

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

General Interviewing Questions

Career Goals

1. If you were hired, where do you see yourself five years from today?

Stress

1. Give me an example of what an organization/ management should do to cushion or prevent the effects of stress from a job.
2. How would you handle the need to juggle priorities or projects?

Motivation

1. What should a manager do to motivate others? Why does it sometimes fail?
2. What is your definition of success? How do you know if a project is successful?

Goal Orientation

1. Do you think Management by Objective works? How do you adjust to working under a goal setting program?
2. How do you/or how should your supervisor monitor the progress of assignments and projects?

Attendance/Punctuality

1. When do you feel it is necessary to work overtime?
2. What would your last supervisor or manager say about your attendance and punctuality? How many times would he/she say you were absent or late this year?
3. Are there any reasons why you cannot work regular hours?

Creativity and Innovation

1. Which have you preferred to work with — a set, planned day, or a day you can create for yourself? Why?

Problem Solving/Analytical Skills

1. How do you go about setting priorities for your time?
2. What information or technical support has helped you succeed on the job?
3. What process do you follow in solving problems?
4. What methods do you use to make decisions? Please give me an example of your approach?
5. In your last job what kinds of decisions did you have authority over? Describe the degree of authority you had over these decisions.

Ability to Learn

1. How do you keep up with changes in technology (terminology, information) in your field?
2. What would you expect from us to get you oriented or trained in this position?

Dependability

1. What do you consider the three most impressive tangible contributions an employee can make to his/her employer?

2. What do you think an employee owes his/her employer?
3. What are the three or four bottom line (most critical) ways an employer can measure success of an employee?

Organization, Attention to Detail and Times Usage

1. How do you feel a meeting should be organized to be most effective?
2. Do you like to juggle a lot of activities at the same time or do one at a time?
3. How do you keep track of your own paperwork, schedule, etc.? Explain.
4. How do you decide what you should work on next?
5. How do you monitor tasks that require your attention?

Interpersonal Communication Skills

1. What sorts of things do you feel are important for an employee to share with a manager? And vice versa?
2. What kind of performance feedback do you feel is important for an employee to receive?
3. How do you persuade others to get what you want?
4. What role do you usually take in a group meeting or discussion? What are the advantages of that?
5. What does the "open door" policy mean to you? Do you think it works?

Conflict

1. What should a manager do to minimize conflict at work? How much should he/she get involved in solving it?
2. How would you confront someone at work? Should it become necessary?
3. When (customers, vendors, co-workers, etc.) get angry with you, how do you usually react? How do you solve the problem?
4. What is the best way to handle problems and complaints that arise on the job?

Cooperation

1. How do you get cooperation from co-workers, vendors, suppliers, customers, etc?
2. What problems do you feel are appropriate to bring to your manager?
3. Would you rather work on a team or on your own?
4. What do you require from a boss?

Previous Employment

1. Tell me about your last position(s).
2. What were your major responsibilities in your previous position?
3. What type of software/equipment did you use in your last position?
4. Are you doing a good job in your present position? How do you know?
5. What do you expect your previous employers to say about you when we call them for references? Why?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISORY POSITIONS

Decision Making

1. At which point do you find it necessary to bring others into your decision-making process? Why?
2. Describe your approach to making decisions and solving problems. Why do you do it this way?
3. When you recommend something to management, what approach do you usually use?
4. How do you assemble relevant data to make your decisions? How do you know you have enough data?
5. How much leeway do you give your employees to make decisions? How do you still maintain control?

Administration

1. What areas are within your sphere of responsibility in your current position? How do you make sure that you know what is happening (problems, changes, etc.)?
2. How do you make sure that your employees are accountable?
3. What operating systems do you use to monitor and maintain control of your area of accountability?
4. What do you typically do when you hear of a problem in your area? Explain?
5. How useful have you found written procedures and guidelines in helping you manage your area?
6. Do you feel that the chain of command is important? Why? When do you feel it might inhibit organizational effectiveness?

Writing Skills

1. When you have to write letters, how do you usually get started?
2. How do you keep track of incoming and outgoing correspondence?
3. What do you think is important to a document? How do you document it?
4. What do you see as the difference in writing strategy for a report vs. memo vs. a letter?

