

Core Competencies Example Questions

Team Player

Q. Tell me about a time when you have felt you contributed to a successful team project? What was your contribution? What was the outcome?

Q. Describe a time when you had difficulties working with a team? What happened? What did you learn?

Q. Give me an example of when you had to support others in a team? Why did they need support them? How did this change things?

Q. Tell me about a time when you needed to get team members to work together? What did you do? How did the team respond to you? What would you do differently next time?

Q. What is your natural role in a team? What is an example of your success in this role? Have you recently tried to assume a different role within the team environment?

Q. How much consideration to other people's feelings, ideas and thoughts do you normally give?

Q. What has teamwork achieved for you in the past?

Q. Can you give an example of when you helped other team members achieve their goals at the sacrifice of your own time and effort?

Q. Can you tell me about a situation where you had to work with a group to get a job done? What was your contribution? Please describe the outcome.

Q. Tell me about some of the toughest groups that you have had to get cooperation from. What did you do? Did you have any formal authority?

Q. How often do you attend meetings with your peers? What role did you play in the last meeting?

Q. What are some of the most difficult one-on-one meetings that you have had with other members of your company? Why were they difficult?

Q. Tell me about a time when you got a group to do something?

Q. We've all had to deal with difficult people. Give me some examples of when this happened to you. Why was it difficult? How did you handle it?

Q. Tell me about the best team you have worked in? Why does it stand out positively in your mind?

Q. Tell me about a new policy or idea you recently implemented which was considered different from the standard procedure. What approach did you take to get others to go along with the idea?

Q. Give me a situation where you have had to influence a group of people to do something? What did you do to get what you wanted from the group? What were the satisfaction and disappointments?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Relates in terms of the team (we, our)
- Democratic style
- Draws others in and collaborates
- Shares views
- Develops a good network of contacts at all levels
- Supportive and helpful
- Acknowledges contribution of others
- Builds lasting working relationships
- Shows consideration for colleagues
- Tries to encourage people to work together
- Creates a sense of team spirit
- Balances personal objectives with those of the team

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Dogmatic
- Withholds information
- Inflexible
- Obstructionist
- Sticks to the book of rules
- Loner
- Works best alone
- Dislikes relying on others
- Fails to establish networks
- Shows limited support of team efforts
- Rarely praises colleagues for their input
- Makes little effort to sustain relationships
- Takes credit for team efforts
- Does little to improve team relationships
- Limited evidence of trying to create harmony
- Puts personal objectives first

Customer Focus

Q. Describe a situation when you have had to deal with an angry client/customer. What made them angry? What did you do to assist them? How long did this take? What was the outcome?

Q. Tell me about a recent situation when you had to develop a relationship with a new customer.

Q. Give me an example of when you have put a customer first. What sacrifices did this require? What impact did this have on your other activities?

Q. Describe a time when you were unable to help a customer as much as they wanted you to? Why was this? What did they say about your reaction? How did you feel about this?

Q. Tell me about a time when you were complemented for helping a customer beyond the call of duty. How frequently do you go to that kind of trouble? What feedback did you receive?

Q. What do you understand by the term customer service?

Q. How did you differentiate the levels of service you give between internal and external customers?

Q. Please tell me about a recent situation in which you had to deal with an uncooperative client or customer and there were serious potential consequences? What did you do? What happened?

Q. Describe a time that illustrates how you built a relationship with a client?

Q. How did you go about the process of identifying user requirements? What was your specific role?

Q. Sometimes we are not on the same wavelength as a user? Describe a time a user wanted something different from what you had in mind. What did they want? How did it differ from what you wanted? How did you overcome the differences? What was the result?

Q. What have you done in the last 6 months to foster effective customer relationships? How do you know if you are meeting your customer's needs?

Q. In your current job, can you give me some examples of where you have exceeded the expectations of your customers?

Q. Sometimes, customers have very unrealistic expectations. Can you describe a time when you have had to persuade a customer to rethink their expectations and help them consider alternatives. What was the outcome?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Looks for a way to improve customer service
- Impresses customers
- Finds solutions
- Active listener
- Flexible and adaptable
- Consistent and timely
- Puts customers first
- Is driven by customer demands
- Ensures total satisfaction
- Prepared to make sacrifices for others
- Works hard to meet customer needs
- Regularly helps others beyond the call of duty
- Protects customers from organizational pressures
- Receives very positive customer feedback

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Treats customer service as a nuisance
- Does not attend to customer feedback
- Internal focus, lack of empathy
- Selfish
- Only moderately concerned about helping others
- Rarely give customers or others special treatment
- Not as driven as others to give complete satisfaction
- Can fail to deliver total satisfaction
- Rarely makes sacrifices for others
- Doesn't work as hard as others to meet others needs
- Leaves people waiting to be helped
- Little evidence of serving the needs of others
- Limited evidence of helping others generally
- Little evidence of receiving positive customer feedback

Leadership/Management

Q. What do you do to set an example for your team members? When was the last time you saw a team member emulate your example?

Q. What happened when you last had to look after a poor performer in your team? How did you initiate the discussions towards solving the issue? What actions did you take to deal with the situation? What was the outcome?

Q. Have you ever made a decision that was unpopular with the team? Please explain how you handled it.

Q. Please provide examples of how you motivate your team. Please provide an example of when a specific motivator has been put in place and achieved and outcome.

Q. How do you keep track of how your team is doing?

Q. What have you learned about leadership since you have been managing people?

Q. With a demoralized team how do you go about lifting the spirit and performance of that team? Please provide examples.

Q. Can you give an example of when you have had an outcome to be achieved and you encountered negativity and criticism from your peer group. How did you handle that and what was the result.

Q. Can you tell me about a time when you have had to deliver unfavourable feedback? How was it received? What was the result?

Q. What is the most difficult management issue you have had to face in your careers?

Q. What is the most satisfying result that you have achieved in your management career?

Q. Please provide an example of when you have had to get around an obstacle in order to achieve an outcome.

Q. Which part of your management role do you find the most tedious? What did you do to overcome this and ensure that you undertake it with diligence?

Q. What processes do you go through to review your staff? Is it formal or informal structure? How often are they reviewed?

Q. Describe to me a time when it has been your responsibility to take charge and coordinate a group of people. Tell me about the surrounding circumstances. How did you organize your team? What was your management style? Discuss your objectives and the outcome.

Q. Tell me about a time when you had to give tough feedback to a team member.

Q. Give me an example of a time when you stood up for something you believed in which was controversial.

Q. Tell me about a time when you took a leadership role of a group in a difficult situation?

Q. Tell me how you ensured your team was aligned to what you wanted to achieve? Give me a specific example of how you have gone about giving your team a sense of purpose.

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Communicates openly to others
- Seeks responsibility for people
- Accepts responsibilities for problems and mistakes
- Displays openness in decision making
- Involves people and development
- Encourages and allows subordinates to discuss problems and grievances

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Avoids responsibility for people
- Blames others for mistakes
- Does not communicate with his/her staff
- Ignores subordinate's potential
- Relies on technical experience and seniority

Problem Solving

Q. Please describe a difficult problem you have recently been confronted with at work and how you handled it.

Q. Tell me about a time when you were able to anticipate a problem. How did you know the problem was likely to occur? What did you do? How effective was your action?

Q. Please describe a complex problem which you solved recently for a customer? What made it so challenging? How did you handle it? What was the outcome?

Q. Tell me about when you have had to identify the key cause of a problem. How did you work out the cause? How did you solve the problem? What lessons did you learn?

Q. Give me a recent example of when you came up with different solutions to a problem. What did others think of your ideas? How well did they work in practice?

Q. Tell me about a recent situation in which you had to be totally objective when reaching a decision. What were the facts you had to review? How did you weigh the different pieces of information? Looking back what did you think of your decision? What sort of information did this involve? How did you analyse it? What did you learn from the analysis?

Q. Give me an example of a good decision you have made recently? What alternatives did you consider and why was it a good decision?

Q. Describe the last time you made a difficult decision on the job. What facts did you consider? How long did you take to decide?

Q. Describe the biggest work related problems you have faced in the past six months. How did you handle them?

Q. Often in a work environment problems arise where initially no solution is apparent. Describe for me an occasion where you had to think outside of the square to solve a predicament. How successful was your solution? If you had not come up with a solution describe what the outcome would have been. Describe the time limitations involved in this predicament. How would you do it if a similar situation rose again.

