

INTERVIEW QUESTION LIBRARY

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BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Accountability

Accounts for activities, accepts responsibility for them, and discloses the results in a transparent manner.

1. Sometimes things get hectic at work. Provide a specific example of how you managed to “get everything done” during a very busy time. What strategies did you use to ensure timely, quality results?
2. Give us an example of a specific time when you faced multiple priorities, and the manner in which you addressed the situation.
Follow-up: What was the end result?
3. Describe one specific service, activity, or process for which you have been held accountable. What obstacles did you face while “owning” this service, activity, or process?
4. 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?
5. Think of a specific instance when you had many demands placed on your time, affecting your availability to meet the needs of your customers, coworkers, supervisors, and/or subordinates. What did you do?
Follow-up: How did everything turn out?
6. Tell me about a time when you were unable to follow through on a commitment that you made. What happened?
Follow-up: How did you explain this to the other party? What was the end result?
7. Tell me about a time when you took responsibility for an error and were held personally accountable.
Follow-up: What was the end result?

Adaptability / Flexibility

Alters responses to changed circumstances or environment; shows the ability to learn from experience.

1. Describe a time in which you had to complete a project with very little direction. What were some of the issues that you faced?
Follow-up: How did you go about completing the project? What was the end result?
2. Sometimes policies exist that we may not personally agree with. Tell me about the last time you disagreed with a policy or procedure. What course of action did you take?
Follow-up: What was the end result?
3. Tell us about a time when you had to deal with a major change in your work process or job responsibilities. What was the most difficult part of that scenario? What was the end result?
4. Tell us about a time when you needed to take action and did not have as much time as you would have liked to prepare. What did you do?
5. Describe a situation in which you had to get around a major obstacle to complete a project.
Follow-up: How did this obstacle impact the end result?

6. Tell us about a time when you had more work than you could handle. What did you do? How did things turnout?
7. Tell us about two previous supervisors with differing management styles. How did you work with their individual management styles?
8. Describe a specific time in which you felt it was necessary to modify your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
Follow-up: What was your role in the situation? What actions did you take? How did the other person respond to your actions?
9. Tell us about a time when you made a recommendation which was rejected or criticized by others. How did you respond? What was the end result?
10. Tell us about a time when you had to learn a new application or system. What were some of the challenges that you faced in learning the application or system?
Follow-up: How did you become proficient? How long did it take for you to navigate the application or system independently?
11. Tell me about a specific situation in which you have had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it?
Follow-up: What was the end result?
12. Tell me about a specific time when you had to adjust to a colleague's working style in order to complete a project or achieve your objectives.
Follow-up: What was the most difficult part of that scenario? How did things turn out?
13. Tell me about a specific time when you made a major sacrifice to achieve an important goal.
Follow-up: How did things turn out? How did that sacrifice impact you or your colleagues?
14. Describe a specific project or goal that was frustrating for you.
Follow-up: How, if at all, did your frustration impact the way that you proceeded with the project or goal? What was the end result?
15. Give me a specific example of when your priorities at work changed quickly. What did you do?
Follow-up: What obstacles did you face? How did things turn out?
16. Describe a time when you implemented a company initiative that you did not personally support.
17. Tell me about a recent situation at work that was particularly stressful. What happened? What did you do?
18. Tell us about a time when you changed or altered a decision as a result of a different point of view.
Follow-up: What occurred that made you re-evaluate that decision? What was the end result?
19. Tell us about a time when your priorities were not in line with the expectations of others. What did you do?
Follow-up: How did things turn out?
20. Give us a specific example of how your current (or previous) job has changed since you started. In what ways has that impacted your overall work and your job satisfaction?

Analytical Skills

Visualizes, articulates, and solves both complex and uncomplicated problems and concepts; makes decisions that are sensible and based on available information. Skills include demonstration of ability to apply logical thinking to gather and analyze information, designing and testing solutions to problems, and formulating plans.

1. We've all faced times when there is an incredible amount of data and information to be analyzed. Tell me about a time when you faced this situation and had to boil everything down to what was most important. What did you do?
3. Tell us about a specific time when you were systematic in identifying potential problems at work.
Follow-up: Were you able to identify the problem while it was still manageable, or had it already reached "crisis" level? What was the end result?
4. Tell me about the most complex or difficult information you have had to analyze.
5. *Follow-up: What made the analysis so difficult? What was the result of your analysis?*
6. Tell me about a time when you were tasked with analyzing information and making a recommendation.
7. *Follow-up: What happened? In hindsight, what, if anything, would you have done differently?*
8. Tell me about a time when you caught a discrepancy or inconsistency in information. How did you catch it? How did you proceed?

9. *Follow-up: What was the impact? How did everything turn out?*
10. Describe a time when your “logical analysis” was seen as illogical or flawed by someone else. How did you respond?
11. *Follow-up: What was the end result?*

Business Acumen

Keeness and quickness in understanding and dealing with a business situation in a manner that is likely to lead to a good outcome.

1. Describe a time when you were tasked with using financial data to identify key business planning issues or concerns.
2. *Follow-up: How did you get started? Were you able to accomplish this task? Why or why not?*
3. Tell us about a time when you were tasked with identifying and capitalizing on a market trend to enhance your organization’s competitive advantage.
4. *Follow-up: Were you able to accomplish this? Why or why not?*
5. Describe a time when you were tasked with integrating financial, enterprise, and/or industry data and indicators into a strategic plan or initiative.
6. *Follow-up: How did this integrated data affect the outcome? What was the end result?*
7. Tell us about a specific time when a decision made in your area had an adverse impact on another area or department.
8. *Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome? What did you learn from this experience?*
9. Describe a specific time when you were tasked with assessing the viability of a new idea or initiative. What items did you consider, and what steps did you take to complete this task?
10. *Follow-up: What was the outcome?*

Coaching

Trains and develops through supporting an individual while achieving a specific personal or professional competence result or goal.

