

Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

If they want to know who you are and what motivates you...

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. What specific goals, including those related to your occupation, have you established for your life?
3. Give me an example of an important goal which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.
4. What influenced you to choose this career?
5. What do you think it takes to be successful in this career?
6. How do you determine or evaluate success? Give me an example of one of your successful accomplishments.
7. What has been your most rewarding accomplishment?
8. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
9. Describe what you've accomplished toward reaching a recent goal for yourself.
10. What do you expect to be doing in five years?
11. What do you see yourself doing in ten years?
12. What are the most important rewards you expect to gain from your career?
13. How would you define "success" for someone in your chosen career?
14. If you were hiring for this position, what qualities would you look for?
15. How would you describe your leadership skills?
16. What have you accomplished that shows your initiative and willingness to work?
17. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
18. When given an important assignment, how do you approach it?
19. If there were one area you've always wanted to improve upon, what would that be?
20. What kinds of things have you done at school or on the job that were beyond expectations?
21. What sorts of things have you done to become better qualified for your career?
22. Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
23. Give examples of your experiences at school or in a job that were satisfying. Give examples of your experiences that were dissatisfying.
24. What kind of supervisor do you work best for? Provide examples.
25. Describe the characteristics of a successful manager.
26. Describe some projects or ideas (not necessarily your own) that were implemented, or carried out successfully primarily because of your efforts.
27. Have you found any ways to make a job easier or more rewarding or to make yourself more effective?
28. How do you determine priorities in scheduling your time? Give examples.
29. Give me an example of when you were able to meet the personal and professional (or academic) demands in your life yet still maintained a healthy balance.
30. Describe a time when you had to make a difficult choice between your personal and professional (or academic) life.

If they want to know if you've done your homework on the company/opportunity...

1. Tell me what you know about our company.
2. Why did you decide to seek a position in this company?

3. What qualifications do you have that will make you successful in this company?

If they want to know how you handle challenges and stressors...

1. What was the toughest challenge you've ever faced?
2. Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stresses that tested your coping skills.
3. Give me a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree.
4. Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a difficult situation.
5. How would you evaluate your ability to deal with conflict?
6. Have you ever had difficulty with a supervisor or instructor? How did you resolve the conflict?
7. Tell me about a major problem you recently handled. Were you successful in resolving it?
8. What personal weakness has caused you the greatest difficulty in school or on the job?
9. When you have been made aware of, or have discovered for yourself, a problem in your school or work performance, what was your course of action? Describe a situation in which you found that your results were not up to your supervisor's expectations. What happened? What action did you take?
10. Tell me about a difficult situation when it was desirable for you to keep a positive attitude. What did you do?
11. On occasion we are confronted by dishonesty in the workplace or in school. Tell about such an occurrence and how you handled it.
12. Tell about a time when your trustworthiness was challenged. How did you react/respond?
13. Tell of some situations in which you have had to adjust quickly to changes over which you had no control. What was the impact of the change on you?

If they want to know how well you communicate and work with others...

1. Describe a time when you had to use your written communication skills to get an important point across.
2. By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
3. Are you more energized by working with data or by collaborating with other individuals?
4. How would you describe yourself in terms of your ability to work as a member of a team?
5. Some people work best as part of a group -- others prefer the role of individual contributor. How would you describe yourself?
6. Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way?
7. What, in your opinion, are the key ingredients in guiding and maintaining successful business relationships?
8. Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you (or vice versa).
9. Sometimes it's easy to get in "over your head." Describe a situation where you had to request help or assistance on a project or assignment.
10. Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?
11. Tell of a time when you worked with a colleague who was not completing their share of the work. Who, if anyone, did you tell or talk to about it? Did the manager take any steps to correct your colleague? Did you agree or disagree with the manager's actions?
12. Tell of the most difficult customer service experience that you have ever had to handle -- perhaps an angry or irate customer. Be specific and tell what you did and what was the outcome.
13. Give an example of when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. Why was this person difficult? How did you handle that person?
14. Give me a specific example of something you did that helped build enthusiasm in others.

15. Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult person. How did you handle the situation?
16. Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
17. Describe a time when you got co-workers or classmates who dislike each other to work together. How did you accomplish this? What was the outcome?
18. Give me a specific example of a time when a co-worker or classmate criticized your work in front of others. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others?
19. Tell about a time when you built rapport quickly with someone under difficult conditions.
20. Describe a situation where you felt you had not communicated well. How did you correct the situation?
21. Describe a time when you put your needs aside to help a co-worker or classmate understand a task. How did you assist him or her? What was the result?
22. Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What could you have done to prevent it?
23. Recall a situation in which communications were poor. How did you handle it?

If they want to know how you make decisions & solve problems...

1. Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem.
2. Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or guide others to a compromise.
3. What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision?
4. We can sometimes identify a small problem and fix it before it becomes a major problem. Give an example(s) of how you have done this.
5. Recall a time from your work experience when your manager or supervisor was unavailable and a problem arose. What was the nature of the problem? How did you handle that situation? How did that make you feel?
6. Recall a time when you were assigned what you considered to be a complex project. Specifically, what steps did you take to prepare for and finish the project? Were you happy with the outcome? What one step would you have done differently if given the chance?
7. Describe a situation that required a number of things to be done at the same time. How did you handle it? What was the result?
8. Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision, but didn't have all the information you needed.
9. Give me an example of a time you had to make an important decision. How did you make the decision? How does it affect you today?
10. Describe a project or situation that best demonstrates your analytical abilities.
11. Tell me about a time you had to handle multiple responsibilities. How did you organize the work you needed to do?
12. Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your company/class/organization was facing. What was the challenge? What role did others play?
13. Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer or professor. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome?