with a co-worker/customer/supervisor. How do you feel you showed respect?
- Tell me about a time that you had to work with someone you didn't respect. What did you do? What happened?

**Integrity**

- Give me a specific example of a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Discuss a time when your integrity was challenged. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a business situation when you felt honesty was inappropriate. Why? What did you do?
- Tell me about a specific time when you had to handle a tough problem which challenged fairness or ethical issues.

- Tell me about a time that you had to make a difficult decision. What was it and what things did you consider before making the decision?
- Tell me about a time that you were asked to do something you felt was unethical. What did you do?

### **Versatility/Flexibility**

- Tell me about a situation in which you have had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you had to adjust to a colleague's working style in order to complete a project or achieve your objectives.
- Tell me about the time when you made a major sacrifice to achieve an important goal.
- Tell me about the time when you really had to remain flexible.
- Describe a project or goal that has caused you frustration.
- What do you do when priorities change quickly? Give me one example of when this happened.
- Tell me about a time when you had to change your course of action. What was it? Why did you have to change? How did it make you feel?

### **Creativity**

- Give an example of a time that you came up with a solution to a challenge that your organization was facing. What was the challenge? What were the specific results? What role did others play in the solution?
- Give an example of when you convinced a supervisor or organization to go ahead with an idea you had. What was your idea? How did you proceed?
- Describe a time you were especially creative in solving a problem.
- Tell me about a problem that you've solved in a unique or unusual way. What was the outcome? Were you happy or satisfied with it?
- Give me an example of when someone brought you a new idea that was odd or unusual. What did you do?
- Can you give me an example of how you have been creative in completing your responsibilities?
- Tell me about a particular project that you worked that you felt was particularly creative. What was it?

### **Accountability**

- Recall a time when you made what you consider a mistake or a bad decision on the job. How did you handle the situation? What happened?
- Tell me about a time when your supervisor criticized your work. How did you respond?
- Tell me about a time when you took responsibility for an error and were held personally accountable.
- Tell me about a time that you made an error. What was it? What did you do?

## LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS

### **Coaches/Counsels/Evaluates Staff**

- Give me an example of a time 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?
- Tell me about a specific time when you had to handle a tough morale problem.
- Tell me about a time when you had to take disciplinary action with someone you supervised.
- Tell me about a time when you had to tell a staff member that you were dissatisfied with his or her work.
- Tell me about a time when you had to handle a highly emotional employee.
- Discuss a work situation in which you felt you successfully directed the work of others.

### **Identifies Areas for and Supports Employee Development Opportunities**

- What have you done to develop the skills of your staff? How many of your employees have received training (any form) during the past year? What were the specific topic areas? Did they ask for the training or did you suggest it to them?
- Tell me about a specific development plan that you created and carried out with one or more of your employees. What was the specific situation? What were the components of the development plan? How long was the time frame from start to finish? What was the outcome?

### **Encourages Teamwork and Group Achievement**

- Please tell me about your most successful attempt to encourage others to take action and get the job done. What led you to take these actions? Exactly how did you encourage others to take action or responsibility? What was the result of your efforts? Did anyone comment on your actions? Who? What was said? How often have you taken this type of action in the past six months?
- Tell me about a time when you needed to have co-workers working on a project who normally have different work styles/ideas. How did you pull them together?

### **Leads Change/Achieves Support of Objectives**

- Tell me about a time when you were responsible for hiring and orientating a new employee. What did you do to help them adjust?
- Tell me about a time when your department was going through long-term changes or working on a long-term project. What did you do to keep your staff focused?
- Give me an example of a time when you helped a staff member accept change and make the necessary adjustments to move forward.

## **Enables and Empowers Staff**

- Tell me about a time when you needed to delegate parts of a large assignment. How did you decide whom to distribute them to? What problems occurred? What was the outcome?
- What specific information do/did you share with your staff, how often do you share this information and why?
- Give me a specific example of how you have empowered your staff to make independent decisions.
- Tell me about the expectations you create for staff. What are they? What factors do you consider in setting/communicating expectations?

## **Understands Diversity Issues and Creates Supportive Environment for Diverse Employees**

- Tell me about the specific talents and contributions of your team/staff and how you have utilized these qualities to increase the effectiveness of the unit.
- What have you done to support diversity in your unit?
- Can you recall a time when you gave feedback to an employee who was unaccepting of others?
- Give me a specific example of how you have helped create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged and supported.