1. Most leaders have had an experience in which they coached a direct report who failed to improve. Tell me about a time when you worked with an employee who was not improving.
Follow-up: What might have caused the lack of improvement? In retrospect, what might you have done differently in your coaching strategy? What was the end result?
2. Tell us about two different individuals who you have coached to accomplish the same task. What similarities and differences were there in your approach?
Follow-up: How did things turn out for both individuals?
3. Tell me about a time when you coached a direct report to take on a “stretch” task or to develop a necessary capability.
Follow-up: What was the most challenging aspect of coaching the individual? What was the end result?
4. Describe a time in which you used feedback to enhance the performance of a direct report or another employee.
Follow-up: What was your approach? What was the end result?
5. Describe a specific time when you needed to help a staff member to accept change and make the necessary adjustments to move forward. What did you do?
Follow-up: What were the change/transition skills that you used? What obstacles did you face? What was the outcome?
6. Tell me about a specific time when you had to handle a tough morale problem. What did you do? What was the end result?
7. Tell me about a specific time when you had to take disciplinary action with someone you supervised.
Follow-up: What happened? What was the end result?
8. Tell me about a time when you had to tell a staff member that you were dissatisfied with his or her work.

Follow-up: What happened? What was the end result?

9. Tell me about a time when you had to handle a highly emotional employee.
Follow-up: What happened? What was the most challenging part of that scenario? What was the outcome?
10. Give me an example of a specific time when you needed to develop the skills of your staff.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?
11. 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?
Follow-up: How long was the time frame from start to finish? What was the outcome?

Change Management

Effectively approaches transition of individuals, teams, and organizations to a desired future state.

1. Tell us about the most difficult change you have had to make in your professional career.
2. Describe a time when you felt that a planned change was inappropriate. What did you do? What was the end result?
3. Describe a change effort you were involved in that was *not* as successful as you or the organization would have liked.
Follow-up: How did the end result differ from the initial expectations? What might have caused the disparity?
4. Tell us about a time when you had to adjust quickly to changes over which you had no control.
Follow-up: What impact did the change have on you?
5. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to help a direct report or a colleague to accept change and make the necessary adjustments to move forward.
Follow-up: What challenges did you face? What was the end result?
6. Describe a specific situation in which you, at first, resisted a change at work, and then later accepted it.
Follow-up: What specifically changed your mind?

Collaboration & Teamwork

Effectively works toward common goals by supporting, encouraging, and sharing information with colleagues.

1. Describe a specific time when you were part of a team in which differences of opinions developed regarding how work was assigned or completed.
Follow-up: What was your role? What actions did you take? What was the outcome?
2. Tell me about a time when you had to enlist the support of your colleagues, subordinates, or supervisors to complete a task.
Follow-up: What obstacles did you face? How did you overcome them? What was the end result?
3. Sometimes teams lose their motivation to perform. Describe a specific time when you were tasked with motivating a team.
Follow-up: What was the most challenging part of that scenario? What was the outcome?
4. Tell us about a scenario you faced in which several of your coworkers did not get along.
Follow-up: How did you approach this situation? What was the end result?
5. Give us an example of a time when you needed to organize a team in order to achieve a goal.
Follow-up: How did you get started? How did you select the team members? What was the end result?
6. Describe a specific time when a problem arose within your department. What did you do?
Follow-up: Was your approach successful? Why or why not?
7. Tell us about a time when you felt uncomfortable sharing your point of view with team members. What about the situation made you feel uncomfortable? What would have allowed you to feel more comfortable?
Follow-up: What did you learn from this experience?
8. Describe the specific behaviors that you use to create an environment of cooperation and collaboration at work. Give us a specific example of how you have used these behaviors in the past.
9. Tell us about a specific time when you were responsible for a team and its success.
Follow-up: What actions did you take to facilitate that success? What actions did you take, if any, to reinforce

the team's performance?

10. Tell us about a time when you were placed in charge of a group and needed to develop the roles and responsibilities of that group.
Follow-up: What challenges did you face? What was the outcome?
11. Describe a specific situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or guide others to a compromise.
Follow-up: What was the most challenging part of that situation? What was the outcome?
12. Tell me about a specific case you worked on that involved you reviewing several issues from different fields (e.g., Benefits, Employee Relations, Compensation, and/or Employment). What were the issues? What did you do? What was the final outcome?
13. Describe a specific time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
Follow-up: What caused you to realize this? What was the outcome?
14. Give us an example of a specific time in which motivation needed to be built up in your coworkers or subordinates at work. What did you do?
Follow-up: What challenges did you face? What was the outcome?
15. Describe a specific time when you needed to be patient with a co-worker.
Follow-up: How did this affect your work? What did you learn from this situation?
16. Tell me about a time when, if it hadn't been for teamwork, your goal might not have been achieved.
17. Describe a time when conflict existed between your co-workers. What was the conflict, and what happened?
Follow-up: What was the end result?
18. Give me an example of a specific situation in which you needed to gain commitment from others.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?
19. Describe a specific time when others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?
Follow-up: How did things turn out?
20. Tell me about a time when you worked with a colleague (or classmate) who was not doing their share of the work. What did you do?
Follow-up: What was the most challenging part of that scenario? What was the end result?
21. 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?
22. Tell me about a specific time when you worked on a team that did not get along. What happened?
Follow-up: What were the challenges? What did you do? What was the outcome?
23. Tell me about a time when you worked with someone whose idea or perspective differed from yours.
Follow-up: What did you do? How did everything turn out?
24. Tell me about a time when there was massive deliverable or a high volume of work in your department.
Follow-up: What was the issue? What did you do? What was the outcome?
25. Tell me about a specific time when you worked with a group of people and everyone had a different opinion.
Follow-up: What did you do? What happened?
26. Tell me about a specific time when someone thought up an idea that was better than yours.
Follow-up: What happened?

