

Questions Often Asked by the Interviewer

The following section is a compiled list of various questions you might encounter during an interview. Before answering interview questions, it is important to remember that most interviewers will be looking for three things in your response: 1) your answer; 2) how well you can organize your thoughts, and 3) how well you express yourself.

Breaking the Ice

1. The campus looks very busy. How is your semester going?
2. I see you are involved in sports. How is your season going?
3. I have an extra hour and it's my first visit to the area. What should I see?

Personal Assessment

4. Tell me about yourself.
5. What are three strengths you possess related to this position?
6. What is one of your weaknesses?
7. What have you done that shows initiative and willingness to work?
8. Has your work ever been criticized? * How do you react to criticism?
9. How would your best friend describe you?
10. Describe yourself using one-word adjectives. *
11. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
12. What kind of people do you enjoy working with?
13. What types of people rub you the wrong way?
14. What frustrates you? What makes you angry?
15. How do you spend your spare time? What are your hobbies?
16. Tell me about someone who has influenced you personally or professionally. *
17. When you are in a group situation are you the leader, technical expert, creative, responsible one? Provide examples. *
18. Have you had any work experience related to this position?
19. Tell me about the most satisfying job you ever held. The least satisfying.
20. What was most rewarding about your previous job? Most frustrating? *
21. What was your most significant accomplishment in your last position? *
22. What kind of work interests you the most?
23. What were you doing during the period of time not covered in your resume?
24. Tell me about a time you made your mind up too quickly. *
25. Tell me about an experience you had in customer service that went badly and how did you handle it? *
26. Have you ever failed at something? What did you do? *
27. Describe a situation in which you and a co-worker have disagreed. How did you work it out? *
28. Tell me about a time when you took charge as a leader in a work situation without being formally assigned to that role by your boss. *
29. Tell me about a time when you felt you went beyond the call of duty in helping a customer. *
30. Describe what you liked and disliked about how you were managed in previous positions. *
31. Have you ever worked with someone who has had excessive absences? *
32. Have you ever stolen anything from a company? *
33. Tell me about the last time you broke the rules. *
34. What is the funniest thing that has ever happened to you? *
35. What was your most interesting project or job? *
36. Tell me how you increased teamwork among a previous group with whom you worked. *
37. Why are you leaving (or did leave) your present (former) position? *

Education

38. Can you summarize your educational background for me?
39. Why did you decide to attend the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay?
40. Why did you major in _____?
41. Tell me about your grades...overall and grades in your major.
42. What courses did you like the most? The least? Why?
43. Do you feel your grades accurately reflect your academic ability?
44. Describe for me your most rewarding accomplishment since you've started college.
45. Describe your study habits.
46. How did you finance your education?
47. Do you feel you received a good general education?
48. Why did you drop out of school for a year?

49. How do you spend college vacations?
50. What extra-curricular activities are you involved in? What have you gained from these experiences?
51. Do you have plans for furthering your education?
52. If you could start college over, what would you do differently?

Leadership and Supervision

53. Describe your supervisory experience.
54. Have you ever trained a co-worker and what steps did you take? *
55. Every manager has to learn to delegate well. Describe a work situation in which you delegated responsibility successfully. Then tell me about a time when your delegation of responsibility did not work out well. How did you handle that situation? *
56. What kind of boss do you prefer? Tell me about your favorite and least favorite boss.
57. What qualities does a successful (manager, teacher, counselor, etc.) possess?
58. Can you get recommendations from previous employers? Professors?
59. What will your current employer tell me about you? *
60. How would your former supervisors/co-workers describe your performance? *
61. Would your boss be surprised that you are interviewing? *
62. Tell me about a time you have disagreed with your boss. How did you handle it? *

Career Ambitions and Plans

63. Why did you choose this career field?
64. What type of position are you seeking?
65. What are your long-range and short-range goals and objectives? When and why did you establish these goals? How are you preparing to achieve them?
66. What are your career goals for the next 5 years? *
67. What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself in the next five years?
68. List the first 5 things you would accomplish in 2 weeks if you took on this role? *
69. What do you know about opportunities in your field?
70. What are the most important rewards you expect from your career?
71. What would you be giving up in your present job to take our position? *
72. What was the worst career mistake you have ever made and what have you learned from it? *
73. Tell me the position you've held that has been most meaningful to you and why. *
74. What improvements would you have made in your last job? *
75. What kind of challenge are you looking for?
76. What do you think determines a person's progress within a company?
77. How do you determine or evaluate success?
78. How much money do you hope to earn five years from now?

Company Organization

79. Why do you want to work for this organization?
80. What do you know about our organization?
81. What prompted you to apply with our company? *
82. What section (service or product) are you most interested in?
83. Do you prefer large or small organizations? Why?
84. What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization such as ours?
85. In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?
86. Have you ever been a member of a union? Worked with union members?
87. How long would you expect to work here?
88. Are you willing to work overtime?
89. Are you willing to relocate?
90. What type of work environment are you most comfortable with?
91. Why do you think you might like to live in the community in which our organization is located?
92. Why should we hire you instead of any of the other well-qualified candidates? *

Closing

93. What are your salary expectations?
94. When could you start work?
95. Is there anything else I should know about you?
96. Do you have any other questions?

* These questions are taken from the Green Bay Area Chapter, Society for Human Resource Management, November/December 2000

Questions Applicants Might Ask

Remember - research the position and organization to avoid questions you could have found through research!

Job Description/History

1. Can you provide me with a detailed job description?
2. What specific responsibilities would I be expected to carry out? Are there particular requirements or quotas to be met?
3. Is there any flexibility in how this position is defined?
4. May I ask why the position is currently open?
5. Is this a regular, long-standing position, or has it been newly created?
6. What might a typical work day in this job be like?
7. What types of career paths do people typically follow when they leave this position?

Supervision

8. How closely would I be supervised?
9. Who would my immediate supervisor be?
10. With whom would I be working?
11. Is there a clear progression in the amount of responsibility I will be allowed?
12. To what extent will I be working independently or as a team member?

The Department

13. How large is the department?
14. Does the organization have any long range plans for this department?
15. What new projects or ventures are contemplated in the near future?
16. Who makes the final hiring decision for this position?

Organization/Training

17. Is there a training program or orientation program for new employees?
18. I was reading about your training program in your brochure. Can you explain it in greater detail?
19. What is the best way for me to become familiar with your organization's policies?
20. I was reading about ___ in your organization's literature and was interested in learning more. What can you tell me?
21. What is your policy on continuing education? Are employees encouraged to take courses or graduate study?
22. Do employees participate in any professional associations or conferences?
23. What new products or services are planned or anticipated in the near future?
24. How would my performance as an employee be evaluated?

Criteria for Hiring

25. Ideally what kind of associate, trainee, etc. are you looking to hire?
26. Is there any area of my experience that you want to know more about?
27. Is there anything in my resume or background that you feel is problematic? If so I'd like to discuss with you. (This shows self-confidence and forthrightness.)
28. When will I be notified of your decision?

Appropriate Pre-Employment Inquiries

<u>Acceptable</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
Are you over the age of 18? If hired can you furnish proof of age?	Age	What is your date of birth? How old are you?
If hired, can you provide papers that show you're legally able to work in the U.S.?	Citizenship	In what country were you born?
Can you perform all of the duties outlined in the job description?	Physical Condition or Disability	Do you have any physical disabilities? Other questions on general medical condition
Have you ever been convicted of a crime?	Character	Have you ever been arrested?
What languages can you read, speak, write fluently?	Ethnicity or National Origin	What is your native language? What nationality are you?