

LIST OF SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions for Assessing Analytical Skills

Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to gain information needed to solve a problem. Then tell me how you analyzed the information and came to a decision, if applicable.

Give me an example of a project you have completed, focusing on the analytical component.

What tools do you currently use on the job to aid you in quantitative analysis?

What is the percentage of time you currently spend on the job dealing with analytical reports, analyses, and comparisons? Tell me about a recent project that was primarily numbers-oriented. Walk me through your procedure and thought processes.

Give me an example of a project that relied heavily on quantitative analysis.

Describe a specific accomplishment that demonstrates your analytical skills.

Give me an example that demonstrates your ability to use a variety of approaches in your work.

Let's assume that you are given an assignment that requires a different methodology than you typically use. Have you ever experienced this type of situation? How did you go about completing your work?

Tell me about a difficult problem you solved for a client.

Tell me about an assignment for which you had little or no previous experience. What strategy did you adopt to complete the assignment?

Give me an example that demonstrates your ability to manage a client's billing and budgets.

Give me an example of a project that demonstrates your ability to work within a client's budgetary constraints.

Questions for Assessing Decision Making and Risk Taking

Sometimes you have to make a decision even when others believe that it may be premature. Can you tell me about a time when you made a decision even when others were not ready to do so?

While planning ahead is usually important, there are times when being spontaneous can lead to success, too. Tell me about a time on the job when you were able to be spontaneous with good results.

Describe an experience that demonstrates your ability to evaluate a situation on the spot.

Describe an important decision you made that affected the course of a project or an activity.

Tell me about a time when you made a decision that at the time was risky.

Describe a situation in which you had to defend your actions or recommendations because they were challenged by others.

What was the most difficult decision you made in the last six months? What made it so difficult?

What was the biggest obstacle you had to overcome in order to incorporate a new idea or process? Why was it an obstacle? How did you overcome it?

Give me an example of a time when you had to analyze another person or a situation carefully in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision.

Describe a situation when you were told by two different people how to handle a project two different ways. What did you do and how did you arrive at a decision?

Give me an example of when you've demonstrated the ability to make quick and accurate job-related decisions.

Tell me about a time when an upper-level decision or policy change held up your work.

Give me an example of a time when you stuck to policy or procedure when it may have been easier to go around the policy or procedure.

Questions for Assessing Decision Making and Risk Taking (continued)

Give me an example of a situation when you were not successful in dealing with a tough decision you had to make.

Tell me about an experience when you had a limited amount of time to make a difficult decision.

Tell me about a decision that you made while under a lot of pressure.

Describe a situation where you heard of some new technology and implemented it.

Describe a situation where you were not supported in performing a task and how you dealt with it.

Do you think of yourself as an internal entrepreneur and why?

How do you determine if a plan is worth the risk of rocking the boat?

If it were apparent that there was little support for something you felt strongly about, would you try it anyway? Why?

What do you think of the phrase "no risk, no reward?"

Describe a time when you weighed the pros and cons of a risk and decided to take it?

Describe a time when you were criticized for taking a risk. What was your reaction to the criticism?

Do you believe in the concept of calculated risk and what does it mean to you?

Describe a time when you seemed to be on the wrong side of an issue and what you did or did not do.

Questions for Assessing Interpersonal and Communications Skills

Success on the job, in part, depends on having good work relationships. Tell me about a time when you were able to get the job done because you had such a relationship with another person.

Describe a situation in which your success depended upon communicating with people from different backgrounds and levels.

Tell me about a time on the job when you had to handle a sensitive situation.

Describe a situation when you were a relative newcomer and saw people doing things in ways you considered ineffective or inefficient. How did you handle the situation?

Tell me about how you dealt with a person who was inflexible. Give me specific examples of tactics you employed.

Describe a situation in which you had to decide the best way to summarize, organize and present complex information.

When working with people, we often find that one style doesn't always work for every person – we have to be flexible in our style of relating to others. Describe a situation when you had to vary your style with a particular individual.

Defending your point of view may not always be a popular position to take. Tell me about a time when you had to do that.

Has there been a time when you thought you had a better idea than that of your supervisor(s)? How did you handle the situation?

Tell me about a time when you had a miscommunication with a client or coworker and how you resolved it.

Describe a time when you had to communicate something unpleasant to a supervisor.

At one time or another, we all have had problems getting our point across. Give me an example of when this happened to you.

Tell me about a time when you didn't communicate something unpleasant but should have. What were the consequences?

Gaining the cooperation of others can be difficult. Give a specific example of when you had to do that.

Questions for Assessing Leadership Abilities or Potential

Give me a specific example of when you had to motivate a group of people to get an important job done.

Tell me about a time when you had to rally the troops to complete a difficult assignment. What did you do and what were the results?

How do you balance the need to supervise your team without doing the work yourself?

Give me an example of how you've motivated others.

Describe a situation when you had to mobilize others to take action toward a specific goal.

If you had to describe your leadership style, what would it be? (Follow-up) Tell me about how you have implemented (or would implement) that style on the job.

Give me an example of when you had to exert your authority to get something accomplished. (Follow-up) What were the consequences?

