

Frequently Asked Interview Questions:

File: Career Advice/Frequently Asked Questions

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File #: 61700

► General Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Tell me something about yourself I wouldn't know by reading your resume.
3. Why do you want to work here?
4. What do you want out of your next job?
5. What are your salary goals and expectations?
6. What new skills do you bring to the job that internal candidates might not offer?
7. What would you like to accomplish that you did not accomplish in your last job?
8. What have you learned about our company from employees, customers or others?
9. Why should I hire you?
10. What brings you to this point in your career?
11. Why are you ready to leave your current job?
12. What is your motivation to do this kind of work?
13. What interests you least about this job?
14. What interests you most about this job?
15. What are your impressions about our company and its reputation?
16. We have a number of applicants interviewing for this position. Why should we take a closer look at you?
17. Prove to me that your interest is sincere.
18. How have your career motivations changed over the past years?

► Diligence and Professionalism

19. Tell me about your most difficult work or personal experience.
20. Give me an example of how you completed a project despite obstacles.
21. Give me an example of your determination.
22. Describe a time when you tackled a tough or unpopular assignment.
23. Would your current boss describe you as the person who goes the extra mile?
24. Tell me about a time when you didn't perform to expectations.
25. How do you handle constructive criticism of your work?
26. Are you concept or task oriented?
27. What would your colleagues tell me about your attention to detail?
28. How do you manage your time and meet deadlines?
29. Tell me about a time when you had to extend a deadline.
30. What personal skill or work habit have you struggled to improve?
31. How do you manage stress in your daily routine?
32. How do you regroup when things have not gone as planned?
33. How do you prioritize or juggle in your current position?
34. Describe a professional skill you have performed in your current job.
35. When have your skills in diplomacy been put to a test?
36. What were the most rewarding aspects of your previous job?
37. What has frustrated you about your current or previous job?
38. Describe your ideal job.
39. What are the limitations of your current job?
40. What do you wish to achieve or develop in your next position?
41. What interests you most about this job?
42. What interests you least about this job?

Frequently Asked Interview Questions:

► Diligence and Professionalism [cont]

43. What concerns you most about performing this job?
44. Considering your background, what are your weaknesses with regard to this job?
45. How did the realities differ from your perceptions of your last job?
46. Can you travel or work extended hours when called upon?
47. Do you like continuity or frequent change in your position?
48. What aspects of the job are you the most confident in?
49. What skills do you have that make you a square peg in a square hole?
50. How would you improve your current job?
51. What makes you qualified for this job?
52. What work setting makes you most comfortable?
53. Tell me about aspects of your current position that you'd prefer not to repeat.

► Accomplishments

54. Tell me a contribution you have made to a team effort.
55. Tell me a special contribution you have made to an employer.
56. Give me an example of a time you delivered more than was expected of you.
57. What accomplishment(s) are your greatest source of pride?
58. What situations do your colleagues rely on you to handle?
59. Tell me about a goal you were able to support through one or more of your actions.
60. Tell me about a measurable outcome of one of your efforts.
61. Describe an ongoing problem that you were able to overcome.
62. Tell me about a major accomplishment.
63. If I were to hire you today, what would you accomplish first?
64. Which of your accomplishments was the most difficult to achieve?
65. Tell me about a time you saved money for your employer.
66. What is your greatest achievement to date?
67. Tell me your most significant accomplishment that required discipline.
68. Tell me about a project you completed ahead of schedule.
69. Tell me about a person/group you had to work with to achieve something important.
70. Tell me about an organization outside work that benefited from your participation.
71. What would your friends tell me about you?

► Cultural Fit

72. What would you tell me about your friends?
73. Tell me about your relationship with your previous boss.
74. Describe your working relationship with your previous bosses.
75. Describe your working relationship with your colleagues.
76. Tell me about a working environment that is ineffective for you.
77. What situations excite and motivate you?
78. Tell me about a situation at work that frustrated you.
79. Tell me about a problem you had with one of your work associates.
80. Can we check all of your references?
81. Why are there certain supervisors we can't talk to?
82. What would your last boss want to change about your work habits?
83. Are you most productive working alone or in a group?
84. Tell me about a situation in which it was difficult to remain objective.
85. What is your personality beyond your corporate image?

Frequently Asked Interview Questions:

► Cultural Fit [cont]

86. What environments allow you to be especially effective?
87. How would your last employer describe your work habits and ethics?
88. Did your customers and primary contacts enjoy working with you?
89. Will you complement this department?
90. Tell me something you recently learned from a book.
91. Tell me about a work group you really enjoyed.
92. Describe a time when you had to assist a coworker.