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Use of data
- Involved other people in finding solutions
- Looks for alternate approaches
- Identifies actual problem
- Decisive and persistent
- Able to think creativity
- Anticipates potential difficulties
- Stays objective
- Stays positive
- Breaks problems down into logical stages
- Creates creative ideas
- Generates new insights and a range of workable solutions
- Weighs risks carefully
- Seeks help when appropriate

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Unable to specify problem
- Hasty in decision making
- Jumps in before thinking
- Procrastinates
- Fails to anticipate problems
- Fails to learn from mistakes

- Swayed by feeling and intuition
- Analyses things at an inappropriate level of detail
- Tends to tackle tasks in a haphazard way
- Lacks creativity
- Tends to come up with impractical solutions
- Puts in limited thought to the consequences of a solution
- Takes risks
- Unsure of the quality of decisions

Planning and Organisation

Q. Can you tell me about a time when you felt you had to juggle a number of tasks to achieve your outcome? What specifically did you do? What was the result?

Q. How do you schedule your time? How do you keep track of what you have to do each day/week?

Q. Can you describe a time recently when you had conflicting demands on your time? What did you do?

Q. What is a typical working day or week for you? What tools or methods do you use to plan?

Q. Tell me about the most complex project you have had to plan or co-ordinate.

Q. How have you improved your personal effectiveness over the last few years?

Q. We all have times when we come across unexpected problems which disrupt our plans, describe the last time this happened to you. To what extent had you anticipated that problems in your plans may occur? How did the problem affect your priorities for that day? How did you find out about the problem situation? What steps did you take to rectify it? What, if anything would you do differently next time to stop this occurring again? Tell me about the days outcome.

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Systematic, methodical and logical
- Pays attention to detail
- Anticipates problems and identifies contingencies

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Reactive approach
- Ignores details
- No systematic or standard framework
- Overlooks minor issues
- Haphazard approach
- Often wastes time on trivial and personal matters

Initiative

- Q.** Have you found any ways to make your job easier or more satisfying?
- Q.** Have you made any suggestions to your supervisor for ways to improve things?
- Q.** What did you do to prepare for this interview?
- Q.** Tell me about the last time you had to take responsibility for your own actions. What had you done that made you take the responsibility for? Why was this so important? How did you stand up for yourself?
- Q.** Describe the last time you had to make a spur of the moment decision. Why did it have to be made so quickly? How did your decision affect others? What would you do differently if you could do it again?
- Q.** Give me an example of when you had to work without any guidance. Why was this? How did you cope? What feedback did you receive?
- Q.** Describe an occasion when you took responsibility for making a key decision. What was your decision? How and why did you defend your position? What was the possible impact of a poor decision?
- Q.** Tell me about a time when you referred upwards for help. What was the background? Why did you need help? To what extent do you seek advice in this area?
- Q.** Give me a recent example of when you showed initiative? What were the circumstances? In what way did you show initiative? What resulted from the initiative you took?
- Q.** How much autonomy do you have currently? How much autonomy would you like to have? How do you like to be managed? Who is your main support at work?
- Q.** Describe a situation of when you have had to accept without questions what your boss has asked you to do? How did you feel? What happened?
- Q.** Give me some examples of new ideas that you developed in your current organization.
- Q.** Tell me about a recent situation that involved you personally dealing with major last minute changes in schedules or deliverables? What did you do? What was the result?
- Q.** What changes have you tried to implement in your areas of responsibility? What have you done to get them underway?
- Q.** Give me some examples of you doing more than required in your job.
- Q.** Tell me about some projects you generated on your own.
- Q.** Describe your involvement in a task or project that had to be done within an agreed timeframe and be of an excellent work standard.

Q. Describe a situation in which you found the results were not up to budget/company expectation. What did you do to rectify the matter?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Does things outside their area of responsibility
- Identifies the need for change
- Demonstrates they have made things happen
- Controls their own destiny
- Takes responsibility for own actions and decision
- Ensures that he/she understands the tasks
- Can make decisions without referring to others.
- Only asked a few key questions.
- Only refers upwards when necessary.
- Handles problems with minimal guidance
- Appreciates the consequences of delaying action
- Times questions carefully to avoid disruption
- Acts without being promoted
- Acts on own initiative

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Does not take action and accepts the status quo
- Waits for others to back what they say
- Avoids responsibility
- Relies too much on others
- Constantly referring to others when asking questions
- Refers upwards about most issues
- Needs considerable guidance
- Prepared to wait to act even in crisis
- Tends to interrupt others at difficult times
- Rarely shows initiatives
- Limited positive feedback

Ability to Learn

Q. Can you tell me what new things have had to learn in your past job? How did you go about learning them? How long did it take you?