Assume that you are managing a project and as the leader, you are expected to give feedback to team members. Describe how you would give feedback to someone who is not contributing quality work.

Describe a situation in which you were responsible for a project and at least one of your team members had more experience or expertise than you did in one area.

Understanding how other people process information is often a part of being a leader on a project. Describe an incident that you've experienced where understanding other people's behavioral styles was key to the project's success.

Give me an example of a time when you've been instrumental in empowering a person or a group to accomplish something.

At times, a situation arises when we can really "make our mark" on the project/business we're working on. Tell me about a time when you were involved in that kind of situation and how you took advantage of it.

How frequently do you meet with the employees under your direct supervision as a group? What do you do in preparation? At the meeting? After the meeting?

Questions for Assessing Leadership Abilities or Potential (continued)

Describe a recent problem you had for which you involved your staff to arrive at a solution? What approach did you take to get them to accomplish the task?

Tell me about a specific time when you had to handle a tough morale problem.

Tell me about a time when you had to tell a staff member that you were dissatisfied with his/her work.

Describe a time when you came up with a creative solution to a problem between two employees.

Describe how you communicate priority projects to your staff without making them feel overwhelmed.

Questions for Assessing Ability to Manage Change

Describe the part you played in implementing a new system and/or technology in your organization.

Tell me how you dealt with those who expressed the sentiment, “Why change when we have always done it this way?”

What new technologies are available that you would like to implement? Why?

How do you encourage people to adopt new techniques or technologies?

How do you instill ownership in people when new ways of doing things are introduced?

Questions for Assessing Planning and Organizational Skills

Describe a project that you worked on. Tell me about how you managed the project to assure that all deadlines were met.

Talk me through a project you've done, either on the job or as part of a course requirement.

Describe a situation when you had to juggle several projects at the same time.

Tell me about how you typically schedule your day. To what extent do you use some kind of time management system and to what extent do you simply wait to see what turns up?

Describe a time when you had to adjust your plans due to changing circumstances. Tell me about a situation in which you were responsible for formulating plans for a large project.

There are times on the job when you have to develop a plan and stick to it, despite the obstacles. Can you tell me about a time when that was true for you?

Seeing a new way of doing a job can many times lead to greater productivity. Give me an example of when you were able to see and implement a new way of getting the job done.

Tell me about a time when you were responsible for an aspect of a job that was particularly uninteresting. How did you deal with it?

Tell me about your technique/method/system for keeping track of matters requiring your attention.

Have you worked in a situation in which there were constant surprises or unanticipated events? How did you manage responsibilities?

Describe a time when your supervisor placed excessive demands on you and how you handled it.

Tell me about a suggestion you made on the job to improve the way things worked. What was the result?

Describe a project that you were responsible for that required a large amount of energy over a long period of time.

Questions for Assessing Problem Solving and Strategic Thinking

Describe a time when you developed an innovative approach or solution that resulted in the implementation of a new idea.

Describe a time when you developed a creative solution to a problem or designed an enhancement to a plan.

Give me an example of a time when you identified a key strategy for a brand that had positive business results.

Tell me specifically what experience you have had in defining strategies in positioning and new product/service launches.

Give me an example of a time when you demonstrated “out-of-the-box” thinking.

Tell me about one of the recent challenges you’ve faced strategically in your current job.

Give me an example of how you were able to take marketing [or other field] principles that you have studied and transfer them to your job.

Give me an example of a time when you were able to look at a challenge with a new perspective that resulted in an innovative solution, strategy, or approach.

Tell me about a time when you designed an innovative approach that had a dramatic and positive impact.

Describe a time when you successfully implemented an idea that led to better results.

Give me an example of an accomplishment, idea, or strategy that illustrates you are not governed by traditional rules or ways of thinking.

Describe a situation that demonstrates your ability to apply creativity and innovation to solving a problem.

Questions for Assessing Teamwork

Describe for me the kinds of things you've done in previous jobs to build teamwork with your peers.

It can be challenging to build relationships with people you haven't worked with before. Give me an example of how you've dealt with this situation in the past.

Tell me about a time when you used your enthusiasm to motivate a team to finish a project or assignment.

What's the key to making a team work? (Follow-up) Tell me about a time when you helped to orchestrate that "key" as a member of a team.

What role on a team do you find yourself most often playing? Tell me about a specific instance when you found yourself in that role.

Describe your most recent group effort.

Give me an example of when you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers or employees reporting to you.

How often do you attend meetings with your peers (or group)? What role did you play in the last meeting?

Give me a specific example of what you did in your last/current position to contribute toward a teamwork environment.

Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.

Describe a situation in which others within your organization depended on you.

Tell me about a situation when you had to work as part of a team that was not getting along well and how you dealt with it.

Questions for Assessing Technical Skills

Tell me about your expertise in [insert field].

I see you have worked with [insert technology]. Tell me about its features and benefits.

What experience have you had working with (insert technology)?

Give me examples of your use of [insert technology] and how you adopted it for your last organization.

This position requires a variety of skills. Describe your absolute strengths applicable to the position.

Tell me how you stay current in your field on new or evolving [insert technologies or programs].