

BEST PRACTICES: EXAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This set of questions represents values and skillsets that broadly apply to all candidates regardless of the position.

Leadership Values & Expectations

Integrity

Be honest, respectful, and just.

- Describe a time when your integrity was questioned. What did you do?
- Describe a time you were asked to do something that was against your better judgment. How did you handle it?
- Describe an ethical dilemma that you have encountered.
- Describe a time when you committed to something but were unable to keep the commitment.
- If I were to seek feedback from your current employer regarding your integrity, what would I learn?
- Have you ever made a career choice based on your sense of integrity?
- Tell us about a time when you went beyond for somebody else at no gain for you.
- If you were in a situation where a coworker was doing something against policy, what would you do?
- What would you do if someone asked you to do something unethical? How would you handle it?
- Describe a time when you made a mistake at work. How did you deal with the situation and what was the outcome?
- You have found a co-worker's or client's belongings in the courtyard/corridor (communal space). Describe how you would take care of the situation.

Adaptation

Stay open-minded and eager for what is next.

- Describe the most difficult transition you have experienced. How did you make the adjustment?
- Describe two of your direct reports who are most dissimilar. How have you managed/led each one?
- Describe a project you were working on for a client in which the specifications changed. What did you do?

- Describe a situation in which you had to adjust quickly to a change in organizational, department, or team priorities. How did the change affect you?
- Describe how you would grow a relationship with a manager who had a very different work style and schedule.
- People react differently when job demands are constantly changing. How do you react to this?
- Can you provide an example of how you adapted to a new change in legislation, policy or business practice?
- Describe a time when you have lost resources for a project (a team member, reduction in funding). How did you adapt?

Determination

Bear Down.

- Describe a time when you seized an opportunity and ran with it.
- Describe a time when you had to meet a scheduled deadline while your work was being continually disrupted. What caused you the most difficulty and why?
- Describe a team project in which things weren't moving along as well as you had hoped. What did you do?
- Describe your most challenging work assignment to date.
- What drives you to go to work each day?
- Tell me what you do when faced with a difficult problem.
- How do you generally react when you are blocked from achieving something?
- Have you ever witnessed a supervisor who pushed forward in the face of a difficult setback? What did you learn?
- What was one of your biggest disappointments at work? How did you overcome it?
- What do you do when other's resist or reject your ideas or actions?

Exploration

Be insatiably curious.

- How do you come up with ideas?
- How do you encourage creative thinking within your current organization?
- What have you done to further develop your career in the last five years? What do you hope to accomplish in the upcoming five years?
- Tell us about a job that you had that required you to gain a new skillset. How did you approach this learning opportunity?

- Can you tell me about a time during your previous employment when, unsolicited, you suggested a better way to perform a process?
- When you complete a task early, what do you do with your “extra” time?
- Describe a time when were you able to demonstrate initiative.

Inclusion

Harness the power of diversity.

- How do you encourage differing opinions and thoughts?
- What benefits have you seen a diverse team bring to your organization?
- Why do you think inclusion is important?
- How do you create inclusive and welcoming relationships with your clients and colleagues?
- What experience have you had building relationships in a multi-cultural environment?
- Recall an occasion when you had to work with people from different divisions/departments or backgrounds to accomplish a single goal?
- What is your method of communication with students and employees who represent a diverse range of backgrounds?
- What do you think is the most challenging aspect of working/managing in a diverse working environment?
- What have you done to build diversity and inclusion in your teams?
- Tell us about a time when you had to alter your style to work more effectively with a person from a different background.

Compassion

Choose to care.

- Describe a time at work when you helped out a person who needed a boost.
- Describe a time when you worked with a person who was very sensitive. How did you grow that relationship?
- When is the last time you acted as a mentor to a person?
- Describe the last time you jumped in to help someone in need.
- Describe a scenario when you had to demonstrate empathy and listening skills to solve a problem.
- How do you react when faced with a client or colleagues who is upset?

- Give me an example of a time when your compassionate attitude caused a client or colleague to stay positive and calm.
- Give an example of a situation where someone showed compassion to you at work? How did this make you feel?
- Tell me about a time when you were under extreme pressure and remained calm, compassionate, and focused at work.

Job Skills

Learning Orientation

Disposition to approach, manage, and achieve learning intentionally and differently from others.