Q. Can you tell me about something particularly difficult that you have had to learn recently?

Strategic Planning

Q. Could you please run me through the processes you go through to put together a strategic plan?

Q. Could you give me a specific example of a strategic plan that you have put together successfully in the past?

- What were your specific responsibilities?
- What was your level of ownership?
- What was the outcome of the planning exercise?

- What decision was made?
- Who made the decision?
- Who measured the success of the strategic plan?

Q. What are some of the most difficult or complex directives you have ever had to implement? Explain how you approached the task.

Q. Describe a situation in which you had to translate a superior general directive into specific goals. How did you do this and what goals did you establish?

Q. What are some of the most innovative strategies or methods you have used in implementing superior directives?

Q. What organizational systems (control compensation communication accounting) have you implemented to support organizational strategies?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Defines clear processes and steps
- Identifies priorities
- Able to complete SWOT analysis
- Able to gather and research data
- Develops concepts and timeframes

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Unable to come up alternatives
- Cannot see the big picture
- Gets bogged down in detail
- Avoids initiatives

Analytical Skills

Q. What complicated problems have you had to address on your job? Describe how you identified or gained a better understanding of the problems and give examples.

Q. What sorts of information do you use to stay aware of problems in your work area? Tell me about a situation in which you used one of these sources.

Q. Tell me about a time where you had to analyse numerical or financial or technical information. Describe the process you used and how useful the information was.

Q. What is an example that will demonstrate your analytical expertise.

Q. Can you describe thought processes that you work through in order to attack a particular problem? How do you go about analyzing a problem and creating a solution? Please provide an example.

Q. Describe the biggest problems you've faced in the last 6 months. How did you handle them?

Q. Describe any significant ideas that you have conceived in the past year. How did you know that they were needed and would work? Were they used? Did they work?

Q. Describe your most recent task/project. What was your involvement, how did you set about working on the project?

Q. Describe a specific task you found especially challenging? What was it about the task you found difficult? How did you overcome the difficulty? What was the result?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Intuitive decision making style
- Able to brainstorm and mind-map
- Logical and structured in thinking
- Able to comprehend big picture
- Understand cause and effect analysis
- Solves problems autonomously

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Creates many problems from one
- Concentrates on small issues
- Has difficulty seeing logic in a problem
- Unable to run effective meetings
- Does not use fact and data in decision making
- Makes gut feel decisions

Persuading and Influencing

Q. Tell me about the last time you persuaded someone to your point of view. How did you put over your ideas? What kind of agreement did you reach? On reflection what would you do differently next time?

Q. Give me an example of when you had to respond to a customer's objection and you were able to convince them of the required solution.

Q. Describe a situation when you were unable to persuade a customer around to your point of view. What did you do? What feedback did you get about your approach?

Q. Give me a recent example of when you negotiated a successful outcome? What did you negotiate? How did you win the person around? How did you know that they were really convinced?

Q. Give me an example of when you have had to respond to a customer's (someone's) objections? What were their objections? How did you challenge their views? How effective were you?

Q. What are your strengths in terms of influencing people? How often do you find yourself influencing others? How do you compare to others in this area? What could you do to make yourself more effective at influencing others?

Q. Tell me about the last time of influencing people? How often do you find yourself influencing your opinion? How did this contrast with the Group's original position? What were the key things that you did which persuaded the Group?

Q. What are some of the best ideas you ever sold to a superior or peer? What were your approaches?

Q. Can you tell me about a time you had to approach several individuals for support or co-operation? What was your approach? What was the outcome?

Q. What are some of the best ideas you have ever sold to a superior/peer? What was your approach?

Q. Describe a major issue that you have had to fight for? How did you go about it? Why was it important to you?

Q. Give me an example of a situation where you have had impact and been able to influence a group of people to do something.

Q. Describe your involvement in a task/project with a tight timeframe and of high standard. What was your specific involvement? What was the outcome?

Q. Tell me about a recent time when you persuaded someone to do something which they were initially reluctant to do? What were their initial objections? What different methods did you use to convince them (discussion, demonstration, adaption of language for a reward system)? What was the outcome.

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Smiles
- Creates empathy
- Proven sales skills
- Persuaded the boss to do things
- Articulate
- Presents key selling points persuasively
- Negotiates well
- Convinces customers
- Gains commitment and agreement
- Handles objections convincingly
- Influences decision making
- Changes other people's views
- Track record of sales success
- Uses a wide range of sales techniques
- Insight into how to improve sales success

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Ineffective and not forthcoming
- Nervous and twitchy
- Unreliable and not punctual
- Failed to negotiate
- No payrise for the past two years
- Avoids conflict at all costs
- Little evidence of developed negotiation skills
- Generally unwilling to convince or sell
- Rarely gains commitment or agreement
- Rarely counters objections convincingly

- Limited evidence of influencing decision making
- Others often retain their own views
- Needs help in selling
- Uses only a limited range of sales techniques
- Lacks insight into how to sell well

Results Driven

Q. Tell me about a situation in which you had to cope with a particularly demanding task. What did you do to ensure you coped? How did you feel? How often do you get asked to achieve difficult goals?

Q. Tell me about a time when you were especially motivated? What most strongly motivates you to work hard? How does this show itself? What de-motivates you?

Q. Describe a recent opportunity you have had to take on new responsibilities? How did the opportunity arise? What were these new responsibilities? What was the outcome?

Q. When was the last time you learnt a new skill at work? What was this skill? How did you apply your learning? What feedback did you receive about your performance?

Q. Give me an example of when you set yourself an ambitious target. What made it so ambitious? How did it compare with other targets you had set yourself? How well did you do?

Q. Tell me about the last time you exceeded your personal targets. By how much did you exceed them? How did you manage this? What has happened since then?

Q. How important is it for you to complete tasks once you have started them? How do you feel when you are unable to complete a task?

Q. How do you respond to setbacks and obstacles when you are trying to achieve deadlines? Please provide an example of when you last experienced this.

Q. When was the last time your patience was genuinely tested as a result of frustration in being unable to achieve a set objective? What happened? How did you feel? What was the outcome?

Q. When have you given up on a task? Why? After what timescale do you regret the decision?

Q. What is the best example you can think of of a strong result in your recent work life?

Q. We all find making decisions difficult at times, tell me about a work situation where you found it hard to decide what should have been done. What made this so hard? What were the consequences of making a poor decision? What did you do? What effect did your decision or non-decision have?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Keeps coming back despite obstacles
- Pushes and fights for objectives
- Uses a different approach to get the same end
- Motivated to get results
- Readily tackles demanding tasks
- Enjoys a challenge
- Gets outstanding results
- Always concerned to improve performance
- Evaluates own performance and recognizes personal weaknesses
- Constantly learning and developing new skills
- Accepts higher personal targets and new objectives
- Sets ambitious targets and personal objectives
- Exceeds targets frequently

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Rationalises failure
- Falls at first hurdle
- Blames the situation on other people
- Gives in easily
- Less motivated than others to achieve
- Prefers simple tasks
- Not necessarily motivated by a challenge
- Mediocre results
- Complacent about achievements
- Limited awareness of own strengths and developmental needs or level of performance
- Not very interested in growing or acquiring new skills
- Prefers not to take on new responsibilities
- Sets easy targets and personal objectives
- Rarely exceeds targets

Decisiveness and Judgement

Q. Can you give me an example of a good decision you have made in the last few months? Why do you feel this was a good decision?

Q. Can you think of a particularly difficult decision you have had to make recently? How did you go about making it?

Q. How much time do you spend weighing things up before making a decision? Please describe the last time you feel you spent too much time making a decision. Please describe the last time you feel you spent too little time making a decision?

Q. What time constraints are typically imposed on you in your decision-making role currently? Have you sought to address this situation in any way?

Q. When have you relied on hunches in decision making? Please provide an example.

Q. What are the most difficult areas of decision making in your current job? Could you walk me through one of these as an example?

