

SAMPLE Behavioral Interview Questions

by Competency

ADAPTABILITY

- Tell me about a situation in which you have had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you had to adjust to a classmate's or colleague's working style in order to complete a project or achieve your objectives.
- How was your transition from high school to college? Did you face any particular problems? How did you handle them?

ANALYTICAL SKILLS / PROBLEM SOLVING

- Describe the project or situation that best demonstrates your analytical abilities. What was your role?
- Tell me about a time when you had to analyze information and make a recommendation. To whom did you make the recommendation? What was your reasoning? What kind of thought process did you go through? Why? Was the recommendation accepted? If not, why?
- Tell me about a situation where you had to solve a difficult problem. What did you do? What was your thought process? What was the outcome? What do you wish you had done differently?
- What steps do you follow to study a problem before making a decision? Why?

COMMUNICATION

- Tell me about a recent successful experience in making a speech or presentation? How did you prepare? What obstacles did you face? How did you handle them?
- Have you ever had to "sell" an idea to your classmates or co-workers? How did you do it? Did they accept your idea?
- 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). How did you handle the situation? What obstacles or difficulties did you face? How did you deal with them?
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your written communication skills in order to get an important point across.

CREATIVITY

- When was the last time you thought "outside the box" and how did you do it? Why?
- Tell me about a problem that you've solved in a unique or unusual way. What was the outcome? Were you happy or satisfied with it?
- Give an example of when someone brought you a new idea that was unusual. What did you do?

DECISION MAKING

- Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision without all the information you needed. How did you handle it? Why? Were you happy with the outcome?
- Give me an example of a time when you had to be quick in coming to a decision. What obstacles did you face? What did you do?
- What is the most difficult decision you've had to make? How did you arrive at your decision? What was the result?

GOAL SETTING

- Give me an example of an important goal which you have set and tell me how you reached it. What steps did you take? What obstacles did you encounter? How did you overcome the obstacles?
- Tell me about a goal that you set that you did not reach. What steps did you take? What obstacles did you encounter? How did it make you feel?

INITIATIVE

- Describe a project or idea (not necessarily your own) that was implemented primarily because of your efforts. What was your role? What was the outcome?
- Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do? What was the result? What do you wish you had done differently?
- Tell me about a project you initiated. What did you do? Why? What was the outcome? Were you happy with the result?
- Tell me about a time when your initiative caused a change to occur.
- What was the best idea you came up with during your professional or college career? How did you apply it?

INTEGRITY/HONESTY

- Discuss a time when your integrity was challenged. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you experienced a loss for doing what is right. How did you react?
- Tell me about a business situation when you felt honesty was inappropriate. Why? What did you do?
- Give a specific example of a policy you conformed to with which you did not agree. Why?

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Give an example of when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. How/why was this person difficult? How did you handle it? How did the relationship progress?
- Describe a situation where you found yourself dealing with someone who didn't like you. How did you handle it?
- Describe a recent unpopular decision you made. How was it received? How did you handle it?
- What, in your opinion, are the key ingredients in guiding and maintaining successful business relationships? Give me examples of how you have made these work for you.
- 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). How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about a time when you had to work on a team with someone you did not get along with. What happened?
- Describe a situation where you had a conflict with another individual, and how you dealt with it. What was the outcome? How did you feel about it?

LEADERSHIP

- Tell me about a team project when you had to take the lead or take charge of the project? What did you do? How did you do it? What was the result?
- Describe a leadership role of yours. Why did you commit your time to it? How did you feel about it?
- What is the toughest group that you have had to get cooperation from? What were the obstacles? How did you handle the situation? What were the reactions of the group members? What was the end result?

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION / TIME MANAGEMENT

- Describe a situation that required you to do a number of things at the same time. How did you handle it? What was the result?
- How do you prioritize projects and tasks when scheduling your time? Give me some examples.
- Tell me about a project that you planned. How did you organize and schedule the tasks? Tell me about your action plan.

