

Examples of Interview Questions

A number of questions are provided for your use. They have been sourced from a variety of places and most have been adapted to suit the public sector.

1. **Why should we give you the job?**
Capitalise on your strengths and your personal attributes that set you apart from others.
2. **What do you look for in job or career?**
Avoid saying that you are 'looking for a challenge', as interviewers tire of this response. Instead, relate this job to your ongoing career goals.
3. **Where do you see yourself in 5 years / 10 years time?**
4. **What style of management works the best for you?**
5. **How would you handle a conflict within the team?**
6. **Did you ever discipline/counsel anyone? If so, what were the reasons and how did you handle it?**
If you have not had the experience, prepare a response that details how you would go about it and why.
7. **What do you see as the most difficult task in being a supervisor (or manager)?**
8. **How have you helped your work team achieve targets?**
This is your chance to describe in some detail an accomplishment that is relevant to the proposed new job.
9. **How much financial responsibility have you had to account for?**
You can answer this in terms of your budget or head count or the size of the project.
10. **Would you describe a few situations in which your work was criticised?**
Be specific and brief, avoid getting emotional or defensive about it. Take the opportunity to state what you learned from the situation
11. **If I spoke with your previous manager, what would she/he say are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?**
Be honest about this one, but do not emphasise the negative. Your manager will probably want to give you a good send-off. Recount some of the good things you did for him/her.
12. **Can you work under pressure, deadlines, etc.?**
I can handle it. It is a way of life in the business world.
13. **Are you a leader?**
Yes. Give examples
14. **What sort of relationship do you have with other team members?**

This is a very important question, and you can well afford to take your time and answer it in steps.

When talking about your relationships with staff, be prepared to state your philosophy of handling them, particularly when they have performance problems.

With regard to bosses, indicate your keen interest in *understanding your boss' expectations*. You may also want to talk about how you would go about *keeping your boss informed*.

Examples of Interview Questions

Frequently you may find that the interview questions are structured in the form of hypothetical questions. That is, they being “What would you do if...”. Wherever possible reflect on a past situation where you successfully dealt with a similar issue.

If you have never been in a similar situation, let the panel know and draw on your common sense and life experience to formulate your answer. Sometimes it is most appropriate to simply state “I have never been in that situation, but I would consider all of the data, possible solutions and the consequences of my decision before taking action.”

Question categories

General

1. What strengths would you bring to the position?
2. Have you identified any areas in this position where you feel you would need support?
3. What do you see yourself doing in 5 years time?
4. What skills and abilities do you possess which would make you the right person for the job?
5. What have you done that shows initiative and willingness to work?
6. In your own words, what do you think the duties of this position require?
7. What aspects of your job do you consider most crucial?
8. Why do you want to work here?
9. What have you learned from jobs you have held?

Teamwork

1. Do you prefer working with others or by yourself?
2. What do you consider are the components of a good team?
3. How would you handle conflict within a team?
4. How have you helped your current work team achieve targets?
5. Do you prefer to work alone, or as a member of a team?
6. You have been asked to arrange an urgent staff meeting for this afternoon where a new and urgent project is to be discussed? What would you do?
7. Explain your role as a group/team member.
8. Describe a situation where your work or one of your ideas was criticised by a team in which you were working?

Communication

1. Give examples of how you provide customer service.
2. This position requires skill in negotiation. Give examples of negotiation in your current position.
3. Give us an example of a difficult and sensitive situation you faced with a customer and explain how you handled this situation.
4. What types of written work are you capable of completing?

5. What experience have you had in report writing?
6. What communication skills do you consider necessary when working with others on the same task?

Project management

1. What do you know about project work?
2. What knowledge do you have of data collection methods?
3. What knowledge do you have of research methods?
4. How do you organise and plan for major projects?
5. Can you work under pressure?
6. You have been given a project that requires you to interact with different levels within the organisation. How do you do this? What levels are you most comfortable with?

PC Skills

1. Can you tell us what computer programs you can use and give an example of how you have used each one?
2. Can you give us some examples of how you have used spreadsheet packages?
3. Can you tell us what types of documents you can produce on a word processor?
4. What computer skills do you have to aid preparation and delivery of presentations or reports?
5. What training and development do you need in this area and why?

Another Question Bank

1. What is it that attracted you to MDC?
2. What do you see as the main priorities and challenges of this job?
3. How does this job fit in with your longer-term plans and ambitions?
4. If you took the job, where do you see yourself 3-5 years from now?
5. Based on your research, what sort of person do you feel the job requires?
6. If you had to pin down your 3 main strengths, what would they be?
7. How about your weaknesses. What areas do you feel you could be stronger in?
8. How do respond to pressure? Can you give me an example?
9. What about your management style? What is your approach to managing?
10. What motivates you? What things are important to you?
11. How do you cope with stress?
12. What kind of office equipment have you worked with? What can you operate?
13. Can you work under pressure or tight deadlines? Give examples.
14. Do you work well with people? What kind of people do you prefer to work with? What kind of people do you find difficult?