Q. What is an example of when you have had to make a hard and commercial decision?

Q. What is an example of when you have had to take a calculated risk?

Q. What is an example of a decision that you have made that indicates that you understand business in the “real world”? Please provide an example which would indicate your commercial/business intuition.

Q. What is an example of a recent work activity that would indicate your ability to look beyond policies, rules and regulations in order to create a commercial result?

Q. What is an example of a situation where instead of sticking to the book you went against policy, out onto a limb to achieve results and how did you sell it to management?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Clear about own goals
- Makes up mind quickly
- Inbuilt path analysis
- Prepared to make a mistake

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Avoids making mistakes with decisions
- Keeps things on hold
- Focuses on the grey areas
- Holds off on definitive answers
- Focuses on the ambiguity

Innovation and Creativity

Q. What ideas have you had in terms of new products, services and markets recently? Please describe what were the outcomes and did they “go live”?

Q. What scope is there for creativity in your job? How do you use it?

Q. What is the best example during a recent period when you have been forced to provide innovative solutions in response to a customer tender/proposal? Please detail the nature of the innovation.

Q. Please provide an example of when you have had to provide alternate strategies to a solution and please detail these.

Q. Please provide an example of when you have improved work practices for your group. Please describe the improvements? Please describe the outcome.

Q. What are some of the most imaginative things you have done in your present position?

Q. Can you think of a situation you had to handle in which old solutions did not work. What did you do to handle it?

Q. What did you do differently than your predecessors in the position?

Q. What kinds of problems have people recently called on you to solve? Tell me about your contribution to solving the problem.

Q. Give me an example of how you have been able to make significant impact on your organization.

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Has new ideas at work
- Free and lateral thinker
- Sees different angles
- Has new approaches to doing things

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Uses standard methodologies
- Predictable and conformist
- Does not experiment
- Lacks imagination

Listening Skills

Q. When someone is speaking to you how do you ensure that you understand what they are saying?

Q. What do you look for in a good listener?

Q. How do you rate your own listening skills? Why?

Q. Please provide an example of when your listening skills have let you down?

Q. Please provide an example of when you have demonstrated strong listening skills?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Listens openly and non-defensively to criticism and opposition
- Accurately hears implied as well as expressed messages.

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Repeatedly interrupts
- Monopolises discussion

Flexibility

Q. Describe a situation where you wish you had acted differently with someone in your workgroup. What happened?

Q. When you are making business decisions relating to clients, how much consideration do you give to your support teams, opinions, ideas and feelings?

Q. Tell me about a time when you deviated from your scheduled roster/diary/agenda. Why did you make that decision? What impact did you have on the business?

Q. Please describe a situation when you have been forced to take a different course of action or a different direction as a result of a more favoured opinion. Please describe the situation.

Q. Please describe an example of when you have displayed flexibility and adaptability in the workplace.

Q. Describe a situation in which your initial attempt to gain someone's support and co-operation failed? Did you try again? What was your approach?

Q. Which bosses have you worked for most effectively and why?

Q. Tell me about some situations in your job where you had to abruptly change what you were doing. What did you do? How did it affect you?

Q. What kinds of problems did you run into switching from position (contract work)?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Good listener
- Balances talking ratio
- Good sense of humour
- Warm and genuine
- Shows natural courtesy to others
- Uses moderate, non-emotive language

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Opinionated and dogmatic
- Pompous, arrogant and insensitive to others
- Accurately hears implied as well
- Keeps interrupting and doesn't listen
- Lacks confidence when dealing with others
- Avoids social contact
- Responds negatively to people
- Short and offhand with people

Building Relationships and Networking

Q. How do you meet new people? How do you feel about them? When was the last time you were required to introduce yourself to new people in a business situation in a social situation? Please provide specific examples?

Q. How do you go about building relationships after an initial meeting? What tools do you use? What is an example of a recent success in this area?

Q. How much of your time do you spend developing contacts rather than initiating them? How do you go about this?

Q. How do you develop your informal contacts?

Q. We all meet people we find it difficult to get along with. Tell me about the last time this happened to you. What were the circumstances? Why did you find this person difficult to get along with? Why do you think the person acted in this way? What did you do to try to resolve the situation?

Q. