

101 Great Interview Questions

Asking the right questions will help you discover whether applicants have the skills and qualities they need to achieve optimal results. Choose from these great interview questions or adapt them to meet your specific needs.

Miscellaneous Good Questions

1. How did the best manager you ever had motivate you to perform well? Why did that method work?
2. How do you measure your own success?
3. Describe what contributions you've made to your present (or previous) company.
4. What are your short-term or long-term career goals?
5. What skills and qualities do you possess that you believe would make you the right person for this job?
6. What responsibilities do you want and what kinds of results do you expect to achieve in your next job?
7. What is the best thing a previous employer did that you wish everyone did?
8. What is important to you in a job? Why did you leave your last job?
9. What do you expect to find in our company that you don't have now?
10. Is there anything you wanted me to know about you that we haven't discussed?
11. Take me through a time when you took a product or a project from start to launch.
12. Describe how you work under tough managers.
13. How do you manage stress?
14. How would you describe your role in a team environment?
15. In the past three years, what aspect of your professional skill set have you improved the most?
16. If you were a new employee, what would you do to gain respect from peers in your first 30 days?

Questions to Reveal Temperament and Interpersonal Skills

17. How would you describe yourself?
18. What are you most proud of?
19. What is the most interesting thing you've done in your life?
20. What would you love doing, even if you weren't getting paid for it?
21. If I call your references, what will they tell me about you?
22. Describe your ideal work environment?
23. What kinds of people would you rather not work with? Tell me about a work situation that irritated you.
24. What kinds of responsibilities would you like to avoid in your next job? How would you remain motivated to complete those tasks if you had to do them?
25. Have you ever had to resolve a conflict with a co-worker or client? How did you resolve it?
26. How have you worked as a member of teams in the past?
27. Tell me about some of the groups that you've had to get cooperation from. What did you do?
28. What previous job was the most satisfying and why?
29. Tell me about the best manager you ever had. What made them effective? Now tell me about the worse boss. What made it tough to work for him or her?
30. What do you think you owe to your employer? What does your employer owe to you?
31. What, if anything, would you do if you thought your manager was making a bad business decision based on inadequate information?

Questions to Reveal Lessons Learned

32. Tell me about a time when a project was returned for errors. What effect did this have on you and how did you handle it?
33. Tell me about an objective in your last job that you failed to meet and why.
34. What have you learned from your mistakes?
35. Tell me about a situation where you "blew it." How did you salvage your credibility?

36. Tell me about a situation where you abruptly had to change what you were doing.
37. If you could change one business decision you made during the past two years, what would that be?
38. If you had the opportunity to change anything in your career, what would you have done differently?

Questions to Reveal Creative Thinking/Problem Solving

39. What have you done in your career or personal life that you thought was very creative?
40. Describe a situation in which you had a difficult work problem. How did you solve it?
41. What is the most difficult decision you've ever had to make? How did you arrive at your decision?
42. Describe some situations in which you worked under pressure or had to meet tight deadlines.
43. Have you ever been in a situation in which you had to meet deadlines for two different people and couldn't do both? How did you handle it?
44. What type of approach to problem solving seems to work best for you? Give me an example of how you successfully applied that approach to solve a tough problem.
45. When taking on a new task, do you like a lot of information at the beginning or do you prefer to try your own approach first?
46. What kinds of opportunities have you created for yourself in your past positions?
47. You're on the phone with another department resolving a problem. The intercom pages you for a customer on hold. Your manager returns your monthly report with red pen markings and demands corrections within the hour. What do you do?

Questions to Reveal Trustworthiness, Dependability, and Inner "Rules"

48. Discuss a time when your integrity was challenged. How did you handle it?
49. What would you do if someone asked you to do something unethical?
50. Have you ever experienced a loss for doing what is right?
51. Have you ever had to apologize for doing something wrong?
52. In what business situations do you feel too much honesty would be inappropriate?
53. What would you do if you saw a co-worker doing something dishonest?
54. How many times were you late to work in the last year and why? What have you done to remedy the problem?
- 55.

Questions for Producers

56. Describe a sales presentation when you had the right product/service, and the customer wanted it but wouldn't buy it. What did you do next?
57. How do you prepare yourself mentally to make cold calls? Sales calls?
58. Tell me about a time you thought you'd lost an opportunity, but did something creative to make the sale.
59. Tell me about a time you lost a sale. What would you do differently today?
60. How do you differentiate your products/services from those of competitors?
61. How (specifically) do you adapt your sales story to match prospects' different personalities or communication styles?
62. How do you believe your customers would describe your sales approach?
63. How would your peers describe you as a producer? As part of the sales team?
64. How do you measure your sales success? What do you believe is the most important contributing factor?
65. How do you stay resilient when faced with rejection?
66. What do you enjoy most about sales? What concerns/worries keep you up at night?
67. Describe the best sales manager you ever had. How did he/she motivate you to succeed?
Why did that method work?
68. Tell me about how you get results from support staff?
69. Persuade me to move to your city (or buy this paper clip)

Questions for Sales Managers

70. What do you believe are the best things a sales manager can do to develop top producers?
What should a sales manager expect from his/her producers?
71. What different skill sets and perspectives do you believe it takes to be a sales manager as opposed to a producer?
72. As a sales manager, what are the three most important pitfalls you'd advise your sales staff to avoid?
73. How would you handle a producer who is not performing up to expectations?
74. As a sales manager, how would you balance autonomy with accountability when setting expectations for producers?

Questions for Managers

75. What is more important – results or people?
76. What is your key to attaining results? What accomplishment(s) are you most proud of?
77. If you could change one (managerial) decision you made during the past two years, what would that be?
78. Have you ever been held accountable for ambitious results with limited resources? How did you approach the challenge and what were the results?
79. Tell me what you do during the interview or during a new employee's first days on the job to create the conditions for their success?
80. How do you attract and retain high performers?
81. How do you manage conflicts between employees?
82. How would your subordinates describe your management style?
83. As a manager, have you ever had to fire anyone? If so, what were the circumstances, and how did you handle it?
84. Describe your work relationships with associates at the same level, above and below you in the organization?
85. What types of tasks do you believe you cannot delegate?
86. How do you inspire excellence in a team?
87. Describe some ways you've recognized/rewarded employees for their contributions?
88. What is your strategy for staff development?
89. How do you coach marginal performers? Address "people problems?"
90. What was the most difficult management challenge you've had to face and how did you handle it?
91. If we hired you, what would you do to establish credibility as a leader in the first 30-90 days on the job?

Questions for You to Answer

92. Why is the job open?
93. Who held the position before and what happened?
94. What are the capabilities of subordinates reporting to this position?
95. Six months from now how will you know you hired the right person?
96. What are current problems that need attention (and future anticipated ones)?
97. What are the company's long term objectives?
98. What is the extent of this position's authority and the budget to get the job done?
99. What are the biggest negatives about this position?
100. What capabilities do you feel are most important in this position?

And, if you like what you've heard during the interview, you might want to ask:

101. Based on our conversation today, what is your level of interest in the position (and why)?

For more information on using these questions to avoid hiring mistakes or to learn about our other highly effective selection tools and practices, contact: **Catherine Carlisi - 866.285.6123.**