



## Sample Interview Questions

This list of sample interview questions is divided into two sections. The first is a list of general interview questions, including the ever-popular "Tell me about yourself?" and "What is your greatest weakness?". The second set of questions are behavioral based interview questions, which are now the most commonly asked type of question. Behavioral based questions are based on the theory past behavior and performance predict future behavior and performance. Questions typically begin with "Tell me about a time when..." or "Give me an example of when you....".

### GENERAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me about your education/work experience.
- What are your short range/long range career goals?
- Why are you interested in our organization?
- What is your greatest strength/weakness?
- What are the most important considerations for you in choosing a job?
- Why do you want to leave your current job?
- How do you feel you can contribute to our organization?
- Are you willing to travel/relocate?
- In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
- What led you to choose your college major?
- What personal characteristics do you feel are necessary to be successful in this position?
- What do you know about our company?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?
- Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
- What have you learned from participation in extra-curricular activities?
- Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
- How do you work under pressure?
- Describe two or three accomplishments that have given you personal satisfaction.
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- What were your favorite/least favorite college courses?
- Why should I hire you?
- What sets you apart from other qualified candidates?

### Strategies for answering the 2 of the most common & difficult questions:

#### "Tell me something about yourself."

Remember, the employer is asking about your professional self, **not your life history!** You can effectively answer this question using a 3-step approach:

- 1) Brief summary of your career/academic history
- 2) One or two sentences of a single accomplishment that you are proud of
- 3) One sentence summary of what you want to do next in your career

#### "Tell me about a professional weakness" or "What is your greatest weakness?"

Remember, the employer is asking about a professional weakness, **not something personal!** Use the following strategy to effectively answer this question:

- 1) Choose something that is not vital to your success in the position
- 2) Choose something that can be turned into a positive, but not something cliché (i.e. "I'm a workaholic.")
- 3) Present a game plan to improve the weakness or demonstrate how you have worked to improve in this area
- 4) Confirm that you do not feel this weakness would limit your success in the position

### BEHAVIORAL BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell about a situation when you persuaded someone to accept your ideas or point of view.
- Describe a time when you had to convince a person or group to re-evaluate their decision.
- Tell me about a time when your opinion was challenged. How did you handle it?
- Describe a situation where you had to work with ambiguity. How did you deal with the situation and what was the result?
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to get yourself out of a difficult situation.
- Tell me about a situation where you had to make a decision without much information.
- Provide an example of how you've used creativity and analytical skills to solve a problem.
- Describe a situation in which you faced an ethical challenge in the workplace and how you resolved it.
- Tell me about a situation at work in which you led a team well.
- Describe an example of your ability to listen and be responsive.
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
- Describe a failed project you have been involved with at work/school, and explain why it was not successful.
- Give an example of a time when you were assertive and tell how it paid off (worked well) for you.
- Give me an example of a time you took initiative.
- Describe a situation in which you had to take immediate action in a high-pressure situation.
- Give an example of a time when you had to deal with unreasonable expectations of you.
- Tell me about a well-functioning team that you were on. Why do you think the team worked so well together?
- Tell me about a situation where you did not get along with your supervisor.

### Using the S.A.R. Method to answer behavioral based interview questions: S.A.R. stands for **Situation - Action - Result.**

This is an excellent framework to use when answering these questions. This 3-step method will help you to prepare concise, organized and articulate examples when answering behavioral based questions. Employers will be looking for you to give specific examples. Begin by describing the **Situation**, then describe the **Action** you took, and wrap-up your answer by describing the **Result** of your actions. It works!