

Sample Interview Questions

Initiative

What aspects of this position appeal the most to you?

What ways have you found to make your job easier or more interesting?

How much information do you need to get started on a new project or assignment?

Give me an example of a project you were responsible for in a previous job. How did you handle it?

Stress

In your last job, when did you feel pressured? Why?

In a past job, what was most likely to create stress for you? (i.e. tough deadline, juggling priorities, resolving conflict, etc.) How did you handle it?

What happens to your work when you begin feeling pressured? How do you know stress is affecting your work?

What do you think would be the most stressful aspects of this job for you? Why?

What have you done on or off the job to alleviate job stress?

Motivation

Why did you choose this profession? What rewards does it give you?

Of all your past work experiences, which were the most meaningful?

What do you need from an employer/organization to feel motivated?

What do you need from a supervisor to feel motivated?

Have you ever worked for or with someone who was highly motivated? In what ways are you like that person? Different?

What is your definition of success? How do you go about achieving that goal?

Goal Orientation

Please describe how you set and measure your work goals?

Describe which job and which supervisor got the most out of your potential. What made that situation productive?

Of your recent jobs, which one required the fastest actions or decisions? How did you feel in those situations? Please describe one.

Attendance/Punctuality

In your last few jobs, what obstacles have you had to overcome to get to work on time?

What would your last supervisor or manager say about your attendance or punctuality?

Creativity and Innovation

Please tell me a great idea you have seen in your field recently. Why was it unique?

If you could change one inefficient thing at your current job, what would it be?

What is the most creative thing you have done in a previous job/position?

Problem Solving/Analytical Skills

What information or technical support has helped you succeed on the job (i.e. standardized forms, procedures, goals, deadlines, etc.)? Which have you created on your own to make things more efficient?

What kind of decisions did you have authority over? Which ones did you have to check with your supervisor before making?

Give me an example of a difficult decision you had to make at a previous job? How did you solve it?

What has been a recurring problem, which you would have liked to solve in your present job – but haven't yet? If given the opportunity and/or authority, how would you go about solving it?

Career Ambitions

What are you looking for in a job/position that you haven't had before? What would make you want to stay in a job/position?

A year from now, what would you see yourself doing on a typical day if you got this job?

What do you consider your three greatest career achievements?

Ability to Learn

What would you expect from us to get you oriented or trained?

How soon could you learn this job well enough to become productive and valuable to us?

What's the fastest you have learned something for a new job? What did you do to learn on company time? On your own time?

Dependability

What did you expect of yourself in your last job? In what ways did it differ from what your supervisor expected of you?

What do you think an employee owes his/her employer/company?

What is an example of something you've done that showed your most excellent performance? Be specific.

Give me an example of a time when a supervisor placed excessive demands on you. What did you do?

If you were a supervisor here or in your past job, what would you require of your employees? Why?

Flexibility

Have you worked in an organization, which changed its policies or procedures frequently? How did you deal with that?

Have you ever had to make a decision before you had all the data you wanted? Give me an example.

What did you do?

Has a policy or directive come down with which you really disagreed? What was it? What did you do?

Give me an example of a time when you were given tasks to accomplish without advance warning.

Organization, Attention to Detail and Time Usage

Describe a busy day at your last job. How do you organize a day like that?

How do you keep track of your own paperwork, schedules, etc.?

How do you decide what you should work on next?

Do you like to juggle a lot of activities at once or do them one at a time?

Where do you waste most of your time (what you do)?

Describe a way you have improved the organization of a system or task at your last/present job?

Interpersonal Communication Skills

When you have started new jobs, how have you established good relationships with your new co-workers? With faculty or administration?

Give me an example of the kind of co-worker whom you find difficult to communicate with. Why?

What sorts of things do you feel are important for an employee to share with a manager? And vice versa?

What does the "open door" policy mean to you? Do you think it works?

What kind of performance feedback do you want and how often would you like it?

Conflict

When (customers, co-workers, etc.) get angry with you how do you usually react?

When you have been criticized at work, how have you reacted? Who has criticized your work in a way you found comfortable? When have you felt over-criticized?

What kinds of disagreements are you able to handle easily? Which have you been involved in which were upsetting or difficult for you?

Have you ever had a situation when you found it necessary to confront someone at work? How did you handle it?

What should a manager do to minimize conflict at work? How much should he/she get involved in solving it? What if you were involved in the conflict?

Cooperation

In which of your past positions have you found it easiest to "buy in" to the management philosophy and objectives? The hardest?

Give me an example of a time you had to take the lead with your work group to get a task done. How did you get cooperation?

How do you get cooperation from other departments? (i.e. business office, faculty, financial aid, etc.)

Give me an example.

Would you rather work on a team or independently?

What do you require from a supervisor?

Other Questions

What do you consider your strongest abilities or talents for the position?

What do you consider your weakest abilities for the position?