► Personal and Management Style

93. Tell me about your least favorite manager or professor.
94. What type of management style do you think is particularly effective?
95. Tell me about your personal management style.
96. What are some of the things that your previous manager did that you disliked?
97. How do you organize and plan for major projects?
98. Tell me about a time you had to work under immense pressure.
99. How do you handle tension with your boss?
100. Tell me about a time you had to defend an idea with your boss.
101. Tell me about a learning experience that affected your personal management style.
102. What personal characteristics add to your effectiveness?
103. Tell me about an effective manager or teacher you have known.
104. What type of people do you work with most effectively?
105. In your last job, what projects did you give priority?
106. Describe a time when you acted on someone's suggestion.
107. What aspect of your management style would you like to change?
108. Have you ever felt defensive around your boss or peers?
109. Have you patterned your management style around anyone in particular?
110. Describe a leader you admire.

► Passion for the Passion

110. Describe a leader you admire.
111. Why do you want this job?
112. Why do you want to work for this company?
113. What excites you about this industry?
114. Describe your competition as you see it.
115. Tell me what you know about our company.
116. What are your distinct advantages in this industry?
117. What are your major interests in our company?
118. Why would you be especially good working in this business?
119. What would you do differently if you ran this company?
120. How can we hold your interest over the long haul?
121. Where do you want to be in 5 and 10 year increments?
122. How much runway do you have left?
123. How would you handle an offer from a competitor?
124. How much do you know about our industry?
125. What products do you like about our company?
126. Where is our business most susceptible?
127. What do you think of our newest product and ads?
128. What is your ideal career?

Frequently Asked Interview Questions:

► Passion for the Passion [cont]

- 129. How do you stay current?
- 130. What would you do if your time and resources were unlimited?

► Personal Interests

- 131. What activities have kept you busy outside of work?
- 132. What outside activities complement your work interests?
- 133. What do you do in your spare time?
- 134. How would you spend unlimited leisure time?
- 135. Have you ever been bored with your job and how did you correct the boredom?
- 136. Do you have a balanced life-style?
- 137. Tell me how outside activities generate new ideas for work.
- 138. How is your personality reflected in the kind of activities you enjoy?
- 139. What kinds of leisure activities help you perform your work better?
- 140. How do you give back to the community?
- 141. What community projects, that can utilize your skills, are interesting to you?
- 142. How has a sport or hobby taught you lessons in learning?
- 143. Tell me an interest you outgrew.
- 144. How do you relax?
- 145. When you aren't at work, do you need an agenda or are things spontaneous?
- 146. Tell me about a character in a book or movie you identified with.

► Management Style, Creativity, Leadership

- 147. What is the best idea or innovation you ever had?
- 148. Give an example of how you have overcome an obstacle in a creative way.
- 149. Why do you think some companies with good products fail?
- 150. Describe a time when an existing process didn't work.
- 151. How would a former subordinate or associate describe your leadership style?
- 152. Describe an improvement you personally initiated.
- 153. Tell me about a time you had to persuade others to adopt your idea.
- 154. What would your last supervisor say about your initiative?
- 155. Have your past job appraisals portrayed your leadership abilities?
- 156. Tell me about a failed project.
- 157. How resourceful are you?
- 158. Give me proof of your persuasiveness.
- 159. Give me proof of your persistence.
- 160. Have you demonstrated leadership by example?
- 161. Describe situations in which you are most comfortable as the leader.
- 162. Where are you an effective contributor not as the leader?
- 163. How comfortable are you working with supervisors and subordinates?
- 164. Tell me about a time when you had to alter your leadership style.
- 165. Tell me about a good process you made even better.

► Skills and Ability to Do the Job

- 166. What sets you apart from the crowd?
- 167. What are the weaknesses in your skills relative to your requirements?
- 168. Tell me about your strengths.
- 169. What are your weaknesses?
- 170. How is your experience relevant to this job?

Frequently Asked Interview Questions:

► Skills and Ability to Do the Job [cont]

171. What is your dream job?
172. What skills do you think are most critical to this job?
173. How do you compare to peers with similar backgrounds in this field?
174. Have you ever been fired or asked to resign?
175. What are your key skills?
176. What one weakness or bad habit would you work on first?
177. What skills would you develop in this job?
178. What would you spend more time on in your current job if you stayed?
179. How did you enrich positions in the past?
180. To what do you attribute your successes?
181. Tell me about a project in which you were disappointed in your performance.
182. What aspects of your work earn you the most respect?
183. What aspects of your work are most often criticized?
184. Does travel fit into your life-styles?
185. Explain all of your job changes.

► Career Aspirations

186. Where do you want to be in 5 years?
187. What are your long term goals?
188. Why is this job the right one for you now?
189. What career direction would you take if you could start all over again?
190. What achievements have eluded you?
191. How would you compare this job to others you are doing?
192. Have you met your own career expectations?
193. What are your salary and objective bonus expectations?
194. Why did you stay in your last position so long?
195. Have you ever been passed for a promotion you should have gotten?
196. How does this first job fit your career path plans?
197. What aspirations do you have beyond this job?
198. What new challenges do you seek?
199. How long do you expect to continue to grow in this job?
200. What career path interests you within the company?
201. Having been out of work, what difficulties have you had choosing the proper path?
202. Where do you expect to be salary wise in five years?
203. Have you ever taken a job for the sake of having a job?