TEAMWORK

- Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with a classmate or colleague who was not doing their share of the work. How did you handle it?
- Describe a situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise or help others to compromise. What was your role? What steps did you take? What was the result?
- Tell me about a time when you had to work on a team that did not get along. What happened? What role did you take? What was the result?

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Additional Sample Behavioral Interview Questions Asked by Employers

LEADERSHIP

- Give an example of your ability to build motivation in your co-workers, classmates, and even if on a volunteer committee.
- What is the toughest group that you have had to get cooperation from? Describe how you handled it. What was the outcome?
- Have you ever been a member of a group where two of the members did not work well together? What did you do to get them to do so?

MOTIVATION

- Give an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty.
- Tell me about an important goal that you set in the past. Were you successful? Why?
- Describe a situation when you were able to have a positive influence on the actions of others.
- How would you define "success" for someone in your chosen career?

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

- What have you done in order to be effective with your organization and planning?
- How do you schedule your time? Set priorities? How do you handle doing twenty things at once?
- What do you do when your time schedule or project plan is upset by unforeseen circumstances? Give an example.
- Describe how you develop a project team's goals and project plan?

DECISION-MAKING

- Give an example of a time when you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- What was your most difficult decision in the last 6 months? What made it difficult?
- What kind of decisions do you make rapidly? What kind takes more time? Give examples.

COMMUNICATION

- Tell me about a situation when you had to speak up (be assertive) in order to get a point across that was important to you.
- Describe the most significant written document, report or presentation you developed.
- 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.
- Have you had to "sell" an idea to your co-workers, classmates or group? How did you do it? Did they "buy" it?

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Describe a situation in which you were able to effectively "read" another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their needs and values.
- What have you done in past to contribute toward a teamwork environment?
- Describe a recent unpopular decision you made and what the result was.
- Tell me about the most difficult or frustrating individual that you've ever had to work with, and how you managed to work with them.

INITIATIVE

- Give me an example of when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Give me examples of projects/tasks you started on your own.
- Give instances where you anticipated problems and influenced a new direction.

TEAMWORK

- Describe the types of teams you've been involved with. What were your roles?
- Describe a team experience you found rewarding.
- Describe a team experience you found disappointing. What would you have done to prevent this?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS – VARIOUS COMPETENCY AREAS:

- Sometimes it can be frustrating and trying to get information from other people so that you can solve a problem. Please describe a situation you've had like this. What did you do? (Teamwork/Collaboration)
- Sometimes we have to work under new policies we don't agree with. Tell me about the last time you disagreed with a policy or procedure instituted by senior management. Why did you disagree? What did you do? (Adaptability)
- Tell me about a time when you were able to respond to an internal/external customer's request in a shorter period of time than was expected. Contrast that with a time when you failed to meet an internal/external time to satisfy a customer totally. (Customer Service Orientation)
- There aren't enough hours in the day to ensure that every customer is totally satisfied. Give me a recent example of when you didn't have the time to satisfy a customer totally. (Customer Service Orientation)
- At one time or another we've all forgotten to do something important for a client. Tell me about a time this happened to you. What did you forget? Why? What happened? (Planning/Organizing/Work Management)
- Tell me about a recent business problem you solved. How did you utilize organizational structure (policies, systems, etc.) to solve the problem? (Organizational Awareness)
- Sometimes you just have to disregard existing organizational policies to get something done. Tell me about a time when you knowingly disregarded an organizational policy. Why did you choose to disregard the policy? What happened? (One of my favorite's, Organizational Awareness)
- In order to keep a customer satisfied, sometimes you have to make a commitment that may not be realistic. Tell me about a time your organization was unable to keep a commitment you made. What happened? (Organizational Awareness)
- Tell me about a time when your work was closely supervised. How satisfied were you with that and why? (Motivational Fit, Independence)