Communication

Note: Communication (verbal and written) is largely an observable behavior. If the available position requires a substantial amount of written communication, we recommend that candidates be asked to provide examples of their work.

1. Tell me about a time when you experienced difficulty communicating your thoughts clearly to another person or group. What message were you trying to convey?
Follow-up: Where did the difficulty in communication lie? How did you end up getting your point across?
2. Describe a specific time when you realized that you needed to change the way you were communicating with a colleague or customer.

- Follow-up: What caused you to realize this? How did you change your approach? What was the end result?*
3. Give us a specific example of a difficult or sensitive situation you faced that required extensive communication. How did you modify your normal actions to accommodate to this situation?
Follow-up: What was the end result? What, if anything, did you learn from this experience?
 4. Describe a specific situation you faced that required a multi-dimensional communication strategy.
Follow-up: How did you recognize this? What was the outcome?
 5. Tell me about a time when you *really* had to pay attention to what someone else was saying – actively seeking to understand their message.
 6. Tell me about the most difficult or complex idea, situation, or process that you have had to explain to someone. How did you explain it?
Follow-up: Were you successful?
 7. Describe a situation in which you had to collect information by asking questions of several different people.
Follow-up: What was the most challenging part of that scenario? What was the end result?
 8. Tell me about a sensitive or volatile situation that required very careful communication. How did you approach this?
 9. Tell me about an experience you've had at work in which you had to speak up in order to be sure that others knew what you thought or felt.
Follow-up: How did you approach the situation? What was the outcome?
 10. Describe a time that you observed (or were a part of) where communication was handled particularly well by someone else. What did they do? Why do you think they were effective?
 11. Describe a time when you failed to communicate important information to a boss or colleague.
Follow-up: What was the impact of that lack of communication?
 12. Tell me about a time when you did *not* document something that you wish you would have.
Follow-up: What was the outcome?
 13. Give me an example of a time when you used written communication to share information that, in hindsight, you realize should have been shared verbally.
Follow-up: At what point did you realize that your initial approach should have been different? What was the outcome?

Conflict Management

Limits the negative aspects of conflict while increasing the positive aspects. Enhances learning and group outcomes, including effectiveness or performance in an organizational setting.

1. Tell me about a specific experience you have had with a difficult customer.
Follow-up: How did you respond? What was the end result? In hindsight, would you have responded to the situation differently?
 2. We all have different ways of doing our work, different communication styles, cultural backgrounds, and prior work experiences. Tell me about a time when you had a disagreement with a coworker or your supervisor.
Follow-up: What happened? What was the end result?
 3. Tell me about a time when you had to work with a difficult person to accomplish a shared goal.
Follow-up: What was particularly challenging about this situation? What was the outcome?
 4. 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?
 5. Describe a specific situation in which you saw things very differently from another person at work.
Follow-up: How did you approach your differing view? What problems, if any, did this cause? What was the outcome?
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Continuous Learning

Embraces continuous learning and renewal. Has an affinity for discovering new ideas, experimenting to learn, and acquiring knowledge.

1. Describe a past failure of yours. What happened?
Follow-up: What did you learn from that experience?
2. Tell us about a specific time when you had to learn a new application or system.
Follow-up: To whom or where did you go for assistance? Did you become proficient? How long did it take for you to navigate the application or system independently?
3. Tell me about a specific time when you received feedback, either positive or negative, from management or another associate.
Follow-up: How did you respond to this feedback?
4. Describe a specific time when you were not very satisfied or pleased with your own performance. What did you do about it?
5. Tell me about a situation in which you had to adjust to changes over which you had no control.
Follow-up: How did you handle it? What was the outcome?
6. Give me an example that illustrates how other people have used you as a resource for knowledge in your field.
7. Tell me about a specific time when you were tasked with making recommendations for change regarding a process/procedure/policy.
Follow-up: What happened?

Continuous Improvement

Makes an ongoing effort to improve products, services, or processes.

1. Tell me about a specific suggestion that you made to improve a job process.
Follow-up: Why did you suggest this change? From whom did you need to get buy-in? What was the outcome?
2. Give us a specific example of a time when you questioned “the way that things have always been done.”
Follow-up: What was the response? How did things turn out?
3. Recall a specific problem that you identified in your last or current job that had previously been overlooked.
Follow-up: What changes, if any, were made? Who supported the changes as a result of your ideas?

Creativity / Innovation

Applies solutions to meet new requirements, unarticulated needs, or existing market needs; accomplished through more effective products, processes, services, technologies, or ideas.

1. Give us a specific example of a time when you came up with a solution to a challenge that your organization was facing.
Follow-up: What role did others play in the solution? What was the outcome?
2. Tell us about a specific time when you convinced a supervisor or organization to move forward with an idea that you had.
Follow-up: How did you approach this? How did you proceed? What was the end result?
3. Describe a specific time when you were especially creative in solving a problem.
4. Tell me about a specific problem that you solved in a unique or unusual way.
Follow-up: Why did you feel that this was the best way to approach the problem? What was the outcome?
5. Tell me about a time when you created a new process or program that was considered “risky.”
Follow-up: How did others respond to this new process or program? From whom and how did you receive buy-in? How did things turn out? What, if anything, would you have done differently?
6. Provide a specific example of a time when someone approached you with an idea that was odd or

unusual. What did you do?