► Problem Solving

204. How do you measure the contribution you make?
205. How pragmatic or practical are you?
206. How do you balance your reliance on facts with intuition?
207. What was your greatest problem in your last job?
208. Tell me about a problem that was not anticipated.
209. Tell me about how you had to act on an unpopular decision.
210. Describe a time when a problem was not resolved to your satisfaction.
211. In what situations do you have difficulty making choices?
212. Describe a situation in which you concluded the risks outweighed the rewards.
213. How have your technical skills been an asset?
214. Describe a situation in which you applied technical skills to solve a problem.

Frequently Asked Interview Questions:

► Problem Solving [cont]

- 215. How do your fundamental & functional skills add to the effectiveness of your job?
- 216. Describe how you've been used in a problem solving process.
- 217. What is your thought process for solving a problem?
- 218. Have you ever resolved a long standing problem?
- 219. What is the most difficult problem you've ever encountered?
- 220. Was there a time there was no set procedure to help you solve a problem?
- 221. Was there a time when you couldn't solve a predicament?

► Wrapping up the Interview

- 222. Do you have any questions for me?
- 223. Is there anything else about your background we need to know?
- 224. Is there anything else you'd like to add in summation?
- 225. Do you really want this job?

► Frequent Job Changes

- 226. Why are you looking after being in your current job such a short period of time?
- 227. What do you want out of this job that you haven't found yet?
- 228. How have your motivations changed as you've matured?
- 229. Why is this job suited for you?
- 230. What are your goals and objectives in the short and long term?
- 231. How can you assure us you'll stay?
- 232. What would cause you to resign from a position?
- 233. What is most important lesson you've learned from your last jobs?

► Reentering the Work Force

- 234. How've your professional skills been challenged having been out of the work force?
- 235. Why do you want to work in this industry?
- 236. How do you balance life-style with work, and how does it mold your success?
- 237. What will be your biggest challenge in reentering the work force?
- 238. What aspects of your past jobs have given you the most confidence?
- 239. What do you want to develop in this job?

► Career Changes

- 240. How do your people skills relate to this job?
- 241. What interests you most about this path?
- 242. How do I know this change is sincere?
- 243. Do you have the resiliency to handle this position?
- 244. How can you help my company?
- 245. How will you overcome your lack of industry experience?
- 246. What concerns you most about performing in an unfamiliar setting?
- 247. What other positions or alternatives are you considering?
- 248. Are you sacrificing earnings potential by changing professions?

Frequently Asked Interview Questions:

► Terminated, Downsized or Laid Off

249. What were your failures in your last job?
250. What led to your company's downsizing?
251. Would you have done anything differently to have avoided a layoff, etc.?
252. What do you seek here that was missing in the past?
253. What have you been doing in the off time and why has it taken so long?
254. Why were you fired?
255. Were you warned prior to termination?
256. What were your limitations in the last job, & what do you seek in the new one?

► Stress Questions

257. How big of a cross section do you need to predict a presidential election?
258. How do you handle personal commitments w/professional crisis that needs to be rectified?
259. Tell me about a time you didn't meet expectations.
260. How have you completed projects despite roadblocks?
261. How do you handle rejection?
262. Sell me something.
263. Why weren't you promoted after all these achievements?
264. Why didn't you finish school?

► Degreed Professionals

265. What did you gain from the internship?
266. How did you balance school and work?
267. Are your grades a good indicator of how you will perform?
268. What extra activities did you participate in school?
269. In what courses did you do poorly compared to other course work?
270. Why did you choose the major you completed?
271. What made you choose this career path?

► Specific Career Questions

272. Describe some projects in which you had direct responsibility for the outcome.
273. How do you cope with a stressful situation?
274. Tell me about your last boss.
275. What type of person do you work with best?
276. What type of person do you find it difficult to work with?
277. How do you organize and plan your day?
278. Tell me about a great idea you had.
279. Give me some successes with customer service.
280. What do you see as the new product opportunities in this market?
281. If you had to do a 30 second commercial on yourself, what would it be?
282. Describe your project management skills.
283. Describe a re-engineering engagement you've worked on.
284. Do you believe the customer is always right?
285. What level of decision making authority have you had in the past?
286. What continuing education programs are you involved in?
287. What qualities do you look for in hiring people?
288. How do you handle an employee whose work is unsatisfactory?
289. What work habits do you find annoying in those who work for you?
290. What are your keys to success as a manager?