



University of San Diego

EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Prepare for your employment interview by reviewing the handout on Effective Interviewing. Practice your answers to these typical interview questions; try them aloud to determine how they sound. Be prepared to discuss at least three examples for each question.

Personal Assessment

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths?
- Describe your most significant accomplishment.
- What have you gained from your previous work experience?
- How do you structure your time?
- Why are you interested in this career?
- What have you done that you would consider to be “innovative”?
- What courses did you like most / least? Why?
- If you had your college education to do over again, what would you do differently?
- What would your previous employers / professors cite as your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What kinds of tasks do you find difficult to perform?
- Tell me about a recent mistake that you made. How did you handle it?
- What do you read during your spare time?

Knowledge of the Organization & Position

- Why do you want to work for this organization?
- Why are you entering this profession?
- What do you know about our organization?
- What do you think about the changing trends in this field?
- Tell me about our products and/or services. What did you learn from our web site?
- What would you look for in a candidate if you were hiring for this position?
- Why should we hire you?
- What do you know about our competitors?

Career Plans & Goals

- What are your short-term / long-term career goals?
- Where do you see yourself five years from now?
- What are you doing to prepare yourself for professional advancement?
- Who influenced you most in your career choices? How did this person influence you?
- Are you planning on furthering your education?

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Communication Skills

- What makes communication effective?
- How do you go about understanding others' perspectives?
- What is the best way to address client complaints?
- What approach do you take in communicating with people from other cultures?
- What do you believe makes someone a "good listener"?
- Describe a situation when you had to communicate something unpleasant to a supervisor, professor or leader.
- Tell me about a time when you were able to be flexible with a rigid person.

Teams & Teambuilding

- Tell me about your work in teams. Define teamwork.
- Tell me about a time when you built credibility within a team.
- How would you feel about working on a cross-functional team? [note: a cross-functional team consists of members from different divisions within an organization]
- With what type of people do you work best? What type of people pose more of a challenge for you?
- How do you handle conflict?
- How do you feel about having your compensation or personal success based on team results?
- Describe your leadership style.

Questions for Common Entry-level Positions

- Describe the field you are seeking to enter.
- What makes a person in this position effective?
- Why is this position important to an organization?
- What is the difference between (select appropriate field) sales and marketing? advertising and public relations? accounting and finance? design and quality control engineering? scientific research and clinical practice?
- What makes a good manager?

Scenarios or Case Questions

These types of statements present you with a problematic situation and ask what could be done. The important thing to remember about scenarios is that they typically force you to describe one of three actions: decision making, problem solving, or information processing. Before you answer, make sure that you understand the problem and its parameters. Also, be clear in explaining your approach so as to allow others to see how you make decisions, solve problems or process information.

Example: If you were to design a web site, what would it look like and why?
(Expect follow-up questions.)

Example: If you had the opportunity to run concession stands for the next Super Bowl, what would you do to maximize sales / profits? Explain your assumptions.