7. Tell us about a time when you needed to be creative in order to complete a work-related task or project.
8. Recall a time when you came up with a creative solution/idea/project/report to address a problem in your past position.
9. Give us an example of when you took a risk to achieve a goal. What was the outcome?
10. Sometimes it is essential that we break out of the routine, standardized way of doing things in order to complete a task or project. Give us an example of a time you were able to successfully develop such an approach.

Critical Thinking

Makes clear, reasoned judgments; intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.

1. Tell me about a time when you had a difficult and/or complex problem to solve.
Follow-up: What made the problem so difficult? How did you organize the available information?
2. Describe a situation in which you were given an assignment that was difficult to complete, because you were uncertain of several key elements.
Follow-up: How did you go about completing the project?
3. Give me an example of a time when you had to solve a problem. Describe the problem and the steps that you took to solve it.
Follow-up: Do you feel that this was the best approach to take? Why or why not?
4. Recall a specific time when you promised something to a customer or coworker by a certain deadline. What did you consider when you agreed to the deadline?
Follow-up: What steps did you take to meet the deadline?

Customer Focus

The desire to help or serve the customer and a commitment to continuous improvement of services. The ability to focus effort on discovering and meeting customers' stated or unstated needs and expectations.

1. Describe a time when you needed to adjust your schedule or workload to ensure that you could meet a customer's needs.
Follow-up: How did everything turn out?
2. We've all heard the phrase "the customer is always right." Can you describe a time when you felt that the customer was *not*?
Follow-up: How did you respond? What was the outcome? What could you have done differently to increase the positive nature of this encounter?
3. Explain a time when you were NOT able to respond to a customer as quickly as promised.
Follow-up: What led to this outcome? How did you handle the situation? What, if anything, would you have done differently?
4. Describe a specific time when you worked with a difficult customer.
Follow-up: In what ways was the customer difficult? How did you respond to the customer? How did the customer respond to you? What was the outcome?
5. Describe a specific situation in which you anticipated, identified, and met a customer's needs.
6. Tell me about a time when you received an unreasonable request from a customer.
Follow-up: What did you do? How did things turn out?
7. Tell me about a specific time when you received feedback from a customer.
Follow-up: Why does this particular example stick out in your mind? What did you do with that feedback?
8. In some cases, we may do everything possible to satisfy a customer's request, yet they still complain

about how they were treated. Can you tell me about a time when a customer complained about the service that you provided?

Follow-up: What happened? What was the outcome? What, if anything, would you have done differently?

9. Tell me about a specific time when you faced an irate customer or co-worker. How did you handle the situation?

Follow-up: What was the outcome? If the encounter was to reoccur, would you handle it differently? If yes, how and why?

10. Tell me about a time when you had to go out of your way to assist a customer. Describe the circumstances.

Follow-up: What was the outcome?

11. Give us a specific example of a request that you received from a customer that could not be accommodated.

Follow-up: What was your response? What was the customer's response?

12. Customers can be very demanding. Tell me about a time when you had to manage a customer's expectation in order to avoid an unreasonable commitment.

Follow-up: What was the outcome?

13. Sometimes, customers have a limited or incorrect understanding of their needs. Tell me about a time when you had this kind of experience with a customer.

Follow-up: What steps/approach did you take to educate them? What was the result?

14. Give us a specific example of an effective client relationship that you developed and maintained.

15. Tell us about a time when you did not understand the exact nature of a customer's issue or problem.

Follow-up: What did you do? What challenges did you face? What was the outcome?

16. Tell me about a time when you received a complaint at work. What was the complaint, and what did you do?

17. Tell me about a specific time when you were unable to solve a customer's problem on your own.

Follow-up: What did you do? What did you learn from this scenario?

Decision Making & Problem-Solving

Selects effective approaches to solving issues based on available information and business objectives, and perceives the impact and implications of decisions.

1. Tell me about a time when you had a difficult and/or complex problem to solve.

Follow-up: How did you organize the information that you had available? How did you gather more information? Was your decision/solution effective?

2. Give us an example of a specific problem that you had to solve or a decision that you had to make at work.

Follow-up: What did you consider in solving the problem/making the decision? Who else was involved, and how? What was the end result?

3. Tell us about a specific time when you failed to handle a problem or situation effectively.

Follow-up: Why do you think your solution was ineffective? What, if anything, did you do after you realized the problem was not handled appropriately?

4. Tell us about a specific time when you firmly believed that your point of view was correct, though others within your department or unit did not.

Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?

5. Describe one of the most difficult problems you've faced at work. What made the problem so difficult to resolve?

Follow-up: What happened? Were you able to resolve the problem?

6. Tell me about a specific decision you have had to make within the past year, which you would consider difficult.

Follow-up: Why was the decision so difficult? What did you consider in making the decision? In retrospect, would you have decided differently?

7. Tell me about a specific time when you had to shift your "plan of action" at work.

Follow-up: How did you make the decision to change? What/who influenced you?

8. Tell us about a specific time when there was a decision to be made and appropriate procedures were not in place to make that decision.
Follow-up: What did you do? What did you consider? Who else was involved, and what part did they play? What was the outcome?
9. Give me an example of a time when you were faced with a complex work-related matter, and you needed to decide on the best course of action.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the end result?
10. Tell us about a time when you worked diligently on a project, though the desired results were not occurring.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome? What did you learn from the experience? In hindsight, what could you have done differently?

Delegation

Shares or transfers authority and associated responsibility from an employer or superior to an employee or subordinate.

