

QUESTIONS THAT DETERMINE ABILITY

EDUCATION & TRAINING

What were the main factors that influenced your decision to select your course of study?

What were your best subjects?

What classes did you have to work at the hardest?

Did you receive any scholarships or grants?

What do you feel is the most valuable contribution your education's made to your work life?

What have you excelled at?

WORK HISTORY

When did you join the company?

What was your title when you were hired?

What circumstances led to your being offered the job?

Who did you report to?

What was your boss's title and job functions?

What were your primary responsibilities?

What do you consider were your most important accomplishments at this job?

What was your specific role in these accomplishments?

What role did other play?

What other functional, day to day activities were you involved with that I should know about?

What impact did you have on the company?

What did you learn most from this job?

What was your starting salary?

Was this an increase from your former salary?

What was your salary when you left?

What were your reasons for leaving?

How did your boss contribute to your decision to leave?

Why were you out of work for so long?

Why have you changed jobs so often?

PERFORMANCE

Describe your typical workday - what are the biggest problems you face on a regular basis?

What special skills and knowledge do you have to solve these problems?

What would you say are your three most outstanding skills?

What types of things do you feel most confident doing?

What job functions in your daily work-life do you like to do least?

Does your present company have a formal performance evaluation system?

How is performance evaluated?

In what areas has your supervisor been most complimentary?

What adjectives have been used to describe your work style?

What aspects of your performance have been criticized?

How do you feel about this criticism?

How have you improved your performance in these areas?

What has been the result of your efforts?

How do you feel you've grown most over the last three years?

We all improve our decision making ability as we gain experience.

How have you improved your decision making ability most?

PROBLEM SOLVING

How would you handle the problem of (and describe a typical problem they're likely to face on the new job).

What's the toughest problem you've ever solved?

What unique skills or knowledge help you solve it?

Tell me about a time you had to solve a problem quickly to make a deadline.

How much time did you have to solve it?

What was the outcome?

Describe a creative solution to a problem you're proud of that was your own unique approach.

What unforeseen problems occurred?

How did it work out?

How many projects are you usually working on at one time?

Do you prefer seeing a project through to completion before starting another, or handling several projects at once?

On your last job, what did you want to accomplish, but didn't?

What obstacles prevented you from accomplishing it?

What did you do to overcome the obstacles?

What type of decisions are most difficult for you to make?

With the benefit of hindsight, what's a decision you would have made differently?

What's the biggest mistake you feel you've ever made?

Can you tell me about a time you felt your AFace was in the mud@?

What did you learn from it?

ORGANIZATION

What aspect of your work requires the greatest attention to detail?

How well organized are you?

What do you do to keep yourself organized?

What's the best organized part of your life?

What's the least organized aspect of your work life?

What could you do to be better organized?

How do you manage your time?

What do you do when you have a heavy workload to accomplish in a short period of time?

How do you plan and organize major projects?

Tell me about a time you couldn't finish a job due to lack of support or something missing.

How did you try to remedy the situation?

In what specific ways have you changed the organization at your present job?

Describe a project where you had to gather material from many different sources and create an original presentation.

What problems did you run into?

COMMUNICATION

Which is more important on your current job, written or verbal communication?

Roughly, what percentage of time would you estimate you spend doing each?

How would you describe your writing style?

How fast can you compose written material?

What was the most difficult report you've written?

What made it so difficult?

How long did you have to finish it?

In retrospect, how could it have been improved?

How would you rate yourself as a speaker?

What's the most difficult verbal presentation you've ever made?

If we watched a video of your most recent presentation, what would we see?

How would you rate yourself as a listener? Have them repeat back earlier questions asked

What do you feel is the biggest obstacle to good listening?

When were your powers of persuasion put to the maximum test?

Describe for me a situation where your ideas were being rejected without hearing your views, or where you had a hard time getting word in edgewise.

What did you do?

Tell me about a time you said something and APut your foot in your mouth.@

How did you handle it?

QUESTIONS THAT REVEAL MOTIVATION ACHIEVEMENT

What do you consider is a successful career?

What do you feel it takes for a person to be successful in your field?

What do you consider is the single most significant achievement of your career?

Why do you feel this is your most significant achievement?

Who or what in your life influenced you the most regarding your career decision?

What are your short term and long term career objectives?

Where would you like to be in five years?

What do you need to do to get there?

How will this job enable you to reach your long term career goals?

How do you feel about the progress you've made in your career to date?

What career objectives have been met?

What aspects of your career have not lived up to your expectations?

What's most important to you in a job?

What type of rewards are most meaningful to you?

When have you felt fully appreciated for your contribution?

How does this affect the effort you make on the job?

What project has gotten you really excited?

What aspect of your work life do you feel passionate about?

What responsibility have you enjoyed?

What are you looking forward to?

What have you done that's demonstrated a high level of initiative?

Give me an example of a task on your current job that requires a lot of persistence.

On average, how many hours per week have you worked in the last year?

What have you done since you were hired on your last job to be a more effective performer?

DEDICATION

If we hire you, how long could we expect you to stay with our organization?...As long as it's a challenge?

How do you define challenge?

What do you feel you can achieve at this company you can't elsewhere?

Of the various work environments you've experienced at your different jobs, which was most productive for you? Why?

Which work environment was the least productive for you?

What would you definitely like to avoid in your work life?

Describe a situation where something was expected of you and you went beyond the call of duty.

What have you done in the last year with your own time and money that would make you more valuable to our company?

Has your current employer had you attend any seminars or training programs?

What books have had the greatest impact on your career?

How do you feel about working evenings or weekends?

How does business travel affect you?

PERSONAL INTEGRITY

Tell me about a time people you were working with weren't being as honest or sincere as you would have liked.

What do you do?

When have you felt the most pressure to compromise your personal integrity?

What was the outcome?

Have you ever had to put your job on the line for something you believed in ?

Have you ever taken anything from work that wasn't yours?

KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR COMPANY

Why are you interviewing with this company?

How much do you know about our company?

What do you know about our products and services?

What printed information have you read?

KNOWLEDGE OF JOB MARKET

How active have you been in the job market?

What other types of positions are you applying for? With what companies or agencies?

Do you have any offers from other companies?

How would you compare this position with others you are considering?

SALARY

Do you have specific salary goals or targets?

What would you like to be earning in three years?

What do you feel is a fair salary progression from the date of hire?

What fringe benefits are most important to you?

QUESTIONS THAT PROBE MANAGEABILITY

GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS

Describe for me a situation where self-centered behavior produced bad teamwork that was expensive for the company.

If you were the supervisor and wanted to solve the problem, how would you have done it?

How would you have described the problem to the individual?

What do you feel makes for good teamwork and morale?

Tell me about a time you pulled the team together - how have you built morale?

What type of people do you enjoy working with most?

What types of people are the most difficult for you to work with?

Tell me about a time you had a problem with that type of person. What happened?

How did you deal with the problem?

Describe for me a difficult political situation you've faced.

Give me an example of when you've confronted a difficult interpersonal problem.

How do you confront and avoid interpersonal conflicts?

Describe your present co-workers, and briefly, their strengths and weaknesses.

What problems have you encountered with them?

STRESS MANAGEMENT

How do you feel about your workload?

Tell me about a situation where a crisis developed to meet a deadline requiring long hours of extra effort.

What happened and how did you handle it?

What projects have you worked on that required a high level of energy over a sustained period of time?

How have you dealt with the stress that creates?

What things have you had to do in your professional life that were particularly unpleasant?

What's been the most frustrating experience of your career?

What types of problems frustrate you the most?

What's the most mundane or boring aspect of your job?

What was the toughest emergency you've ever faced?

How do you feel your personality changes working under pressure?

What have you done under extreme pressure you later wish you hadn't?

When was the last time you felt really angry on the job?

What types of things make you angry?

How do you deal with anger?

ACCEPTING DIRECTION AND FEEDBACK

Tell me about a time your approach was criticized

Was there anything that felt unfair about the criticism?

How did you respond?

What have you changed about yourself as a result of criticism?

What have you been criticized for that you've heard from more than one source?

What criticism have you found the most difficult to accept?

When was a request for support you felt was important denied by a superior?

Why was it denied?

How did you deal with it?

RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR SUPERIOR

How much do you work alone on your current job?

How much or how little supervision do you feel is optimal?

Describe for me your best boss.

What made him/her your favorite?

Which was your worst? Why?

How much notice will you need to give if you leave your current job?

What do you think your boss will say when you resign?

What are some of the things you didn't agree with your boss about?

How could your boss have done a better job?

What constructive criticism would you offer for the way the company was run?

To be an effective member of a team I place a high value on a person's awareness of how they're perceived by others

Whether you agree with those perceptions or not is a separate issue we can also discuss - but I'm interested in seeing how closely you can tell me;

What type of reference do you think your former boss will give when I call?

What do you think they'll say about the way you accept direction and feedback?

What do you think they'll say about your organizational skills?

Having applicants give this type of reference information on themselves is the most powerful technique you have for getting information that's honest and has real value

If they divulge negative information at this point, remember to downplay it by saying. Everyone has had some working relationship that didn't go as smoothly as you would have liked.

If an applicant doesn't want their current employer contacted, ask for permission to do so after they're hired by your company

CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW

Let the applicant know you're wrapping up - We only have a few minutes left, is there anything

else you'd like to discuss? Do you have any questions?

Be wary of a candidate that doesn't have any questions about your company or the position.

Good candidates tend to have well prepared questions.

What salary and benefits are you offering?

Applicants have a right to know what the opposition pays, but this is not the place to negotiate salary - not until you're ready to make a job offer.

Who held his position before?

Were they promoted, fired or did they quit?

How will my performance be evaluated?

How would you describe yourself as a boss?

What are the worst aspects of the job?

What career path does this position lead to?

Are there any special policies or procedures I should know about?

Be absolutely truthful.

Don't oversell the position, or fail to portray the job's negatives realistically.

Never offer the job on the spot even if you're very favorably impressed.

This is an important decision and should always take at least a day or two to check references and sleep on it.

Immediately after the applicant leaves fill out your interview notes with details to help you understand your shorthand.