

Common Interview Questions

Open-ended questions

These questions are used by the interviewer to get to know you. You will be expected to give opinions, explanations or detailed information, rather than a yes/no answer.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why did you choose this major/ degree/ profession?
3. What do you know about this company?
4. Why are you interested in this position?
5. What motivates you?
6. What do you see as your greatest strengths? What do you consider your major weaknesses?
7. What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?
8. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years?
9. How has your education and experience prepared you for this position?
10. What does "teamwork" mean to you? Do you prefer working independently or in a team?
11. What did you dislike most about your previous job? Supervisor? Company?
12. What experiences did you gain from your (previous/current) employer? What did you do particularly well in your last job?
13. What is your scope of competence using... (required/desired) computer program?
14. What would your past supervisors or coworkers tell me about your performance?
15. What makes you a good fit for this position?
16. What can you say to convince me to hire you for this position instead of another candidate?
17. What are your salary expectations?

- Practicing interview questions can improve your performance and reduce stress at your next interview.
- Usually, the interviewer will start by asking open-ended questions, then behavioral questions, and finally, situational questions. At the end, they will give you time to ask them any questions that you have.
- Career Services offers one-on-one interview prep sessions. [Book an appointment](#) before your next job interview.

Behavioral questions

The purpose of these questions is to assess how you are likely to perform in the future, based on past performances. You will be expected to provide specific examples that demonstrate your competencies. Pull examples from school, work or volunteering and follow the **STAR** formula to outline the Situation, specific Task, Actions taken, and Result.

Teamwork/collaboration questions

1. Tell me about your most successful team project you worked on. What was your personal contribution?
2. Tell me about a challenging workplace situation that you had to deal with.
3. Describe a time when you had to collaborate with a team member who was not responsive. How did you handle that situation?

Organization/time management questions

4. Describe a situation in which you had to handle a variety of projects simultaneously. How did you stay on top of them? What did you do to manage your time well?
5. Give me an example of a time when your planning led to positive results.
6. Tell me about a time when you worked under a tight deadline.

Flexibility/adaptability/agility questions

7. Tell me about the biggest change you have had to deal with. How did you adapt?
8. Describe a situation when you experienced a changing deadline and how you handled it.
9. Describe how you have been able to apply something you learned from your program to a real-life or situation.
10. Tell me about a project that didn't go according to plan. What corrections did you make and what were the results?

Leadership/initiative questions

11. Describe a time you took on something new and had little or no guidance. How did you handle it?
12. Describe how you discovered a need and met it or an instance in which you developed an idea.
13. Tell me about a time that you took the lead on a project.

Analytical/critical thinking/problem solving questions

14. Describe a time when you demonstrated creative problem solving.
15. Can you tell me about a time when you had to work with a particularly difficult client? How did you handle the situation?
16. Give me an example of a time when you had to analyze information and make a recommendation.
17. Tell me a time when you had to make a decision with limited information in hand.

Communication questions

18. Describe your most successful experience in delivering a presentation or giving a speech.
19. Tell me a time when you influenced someone to agree with your ideas? What did you do to influence them?
20. Describe a time when you explained a complex concept to someone not having a background in your field.

Professionalism/work ethic questions

21. Tell me about a mistake you made in your work. How did you handle it?
22. Tell me about a time that you went above and beyond the call of duty to get things done.
23. Tell me a time a supervisor criticized your work. How did you deal with that?

Attention to detail questions

24. Give me an example of a time when you worked on something where it was crucial to be accurate.
25. Tell me about a time you achieved a goal by following instructions.
26. Describe a time when you handled multiple tasks at a time. How did you ensure accuracy in your work?

- Remember the job expectations and company needs while you form your answers.
- Never be afraid to ask for clarification or pause to collect your thoughts.
- For more help preparing, read up on the different [types of interviews](#) and what to do before, during and after your [job interview](#).

Situational questions

These questions outline a hypothetical situation that may happen in the workplace. You will be expected to propose solutions and explain your approaches.

1. What would you do if you made a mistake that no one else noticed?
2. What would you do if you discovered that one of your co-workers was doing something unethical?
3. How would you handle being unhappy with a particular aspect of your position?
4. What would you do if you were assigned to work closely with a colleague on a project, but you two did not get along well?
5. What would you do if you were working hard on a project and were almost finished when the goals or priorities were changed?
6. You are working on a project with a tight deadline but you find that you are unable to complete your section because your coworkers and your supervisor are unavailable to answer a few key questions. How do you deal with the situation?
7. You have been assigned a major project and are halfway through when you realize that you have made a mistake back in the beginning that required you to start over. How would you handle that while still trying to make your deadline?
8. You are in a meeting. Your manager points out your mistake in front of all your peers. You believe that your manager is wrong in their critique. You feel you are being treated unfairly in front of your team. What would you do in this situation?
9. You are working on an important assignment that is due in a few hours. A client contacts you with an urgent request that will take a few hours to resolve. What would you do?

Questions to ask the interviewer

On a page you take with you to the interview, list some of these and other questions you have that you would like to ask. Asking 3-5 questions at an interview is typically appropriate. Rank them in order of importance in case you run out of time for all of them.

1. What a typical day on the job would look like? What assignments could the new hire expect in the first 6 months?
2. How much autonomy or collaboration is typically associated with this position? Would I be working with other departments?
3. What problems/challenges are associated with the position?
4. How is performance measured? What would you like to say about the new hire's achievements a year from now?
5. What type of initial training is provided (structured/informal/mentoring, etc.)?
6. What does "teamwork" look like in your company? How does the team communicate?
7. How would you describe your ideal employee? What kind of personal characteristics are you looking for?
8. What kinds of employee achievements are recognized by the department/company? How do you celebrate team successes?
9. In what way is a career in this company better than with one of your competitors? Give an example of something that happens here that wouldn't happen anywhere else.
10. What is the next step in the process? When do you expect to make a decision on the successful candidate?
11. Do you have any reservations about my qualifications? Do you have any doubts about my suitability for this job? Can I clarify anything more for you about my skills, education or experience?

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