- Describe your top strengths. How have they helped you acquire the needed skills for a new role or task?
- Describe an individual area of opportunity. How did you identify? How have you improved?
- Describe a time when you had to educate yourself about a topic to make a presentation or complete a new task.
- What skills have you gained from previous work experience?
- What has been the most difficult job related skill that you've had to learn?
- What developmental goal did you set for yourself during the last couple of years? How did you monitor your progress?
- How do you stay current with new developments in your profession?
- If you were promoted tomorrow, do you have a replacement? What would you do to help him or her be prepared?
- Describe your least effective direct report. What were his or her strengths and weaknesses? What did you do to improve his or her performance?
- Describe an effort you undertook to proactively identify your own developmental needs and areas of opportunities.
- Describe the career path you have set for yourself. What have done to achieve your goal?

Communication

Shares information with others in a professional and compassionate manner.

- How would you go about explaining a complex idea/problem to a client who was already frustrated?

- How would you explain a complicated technical problem to a colleague with less technical understanding?
- What feedback have you received regarding your communication style?
- What did you do in your last position to ensure information was distributed appropriately?
- How do you ensure you are communicating clearly with your leaders, peers, and subordinates?
- How would you overcome difficulty with a non-communicative supervisor?
- How can you tell whether your message has been clearly received?
- Describe a time when a miscommunication caused an issue for you.
- Describe a time you had to communicate under difficult circumstances with an external or internal stakeholder.
- How do you ensure that your team is aware of the strategic direction and vision of the organization?

Leadership

Develops self and others in order to deliver products and services with greater efficiency.

- How would you describe your leadership style?
- What values are most important to you as a leader?
- How would you handle it if your team resisted a new policy or idea you introduced?
- What value should a leader possess?
- Give us an example of a great leader and then explain why you emulate them.
- How do you balance the needs of your leadership with the needs of your reports?
- What percentage of your time do you spend developing your employees? How do you ensure your employees are being developed to their fullest?
- A new policy is to be implemented company wide. You do not agree with this policy. How do you discuss this policy with your staff?
- Describe an effort you undertook to proactively identify your own developmental needs and pursue growth opportunities.
- Gaining commitment to a new vision can be very challenging. Describe a time you were successful in gaining the commitment of others in your organization to a new vision. Why was it successful?

Management

Knows how to organize, motivate, and coach employees and related activities.

- How do you describe your management style?
- How do you monitor the performance of your employees?
- Are you able to build consensus? Provide an example.
- How do you recognize the achievement of others?
- How frequently do you provide feedback and development to your staff? Please elaborate.
- What do you do differently as a seasoned manager than you did earlier in your management career?
- Describe a time when an employee thought they were ready to be promoted and you disagreed. What did you do?
- Describe the career path you have set for yourself. What have done to achieve your goal?
- Describe a time when your coaching of an employee was effective because of the constructive feedback you provided.
- Describe your least effective direct report. What were his or her strengths and areas of improvement (weaknesses)? What did you do to improve his or her performance?

Teamwork

Collaborates within a group to achieve a common goal.

- If you see a colleague struggling with their workload (or are overwhelmed), how would you approach the situation?
- How will you create opportunities to collaborate with units beyond your own?
- How did you collaborate in your previous institution across disciplines or units?
- Tell us about the most successful team you have been a part of and your contributions to that team.
- Tell us about a dysfunctional team you have been a part of and in retrospect what would you change in regards to your contribution(s) to that team?
- Building rapport is sometimes a very challenging thing to do. Describe a time when you were able to build rapport with someone at work, even under difficult circumstances.
- What is the role you play as a member of a team?
- Tell me about a time you worked on a cross-functional team. How did you manage challenges as they arose?
- A project is brought to a lull due to a co-workers lack of productivity. What are your next steps?
- Tell us how you demonstrate the qualities of a good team player.

- What makes a team effective? How does an effective team make an impact on the organization?

Creativity/Innovation

Uses imagination or original ideas to produce exceptional work or solve problems.

- You are given the task of coming up with a new vision for your college? What are your next steps?
- How would you create an environment that promotes ideas/innovation from team members?
- Describe a technique you use to foster creative thinking?
- What are the benefits of fostering creativity in an organization?
- What are the roadblocks to innovation?
- Given an example of a recent innovation that you are familiar with. How and why did it inspire you?
- How you would encourage creativity or innovation within your team/organization?
- How would harness the power of your team's creativity to create sustainable change?