



Career Services Center

Behavioral Based Interview Questions by Competency Area

Teamwork/Cooperation/Relationship Building

- Give me a specific example of when you had to gain the cooperation of others, and what challenges you faced. What was the outcome? What was the long-term impact on your ability to work with this person?
- Please give me your best example of working cooperatively as a team member to accomplish an important goal. What was the goal or objective? What was your role in achieving this objective?
- Tell me about a time when your coworkers gave you feedback about your actions. How did you respond? What changes did you make?
- Describe a project you were responsible for that required a lot of interaction with others over a long time period.
- How have you recognized and rewarded a team player in the past?
- Describe a challenge you had in your life when someone else's help was very important to you.
- What, in your opinion, are the key ingredients in building and maintaining successful business relationships? Give me examples of how you've made these factors work for you.
- Describe a time when you got co-workers or classmates who disliked each other to work together. How did you accomplish this? What was the outcome?

Customer Service

- Provide an example of a time when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem and what was the outcome? How would you assess your role in defusing the situation? What might you have done differently?
- Give me an example of when you initiated a change in process or operations in response to customer feedback.
- Tell me about a marketing/information initiative you developed. How did it meet customer need(s)?

Commitment to Quality Improvement

- Tell me about a suggestion you made to improve the way job processes/operations worked. What was the result?
- Give me an example when you initiated a change in process or operations.
- In your last job, what problems did you identify that had previously been overlooked? Were changes made and were they well accepted?
- Describe an improvement you have implemented at work. What were the steps you used to implement this?

Creativity/Innovation

- Describe the most significant or creative idea that you developed/implemented.
- Describe a time when you came up with an innovative solution/idea/ to a challenge your company or class was facing. What was the challenge? What roles did others play?
- Tell me about a time when you created a new process/program that was risky. What was the situation?
- Can you give me an example of how you have been creative in completing your responsibilities?
- Can you think of a situation where innovation was required at work? What did you do in this situation?

Flexibility

- By providing examples, demonstrate that you can adapt to a variety of people, situations and/or environments.
- What do you do when priorities change quickly? Give me one example of when this happened.
- Tell me about a decision you made while under a lot of pressure.
- Provide an example of a time when a decision was needed and procedures were not in place? Describe the outcome.
- When was the last time you felt pressure on a job? How did the situation come about? How did you react? What effect, if any, did this have on your other responsibilities?

Continuous Learning/Development

- Describe a decision you made or a situation that you would have handled differently if you had to do it over again.
- When you have been made aware of a problem in your work performance, what was your course of action?
- Tell me about a time when your supervisor/co-workers gave you feedback about your work/actions. What did you learn about yourself? **Make sure positive as well as negative feedback example given.*
- Tell me about a job that you had which required you to learn new things.
- Tell me about a recent experience that you would describe as a real learning experience. What did you learn.
- Describe a time when you were asked to finish a difficult assignment even though the odds were against it/you.
- On your resume you mentioned that you attended _____ training program. Please describe the training program and your reason for attending. How have you applied what you learned to your current job?

Leadership/Initiative

- What are 3 leadership qualities you think are critical. How have you demonstrated these qualities?
- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to convince someone to approach things your way.
- Tell me about a time when you had to take a risk.
- Tell me about your efforts to "sell" a new idea to your supervisor.
- Describe a leadership situation that you would handle differently if you had it to do over again.
- What one experience proved to you that you would be a capable manager?
- Tell me about a time when you were able to provide a co-worker with recognition for the work they performed.
- Describe a time when you sought out additional responsibility and went beyond what was required of you.
- Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do?

Mutual Respect

- Tell me about a time when you had to resolve a difference of opinion with a co-worker/customer/supervisor.
- Tell me about a time when you needed to give feedback to a sensitive/emotional employee. Was the outcome?
- Describe the way you handled a problem involving those with differing values, ideas and beliefs.

Interpersonal Skills

- Give me an example of a time when you had to address an angry customer. What was the problem and outcome?
- Tell me about the most difficult challenge you faced in trying to work cooperatively with someone who did not share the same ideas. What was your role in achieving the work objective? What was the long-term impact on your ability to get things done while working with this person?
- Describe a work situation that required you to really listen and display compassion to a co-worker/employee who was telling you about a personal/sensitive situation.
- Describe the way you handled a specific problem involving people in your last job.

Sensitivity to Diversity

- Tell me about a time when you had to adapt to a wide variety of people by understanding their perspective.
- What have you done to further your knowledge about diversity? How have you demonstrated your learning?
- Can you recall a time when you gave feedback to a co-worker who was unaccepting of others?
- How have you handled situations in which you could not understand a customer's strong accent?
- Tell me about a time that you successfully adapted to a culturally different environment.
- How have you taken responsibility/accountability for an action that may have been offensive to the recipient?
- How have you reacted to conversations between co-workers that were clearly offensive to non-participants?
- Give examples of when your values and beliefs impacted your relationships with your co-workers.
- How have you made your voice heard in a predominantly male or female-dominated environment?
- What have you done to make another person feel comfortable in an environment that was uncomfortable with their presence?

Honesty/Equality

- Tell me about a specific time when you had to handle a tough problem which challenged fairness or ethical issues.
- Tell me about a tough decision you made. What steps, thought processes, and considerations did you take to make an objective decision?

Conflict Resolution Skills

- Describe a time when you successfully communicated with another person that did not value your perspective.
- Tell me about a time when you and your supervisor disagreed but you still found a way to convey your point.
- Describe a time when you facilitated a creative solution to a problem between employees.
- Describe a time when you took accountability for a conflict and initiated contact with those involved to explain your actions.

Positive Attitude

- What aspects of your last job gave you the most satisfaction? Why?
- What have you done in your last job that makes you feel proud?
- Describe a time when you set a positive example for others. What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you needed to address an employee's attitude.

Planning/Organization/Prioritizing/Time Management

- Give me a specific example of a time when you did not meet a deadline. How did you handle it?
- Please give me an example of when you had to work on multiple projects and how you managed them?
- Describe the system you use for keeping track of multiple projects. How do you track your progress so that you can meet deadlines?
- Of your current assignments, which required the greatest amount of effort in planning/organization? How did you accomplish this assignment? How would you assess your effectiveness?

Decision Making/Problem Solving Ability

- Tell me about a decision you made but wish you had done differently.
- Describe an experience when you had limited time to make a difficult decision. What was the decision & outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you had to make an unpopular decision.
- Describe a time recently when you had to rely on common sense.
- 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?

Staff Supervision and Development

- Give me an example of a time when you helped a staff member accept change and move forward.
- Tell me about a time when you had to take disciplinary action with someone you supervised.
- Tell me about a time when you had to tell a staff member that you were dissatisfied with his or her work.
- Describe a time when you had to handle a highly emotional employee.
- Discuss a work situation in which you felt you successfully directed the work of others.
- Describe a time when your department was going through changes. How did you keep staff focused and motivated?
- Give me an example of how you have helped improve the abilities/success of those around you?
- Tell me about a time when you needed to have co-workers working on a project who normally have different work styles/ideas. How did you pull them together?
- Tell me about a time when you needed to delegate parts of a large assignment. How did you decide whom to distribute them to? What problems occurred? What was the outcome?
- Give me an example of how you've empowered your staff to make independent decisions. Describe the expectations you create for staff. What factors do you consider in setting/communicating expectations?
- What have you done to support diversity in your unit/office?