



Commonly Asked Questions

Before you begin interviewing, think about these questions and possible responses and discuss them with a career advisor. Conduct mock interviews and be sure you are able to communicate clear, unrehearsed answers to interviewers.

Personal

1. Tell me a little about yourself.
2. What are your hobbies?
3. Describe your personality.
4. What kind of an employee are you?
5. How do you handle criticism? Give an example.
6. Why did you choose to interview with our organization?
7. Describe your ideal job.
8. What can you offer us?
9. What are your greatest strengths/weaknesses?
10. Have you ever failed? What did you learn?
11. Have you done the best work you are capable of?
12. Do you consider yourself a success?
13. Why does this job interest you?
14. Why should we hire you instead of another candidate?
15. Of which three accomplishments are you most proud?
16. Who are your role models? Why?

Education

17. Why did you choose your major?
18. Why did you choose to attend your university?
19. Do you think you received a good education? Why?
20. In which campus activities did you participate?
21. What would you change about your education?
22. Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
23. Where you financially responsible for any portion of your college education?

Experience

24. What have you learned from each of your jobs?
25. Which of your jobs was the least interesting? Why?
26. What is the hardest thing you ever had to do in your job?
27. What job-related skills have you developed?
28. Did you work while going to school? In what positions?
29. Have you ever quit a job? Why?
30. Have you ever done any volunteer work?
31. How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?

Career Goals

32. What are your career goals/objectives?
33. How does this job fit in with your career goals?
34. Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
35. What kind of boss do you prefer?
36. Would you be successful working with a team?
37. Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?
38. What other types of positions are you considering?

39. How do you feel about working in a structured environment?
40. Are you able to work on several assignments at once?
41. How do you feel about working overtime?
42. How do you feel about travel?
43. How do you feel about the possibility of relocating?
44. Are you willing to work flextime?
45. When are you available to start?
46. How long do you plan on staying?
47. Is there anything I have forgotten to ask you?

Your Turn to Ask

1. Please describe the duties of the job for me.
2. What kinds of assignments might I expect in the first six months on the job?
3. Does your company encourage further education?
4. What products (services) are in the development stage?
5. Do you have plans for expansion?
6. Is your company environmentally conscious? How?
7. In what ways is a career with your company better than one of your competitors?
8. Can you tell me why this position is open?
9. What would you like to see the person who fills this position do differently?
10. What qualifications would you expect the successful candidate to possess?
11. What are your immediate goals and priorities for this position?
12. How much freedom would I have to determine my work objectives?
13. What do people like most/least about working here?
14. Do you encourage participation in community or professional activities?
15. What kind of personal characteristics are you looking for?
16. Do you encourage creativity? How?
17. Do you fill positions from the outside or promote from within first?
18. What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?
19. Where does this position fit into the organization's structure?
20. Is there a lot of team/project work?
21. What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you or should I contact you?
22. What do you like best about your job/company?
23. Has there been much turnover in this job area?
24. What is the largest single problem facing your staff (department) now?

Do not ask questions answered in the interview, but show your interest in the job by asking pertinent questions regarding the position and the company.



The 25 Most Popular Behavior-Based Questions

Behavior-based questions show the interviewer how you would react in a specific work related situation. They are looking for actual outcomes so think of situations where you have had a similar situation. Remember they do not have to be work related, but could relate to work in classes or in student activities. If you didn't make the right choice (or the question asks for you to relay a negative outcome), be sure to relate what you learned from the experience.

Tell me about a time when you ...

1. Worked effectively under pressure.
2. Handled a difficult situation with a co-worker.
3. Were creative in solving a problem.
4. Missed an obvious solution to a problem.
5. Were unable to complete a project on time.
6. Persuaded team members to do things your way.
7. Wrote a report that was well received.
8. Anticipated potential problems and developed preventative measures.
9. Had to make an important decision with limited facts.
10. Were forced to make an unpopular decision.
11. Had to adapt to a difficult situation.
12. Were tolerant of an opinion that was different from yours.
13. Were disappointed in your behavior.
14. Used your political savvy to push a program through that you really believed in.
15. Had to deal with an irate customer.
16. Delegated a project effectively.
17. Surmounted a major obstacle.
18. Set your sights too high (or too low.)
19. Prioritized the elements of a complicated project.
20. Got bogged down in the details of a project.
21. Lost (or won) an important contract.
22. Made a bad decision.
23. Had to fire a friend.
24. Hired (or fired) the wrong person.
25. Turned down a good job.