SAMPLE JOB INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Hiring Manager: Choose the questions from the appropriate areas based on the type of position being filled.

PERSONAL INSIGHT

- Tell me about a time when you were bored on-the-job.
  - What did you do to make your job more interesting?
- What is the best way to motivate you?
- In what ways did you take initiative in your last job?
- What kinds of rewards are most satisfying to you?
- What discourages you from wanting to do a good job?
- Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond the “call of duty to get the job done.”
  - Were your efforts recognized?
  - By whom and how?
  - How did that make you feel?
- Give me an example of a time when you took ownership of a situation.
  - What was the result of you stepping up to the challenge?
  - What could have happened if you did not take ownership?
- Describe the best manager you’ve ever worked for.
- Describe the most difficult manager.

ADAPTING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

- Tell me about a situation in which you had to get around a major obstacle to complete a project.
- Tell me about a time you had to work on several projects at once. How did you handle this?
- Describe something you did in your last job that showed your ability to be flexible.
- Under what conditions do you work best? What changes have you experienced in your current position?
- Give me a recent example of a stressful situation on the job. What happened? How did you handle it?

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- What kind of written communication have you done?
- How to you demonstrate to others that you are listening?
- Name one recent success you’ve had in dealing with a customer. How did you accomplish it?
- On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the most interaction), how important was the interaction with others on your last job?
- What kinds of communications were used the most in that organization? (One-on-one meetings, email, voice mail, group meetings, written reports)
- What departments did you interact with?
- Tell me about a difficulty you encountered in working with another department. How did it reach resolution?
- What was the most complex report/presentation you worked on?
- What made it complex or difficult? Walk me through your time line.
- I’d be interested in hearing about a miscommunication you had with a peer and how you solved it.
- I’d like to hear about the most recent time you had to deal with someone who was upset with you.

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

- We all have different ways of doing our work. We also have different communication styles, cultural backgrounds and work experiences. Tell me about a time when you had a disagreement with a coworker or your supervisor and how you handled the situation.
  - Reflecting on the situation, is there something you wish you had done differently?
  - Tell me about a conflict situation, in the workplace, that you handled well.
  - Tell me about a conflict situation, in the workplace, that you did not handle well.
- Tell me about a time when you had to work with a difficult person to accomplish a goal.
- Who are/were your internal customers? Describe a problem you encountered where you saw the situation very differently than the other person.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS**

- What does customer service mean to you?
- Describe a situation where you went out of your way to solve a customer problem.
- How would a customer describe your service? Give me an actual example of something you have done to satisfy a customer’s desire.
- Tell me about a time when you encountered an angry customer.
- Give me an example of a time when you went out of your way to please a customer.
- Tell me about your most rewarding customer service experience.
- Tell me about the most difficult customer service experience you’ve encountered.
- Give me an example of a time when a customer really tried your patience.
  - Probing questions for all of the above: How did you handle the situation?
  - Reflecting on the situation, should you have handled the situation differently?
  - If so, how?

**INFLUENCE/PERSUASION**

- Tell me about a recent situation at work in which you were able to get management to accept one of your ideas.
- Tell me about a decision you have made which affected other departments. How did you alert them?
- What are some recent examples of things you have done to foster creativity in your group?
Tell me about a problem you encountered when the old solutions didn’t work and what you did about it?

Tell me about a major challenge that you have undertaken within the last year. How did you handle it?

What is the most difficult project/program you had to manage?

Describe how you helped develop someone else’s career. What was your role?

What skills do you consider essential in the management of people?

Describe your management style?

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Tell me about a time you had to deal with an irate customer.

We’ve all had situations in which we’ve disagreed with our manager. Tell me about a time this happened to you.

Describe your manager. How would you evaluate your working relationship with him/her?

How would your current team members describe your strengths and development needs?

What skills do you consider essential in the management of people?

Describe your management style.

PLANNING/ORGANIZING/PRIORITY SETTING

How do you keep track of matters requiring your attention?

What do you want out of your career short-range? Long range?

How are you capitalizing on your strengths?

What methods do you use to keep track of your activities and results?

How do you determine priorities in scheduling your time?

Give me an example of a time when you had to do many things at once.

Tell me about a time when a coworker did not report to work and you had to take on extra duties to help out in the absence of the coworker.
  o How did you plan your day?
  o How did the day go?

Have you ever been in a position where you worked for more than one manager?
  o Tell me about a time when you were asked to complete more work that was reasonable during your workday?
  o How did you handle the situation?

PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Do you consider yourself to be a proactive person? Give me an example of a time when you were proactive in solving a small problem before it turned into a major problem.

How have you used creativity to solve a problem? Tell me about a specific instance.
• Tell me about the most frustrating work experience you have ever faced.
  o How did you deal with the situation?
  o What steps did you take to improve the situation?

• Tell me about a time when you encountered a problem and your supervisor was not available to help you.
  o How did you handle the problem?
  o How did that make you feel?

• Walk me through a difficult/complex problem/project you encountered.
  o How did you decide what to do first?
  o What information did you need?
  o What obstacles did you face? Which ones were you able to overcome? Where did you have to ask for help? What did you do?
  o Tell me about a time when you had to shift your plan of attack, How did you make the decision to change? What/who influenced you?

QUALITY OF WORK

• Describe what you do to ensure your work is of top quality?

• How do you define quality?

• Tell me how your peers would rate the quality of your work?

WORK RESULTS

• What are your personal objectives for this year? What have you done to make sure that you attain them?

• We’ve all made decisions that haven’t turned out as we had hoped. Tell me about a time this happened to you.

• Tell me about your last key job assignment. How was success measured? How could you have been more successful?

• What would your manager say your greatest contributions at ______________ were?

• Describe a process or task that you put into place in your current job that has helped your team move forward.

TEAM ORIENTATION

• Give me an example of a time when you worked as part of a team.
  o What was your role?
  o What was your contribution to the team?
  o What difficulties did the team experience?
  o Did all of the team members get along?

• Give me an example of a time when you worked by yourself.
  o What were your accomplishments?
  o What challenges did you encounter?

• Out of the two situations you just described, which situation was most interesting and why?
  o What did you most enjoy and why?
  o What did you least enjoy and why?

• How are you perceived by your team members?

• What do you need from others to operate successfully as a team? Give me an example of a time this worked well for you.
- Tell me about a time when you worked with someone who was not completing his or her share of the work.
  - How did you handle the situation?
  - Did you discuss your concern with your coworker? With your manager? If yes, how did your coworker respond to your concern? What was your manager’s response?

- Tell me about a time when you had to change your behavior to successfully work with others.
  - How did this make you feel?

- How have you built positive, productive relationships with your coworkers? Other departments? Your manager?

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- Tell me about your most important responsibilities in your current /last job.
- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you find most satisfying about your current job? What do you find least satisfying?
- Why are you leaving your current employer? How did you reach this decision?
- Why did you choose this field?
- What achievements would your manager note? Your peers? Your staff?
- What is the ideal job for you?
- What accomplishments have provided you with the most personal satisfaction and career advancement?
- What are your salary aspirations?
- What is the make up of an ideal (your position)?
- How would you evaluate your career to date?
- What qualities do you think have helped you be successful?
  - Tell me about a situation that exemplifies these qualities.
- Tell me about a job you’ve held that most closely matched your skills.
  - What made this job the best fit for you?

CLOSING QUESTIONS THAT CHECK LEVEL OF INTEREST

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how interested are you in this job at this point?
  - What interests you most? Least?
- Why should I offer you the job?
- What can you do for us that someone else cannot do?
- What reservations do you have about working here?’
- How far along are you in the interview process with other organizations?