Financial

1. What responsibility do you have for budgeting? What budgeting method do you use?

Leadership

1. How do you get your employees (or others) to follow you?
2. How do you use power or authority to get what you want done?
3. How do you delegate responsibility for an assignment? Who do you choose? What and how do you delegate, and what do you monitor and follow up?
4. How would you describe your management style?

Evaluating Performance

1. What do you do to ensure objectivity when you evaluate the work of others?
2. What sort of performance standards have you held Employees to? Were they written?
3. How often do you evaluate your employees?
4. How do you get your employees involved in their own evaluation?
5. How do you evaluate your department's overall performance?
6. When you evaluate someone's performance verbally, what approach do you take?
7. How do you plan for performance improvements?
8. How do you measure performance in your area?

Employee Relations

1. How do you go about developing the people you manage?
2. How do you help your employees become committed to a job or to the organization?
3. How do you deal with an "attitude" problem?
4. How often do you think it is necessary to meet with your employees?
5. How have you handled "complainers"?
6. How do you deal with an employee who needs to be disciplined? Explain your strategy.
7. What sort of employee training do you think is necessary to offer?
8. How would you handle a personnel situation, which might have a potential legal impact?
9. How do you develop trust and loyalty in your employee?

Planning

1. How far in advance do you typically plan activities for yourself and your employees?
2. How do you assess priorities? How do you then assign them?

Organizational Relationships

1. How would you deal with "politics" in a work place?
2. What would you describe as an effective staff meeting? Ineffective?
3. How do you typically get cooperation from someone in another department?
4. Have you had to make an oral presentation to other managers? Explain.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FACULTY POSITIONS

1. What is your teaching philosophy?
2. How do you define the educational philosophy of the community college and that of a four-year institution?
3. What can you bring to the department that is uniquely yours?
4. What kind of techniques have you found, to be effective?
5. Take us through an assignment.
6. Describe your grading criteria.
7. Please explain the composition of the student bodies you have taught.
8. Describe your relationship with (to) your students.
9. Tell us how you keep current in your field.
10. In the last year, what have you done to develop professionally?
11. What is your view of the relationship between faculty and administration?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CLERICAL POSITIONS

Assertiveness

1. How would you handle a boss who gave you assignment without complete instructions?
2. How would you handle a situation where you found mistakes on an assignment someone else gave to you to type and/or process?
3. How do you minimize interruptions on the job?

Independence and Initiative

1. How do you organize your typical workday?
2. How do you begin a complex work assignment?
3. What do you do when you have "down" time at work-those times when the work slows down? Please be specific.
4. What sort of direction do you want from a supervisor? Do you like detailed instructions, or would you rather just know the highlights? Do you want them in writing?

Business Writing/Editing

1. How much rewriting do you usually do when working on someone's proposal/report?
2. When typing, what sorts of mistakes can you catch quickly and correct for the original writer?
3. When typing a document, which things do you feel comfortable changing without needing to check with the one who has assigned you the work? What do you feel is necessary to ask about before changing or rewriting?
4. What type of letters, memos, etc., can you set-up and write "from scratch"?
5. How much writing have you done from incomplete instructions or notes? Explain.
6. What formats or form letters have you had experience working with?

Handling Pressure

1. How do you deal with tight deadlines?
2. How do you deal with people who have angered or frustrated you?
3. How would you handle a situation where someone is pressuring you for his or her work to be completed?

Prioritizing Work

1. How do you prioritize your work? How well does this work?
2. If you have a situation where several people gave assignments-all due very quickly-how would you handle the problem?

Attention to Detail

1. Do you prefer to see a project through from beginning to end, or just do a part of it?
2. Walk me through how you would set up and complete an (job specific) assignment. What are the most trouble spots you anticipate?
3. How do you rate yourself on a proofreading or correcting another person's work? How would your supervisor rate you?

Internal Relations

1. What type of things should be kept confidential? How would you handle co-workers who ask too many questions regarding confidential information?
2. How would you handle a conflict situation with a co-worker?