1. Give us a specific example of a time when you needed to delegate work to your team members.
Follow-up: What did you consider in making these decisions?
2. Tell us about a task or project that you unsuccessfully delegated. What happened?
Follow-up: What was the impact? What would you have done differently?
3. Tell us about a time when you needed to delegate parts of a large project or assignment.
Follow-up: How did you decide which tasks to delegate to each person? What challenges did you face? How did the project or assignment turn out?

Developing Others

Develops and coaches others and constructively reviews the work of others in order to improve and advance the skills, knowledge, and performance levels of direct reports.

1. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to take disciplinary action with one of your direct reports.
Follow-up: What did you do? What challenges, if any, did you face? What was the outcome?
2. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to coach an employee in completing a new task or project.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?
3. Tell us about a time when you needed to create and carry out a developmental plan with one or more of your direct reports who was not performing up to expectations.
Follow-up: What were the components of the developmental plan? What was the timeframe? What was the response? What was the outcome?
4. Tell me about a time in which you needed to provide constructive feedback to an employee who was not meeting performance expectations.
Follow-up: What was the most difficult part of that scenario? How did things turn out?
5. Tell us about a time when you needed to coach or mentor someone to a higher level of performance or to a higher-level position.
Follow-up: Were your efforts successful?

Diversity and Inclusiveness

Respects and values the unique dimension each employee adds to the organization; values and encourages diversity of thought and experience.

1. Tell me about a specific time when a new member of your team needed help acclimating to your department.
Follow-up: How did you go about making him/her feel welcomed and a part of your unit? How was the new member received by your coworkers?

2. Tell me about a time when your team or direct report faced a problem or issue, and they were not offering any ideas to resolve the issue.
Follow-up: What did you do?
3. Tell me about a specific time when members of your work team had difficulty adapting to the differences (e.g., personal, cultural, etc.) of others on the team.
Follow-up: How did you handle the situation?
4. Describe a specific time when you needed the cooperation of many diverse people in order to succeed.
Follow-up: How did your approach vary from one person to the next? What was the most challenging part of that situation? What was the outcome?
5. Tell me about a specific situation in which you worked with a diverse group of individuals to complete an assigned task.
Follow-up: What was your role? What was the result?
6. Tell me about a specific problem you encountered at work that involved others with differing values, ideas, and beliefs.
Follow-up: How did this experience affect your work-related performance?
7. Describe a specific time when you needed to give feedback to an employee who was unaccepting of others.
Follow-up: What happened? What was the outcome?
8. Tell me about a time when a conversation occurred between coworkers (or direct reports) that was offensive to non-participants.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the end result?
9. Tell me about a time when you worked with someone who wasn't familiar with the job or needed to improve their skill set in order to be successful.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome? What did you learn from this situation?
10. Tell me about a time when you worked with a diverse group that had several ideas about how to accomplish a specific project or task.
Follow-up: How did the group decide on which route to take? What was your role within the group?

Influence / Persuading Others

Persuades, encourages, or gains the support of others and causes them to take action.

1. Tell me about a specific time when you needed to make several attempts to receive buy-in to an idea.
2. Tell me about a specific time when you needed to sway others at work to your point of view.
3. Tell me about a recent situation you faced at work in which you needed to get management to accept one of your ideas.
Follow-up: What did you do? Did management accept your idea?
4. Sometimes we believe that we have the best solution to a problem, but we can't convince others of the value. Can you describe a specific time when this happened to you?
5. Tell me about a time when you needed to foster creativity within your work group. What was the specific scenario, and what did you do?
Follow-up: Were your actions well received?
6. Describe a time when you needed to establish credibility for a new procedure or idea that you implemented, which may have been different from the standard approach.
Follow-up: What did you do? Was your approach successful?
7. Tell me about a time when you needed to significantly change the viewpoint of a client, colleague, or subordinate.
Follow-up: What did you do? Was your approach successful? What, if anything, would you have done differently?

Initiative / Achieving Goals

Possesses the ability to focus efforts and energy on successfully achieving standards of excellence in delivery of goals and objectives. Thinks ahead, identifies opportunities, and independently takes action to influence events

where appropriate. Is accountable for meeting objectives to the required standard.

1. Tell me about a specific time when you were tasked with initiating a procedural change.
Follow-up: To whom did you present the changes? What happened?
2. Tell me about a time when none of your supervisors were available to guide or direct you on a particular project or problem.
Follow-up: How did you approach the situation?
3. Tell us about a specific time when you were asked to complete an assignment where there was very little supervision.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a specific time when you needed to assess the viability of a new idea or initiative.
5. Tell me about a time when you identified a problem, and needed to decide whether or not it was worth the effort involved to fix it.
Follow-up: How did you arrive at that decision? What was the impact? In hindsight, would you have made a different decision?
6. Describe a time when your quick response to a problem or situation made a difference. What happened?
7. Tell us about a time when you needed to change the way that your business unit/department/group was operating.
Follow-up: What prompted you to make these changes? What was the outcome?
8. Tell me about a time when you needed to address barriers to full empowerment or continuous improvement at work.

Integrity

Acts ethically and honestly in all business practices and builds professional relationships by promoting mutual trust.

1. Tell me about a time when you had to say “no” to a customer, co-worker, or supervisor because you didn’t think that saying “yes” would be right.
Follow-up: How/why did you think that you were “right”? In hindsight, would you have handled the situation differently?
2. Tell me about a time when you could not meet a commitment to a business partner or coworker.
Follow-up: How did you handle this situation? What was the outcome?
3. Describe a situation in which you received negative feedback from a supervisor, coworker, or business partner.
Follow-up: How did you respond to this feedback? What was the outcome?
4. Give a specific example of a situation in which it was imperative that you maintain confidentiality, yet someone asked you to release the confidential information.
Follow-up: What did you do?
5. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to handle a situation with a coworker that could have been (or was) sensitive or uncomfortable.
Follow-up: How did you handle this situation?
6. Tell me about a specific time when you made a difficult decision that was not well received by either your management or employees.
Follow-up: How did you handle the feedback?
7. Give us an example of a specific time when you needed to deal with a difficult ethical issue.
Follow-up: What did you do? What, if anything, would you have done differently?
8. Tell me about a time when you needed to promote an environment of mutual trust within your department/division.
Follow-up: What did you do? Were your efforts successful?
9. Give me a specific example of a time when you were required to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
Follow-up: Why? What did you do? What was the outcome?

10. Tell me about a specific time when your integrity was challenged.
Follow-up: What did you do?
11. Tell me about a specific situation you faced at work, in which you felt that honesty was inappropriate.
Follow-up: Why? What did you do?
12. Tell me about a specific time when you needed to resolve a tough problem, which challenged fairness or ethical issues.
Follow-up: What was the most difficult part about that scenario? What did you do?
13. Tell me about a time when you had to make a difficult decision at work.
Follow-up: What did you consider before making the decision? What happened?
14. Tell me about a time when you were asked to do something that you felt was unethical.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?
15. Tell me about a time when you needed to decide between taking a professional “loss” and doing what you felt was not right.
Follow-up: What did you consider? What was the most difficult part of that scenario? What was the outcome?

Interpersonal Skills

Skillful in interacting with others. Actively listens and effectively communicates; able to resolve conflict through communication.

1. Tell me about a time when you needed to work with someone who was “difficult.”
Follow-up: How/why was this person difficult? How did you handle this particular situation? How did the relationship progress?
2. Tell me about a time when you needed to work with someone who did not share your ideas.
Follow-up: What challenges did you face? What was the outcome?
3. Describe a specific time when you needed to work with someone who did not like you.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the end result?
4. Tell us about a time when you needed to make an unpopular decision at work.
Follow-up: What did you consider in making that decision? How was this decision communicated? What was the outcome?
5. Tell me about a time when conflict existed between you and a co-worker or supervisor.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?

Leadership

Links vision to goals/objectives, influences others, models the way, and is a source for encouragement. Actively seeks positive change for organization by capitalizing on opportunities.

1. Give me a specific example of a time when you needed to empower your staff to make independent decisions.
Follow-up: What did you do? Were your efforts effective?
2. Tell me about a time when you needed to provide feedback to others regarding their performance.
Follow-up: How did you go about this? What kind of feedback did you provide? How do you think the feedback was received by them?
3. Tell me about a time when you were the leader of a team and your team had all of the expertise.
Follow-up: What did you do? Did you establish credibility with your team?
4. Describe a specific time when you needed to train a new member within your work unit.
Follow-up: What was your approach? What challenges did you face? What was the outcome?
5. Tell me about a specific time when you were in charge of a project and had to enlist the help of others.
Follow-up: What were the circumstances? How did you delegate work?
6. Tell me about a time when you needed to complete a goal or objective though you encountered resistance from others.

Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?

7. Tell me about a time when you needed to take the lead on a team project.

Follow-up: What obstacles did you face?

8. Tell me about a specific time when you were in a leadership role faced with resistance.

Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?

9. Leaders often take unpopular positions on organizational issues. Describe a time when you needed to decide whether to take an unpopular position.

Follow-up: What did you consider? What was the result? What, if anything, would you have changed?

10. Tell me about a time when you were tasked with implementing a policy or a program that would largely impact the organization.

Follow-up: What was the potential impact? What happened?

11. Tell us about a time when you were in a leadership role during an event, meeting, presentation or project, and everything did not go as planned.

Follow-up: How did you handle it? What was the outcome? What did you learn from this experience?

12. Tell me about a time when you were responsible for hiring and orienting a new employee.

Follow-up: Were your efforts successful in helping this employee to adjust?

Leading Through Change

Identifies and addresses the typical questions that employees raise during a change; uses appropriate change strategies to resolve corresponding behaviors and resolve concerns.

1. Tell me about a time when your department was going through long-term changes or working on a long-term project.

Follow-up: What did you do to keep your staff focused?

2. Tell me about a time when a member of your staff did not accept a change that was made within your department or organization.

Follow-up: What did you do? Did the employee make the adjustments necessary to move forward?

Time Management / Organization

Organizes own time effectively, creates own work schedules, prioritizes workload, prepares in advance and sets realistic timescales. Monitors progress towards operational or strategic objectives. Makes sure all activity and resources are used efficiently and effectively.

1. Tell me about a specific time when you had a lot of work to accomplish in a short amount of time.

Follow-up: How did you manage the situation? What was the result?

2. Recall a specific time when you were tasked with managing multiple projects and expected to meet certain deadlines.

Follow-up: Tell me about the most difficult part of that situation. How did you deal with it?

3. Tell me about one of the busiest workdays that you needed to organize.

Follow-up: What was on your agenda? What did you consider in organizing the day's work?

4. Tell me about a time when you needed to take a different approach to resource planning in order to achieve a goal.

5. Tell me about a specific time when a coworker or subordinate was not at work and you had to take on extraduties to help out in his/her absence.

Follow-up: How did you plan your day? How did the day go?

6. We've all had to reschedule a project or plan because of unforeseen circumstances. Tell me about a time when this happened to you.

7. Tell me about a time when you had both large and small projects to complete, within the same timeframe, at work.

Follow-up: How did you go about setting priorities? What challenges did that present? What was the outcome?

8. Tell me about a time when you were unable to finish a task because you did not have enough information or were under-prepared.
Follow-up: What happened? What specific obstacles did you face? What was the outcome?
9. Tell me about a time when a project that you were coordinating stalled.
Follow-up: What happened? Did things get back on track? What was the outcome?
10. Describe a situation that required you to do a number of things at the same time.
11. Give me a specific example of a time when you were unable to complete a project on time.

Problem Solving / Negotiation

Uses generic or ad hoc methods, in an orderly manner, to find solutions to problems.

1. Tell me about a time when you needed to work cooperatively with someone who did not share the same ideas or point of view as you.
Follow-up: What was the most difficult challenge you faced in trying to work with this person? What were the differences in ideas? What was the outcome? What was the long-term impact?
2. Tell me about a time when your organization was facing a challenge, and you were tasked with presenting a solution.
Follow-up: What was the challenge? What were the specific results? What role did others play in the solution?
3. Tell me about a specific problem that you encountered at work.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome? What was the impact of your specific solution?
4. What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision? Give me an example of your approach and how it works.
5. Tell me about a specific time when a problem arose, and your manager or supervisor was unavailable.
Follow-up: What was the nature of the problem? What did you do?
6. Tell me about a time when you worked with a customer who had a problem, and realized that the problem needed to be solved by another office, or by multiple offices.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the end result?
7. Tell me about a time you worked with several individuals who wanted a different outcome than you.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?
8. Tell me about a time when you were working with an individual, and realized that their problem was greater than just the issue they presented.
Follow-up: What did you do? What happened?
9. Tell me about a time when you needed to make a difficult decision at work.
Follow-up: What did you decide? How did you make the decision? What was the outcome?
10. Tell me about a specific time when you worked with an upset customer.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the end result?

Quality

Consistently takes actions to improve work processes, maintains attention to detail, and is committed to high standards of work product.

1. Tell me about a time when you were extremely busy and tasked with delivering a quality product.
Follow-up: What obstacles did you face? What was the outcome?
2. Tell us about a specific time when you were tasked with meeting a quick deadline, and you were expected to deliver high quality output.
Follow-up: How did everything turn out?
3. Describe a specific time when you improved a process at work.
Follow-up: What happened?
4. Tell me about a specific time when you weren't happy with a particular product or type of service that you, or

your department, delivered.

Follow-up: What did you do?

5. Tell me about a specific time when a *client* was not happy with a particular product or type of service that you, or your department, delivered.

6. Tell me about a specific customer issue that you needed to solve.

Follow-up: What was the issue? What did you do?

7. Tell me about a specific task or project that you worked on that required a great deal of attention.

Follow-up: What obstacles did you face? What was the outcome?

Relationship Building

Builds and maintains relationships (internally and with key external groups) that support and improve personal/team effectiveness.

1. At some point or another, we've all encountered working relationships which start out on bad terms. Tell us about a specific time when this happened to you with a colleague, supervisor, or client.

Follow-up: What did you do? Were your efforts effective? Why or why not?

2. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to develop a relationship with someone who you did not personally enjoy working with.

Follow-up: What was so challenging about this scenario? What happened? What were the long-term effects of your efforts?

3. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to build and maintain a working relationship.

Follow-up: What did you do? Were your efforts effective? What were the long-term effects of your efforts?

4. Some level of conflict exists in all work places. Give us a specific example of a conflict that you had with a coworker.

Follow-up: What did you do? Were your efforts effective?

5. Tell us about a specific time when you had difficulty establishing a relationship necessary for task completion.

Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?

6. Tell us about a specific time when you disagreed with your boss or supervisor on a job-related issue.

Follow-up: What did you do? What was the end result?

7. Tell me about a specific time when you anticipated that conflict was going to occur.

Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?

8. Give us a specific example of a time when you needed to build an effective working relationship with an external partner in order to be successful.

9. Describe a specific situation that you encountered in which there was not a trusting relationship with another co-worker.

Follow-up: What did you do? What was the end result?

10. Tell me about a time when you regularly dealt with a difficult customer.

Follow-up: What happened?

11. Describe a specific time when you needed to guide and maintain a successful business relationship.

12. Tell me about a time when you made a decision without including all the necessary players.

Follow-up: What happened? What were the repercussions?

13. Describe a specific time when you were working with another person, and you needed to modify or change your actions.

14. Tell me about a time when you needed to develop a relationship with a customer or customers.
Follow-up: What specifically did you do? Were your efforts effective? What was the long-term impact of your efforts?
15. Tell me about a time when you were involved in a process and you were tasked with being the strategic lead.
16. Tell me about a time when you realized that a manager needed help, but the manager did not know that she/he needed help.
17. Describe a time when you needed to gain and develop trust among colleagues, staff, or constituents.
Follow-up: What did you do? Were your efforts effective? What, if anything, would you have done differently?
18. Sometimes it can be difficult to work across functional boundaries. Tell me about a situation in which you needed to work with individuals from various cross-functional areas.
Follow-up: What obstacles did you face? What was the outcome?
19. Sharing information is critical to effective collaboration. Tell us about a specific time when important information was not shared.
Follow-up: How did this affect efficiency and/or comradery? How did you handle it?
20. Interacting with others can be challenging at times. Tell us about a time when you had difficulty getting along with a business partner (e.g., peer, external vendor, others at work).
Follow-up: What did you do? What happened?

Resourcefulness

Identifies information and materials internally and externally that contribute to the completion of quality work.

1. Tell me about a time when you lacked much of the knowledge or information necessary to complete a task or project.
Follow-up: What did you do? From whom or where did you go for assistance? What was the outcome?
2. Tell me about a time when you were asked to complete a task that required the use of information that was not easily accessible.
Follow-up: What did you do? Did you obtain the information that you needed?
3. Describe a specific situation in which you had to conduct research to complete a task or a project.
4. Tell me about a specific situation in which you did not have time to conduct thorough background research for a project or task.
Follow-up: What happened? What did you learn from this experience?
5. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to develop new resources to gather information.
6. Tell me about a time when you realized that you lacked a skill or set of knowledge that you needed in order to complete a task or a project.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the outcome?

Results-Oriented

Creates an environment that fosters achievement, encourages others to take ownership, and accepts personal accountability for results.

1. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to hold an employee accountable for results.
Follow-up: What obstacles did you face? What happened?

2. Tell me about a time when your department or work group was not meeting established goals.
Follow-up: What did you do? Were the goals achieved?
3. Describe a specific time when you were tasked with meeting a goal, and the actions that you made toward meeting that goal.
Follow-up: What obstacles did you face? What was the end result?
4. Give an example of a time when you needed to decide whether to take a known risk in order to achieve a business goal or objective.
Follow-up: What did you consider? What happened? In retrospect, would you have decided differently?

Strategic Business Focus

Understands and contributes to an organization's short and long-term business strategy.

1. Give an example of a time when you used an informal relationship to accomplish a goal. Describe your thought process.
2. Give an example of a time when you worked with resources outside your department to accomplish an objective. How did this inter-unit collaboration help you better understand your company's business?
3. Describe a project you worked on recently. Explain how your responsibilities as part of the project team helped your department, and/or your company, meet its business goals.
4. Describe a recent project you were involved in. Explain how the outcome of your project work affected the operation of other departments and/or business units.

Stress Tolerance

Appropriately accomplishes tasks with minimal anxiety level in stressful conditions.

1. Tell us about a specific time you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the most challenging part of that situation?
2. Tell me about a particularly stressful situation that you faced at work.
Follow-up: What happened?
3. Describe a time when your team was under a fair amount of stress.
Follow-up: What did you do? Were you successful?
4. Most of us have had times when we've felt overwhelmed with a task or project. Tell me about a time when this happened to you.
Follow-up: What did you do? Were your efforts successful?

Vision

Creates a sense of vision and brings about shared enthusiasm and focus.

1. Describe a time when your employees did not understand the reason for goals and/or objectives that were set by your department or work area.
Follow-up: What did you do? Were your efforts effective?
2. Tell us about a specific time when you needed to enhance your organization's competitiveness.
Follow-up: What did you do? What obstacles did you face? What was the outcome?
3. Describe a time when you needed to make changes due to your external business environment.
Follow-up: How did you come to realize that these changes were needed? What did you consider when deciding which changes to make? What happened?
4. Tell us about a specific time when your organization's vision for the future impacted one or more daily decisions that you needed to make.

Work Ethic

Displays values which contribute to a shared focus, exhibits high level of effort and commitment, is motivated to achieve, and demonstrates responsible behavior.

1. Give us a specific example of a situation in which you were expected to meet a difficult deadline.
Follow-up: How did you respond? What was the outcome?
2. Often, our work environments require that numerous tasks be completed simultaneously, which can be demanding. Tell us about a specific time when this happened to you.
Follow-up: What did you do? What was the end result?

GENERAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why are you interested in the _____ position with UNM?
2. From your current understanding of this position, what is the most critical skill for our selected candidate to have?
3. How do you keep up with developments and trends in your field?
4. Why are you leaving your current employer? How did you reach this decision?
5. Why did you choose this field?
6. What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?
7. If you were offered this role, what would you expect to achieve within the first year?
8. Describe the relationship that you believe should exist between a supervisor and those reporting to him/her.
9. Briefly describe your work experience and how it is relevant to this position.
10. Why have you decided to change careers?
11. Why have you changed jobs frequently?
12. Tell me about the major responsibilities of your role at _____.
13. What qualities do you feel have helped you to be successful in your career? Tell me about a situation that exemplifies these qualities.
14. How do you view your workplace communication style?
Follow Up: Have there been any ramifications from your communication style with coworkers or supervisors?
15. What reservations do you have about working here?

PROBING / FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

1. Can you explain what you meant by....?
2. What steps did you take?
3. What was your role?
4. What happened after that?
5. Who else was involved?
6. Tell me more about your interaction with that person.
7. How did he/she react?
8. How did you handle that?
9. How did you prepare for that?
10. How did you feel when that happened?
11. What was your involvement?
12. Can you tell me why you reacted this way?
13. What was your logic?
14. What was your reasoning?
15. Can you talk me through your thoughts at the time you took that action?

16. What obstacles did you face?
17. How did you resolve that?
18. Lead me through your decision process.
19. What was the outcome?
20. Were you satisfied with the outcome?
21. Looking back, how do you see things now?
22. What, if anything, would you have done differently?
23. What did you learn from that?
24. What did you learn from that experience?

CAREER ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Considering each position that you've held, which one did you enjoy most? Why?
2. Which prior position did you least enjoy? Why?
3. On your last performance evaluation, which three areas were rated as your strongest?
4. Based on your last performance evaluation, tell me two areas that you could improve on.
Follow-up: What, if anything, have you done to improve upon these areas?
5. Tell me about your career goals for the next two to five years.
6. What would your manager from _____ say that your greatest contributions were?
7. Which job accomplishments have provided you with the most personal satisfaction?

Do you have an interview question that is not listed here?

We want to hear from you!
Please submit your interview question to clientsv@unm.edu.

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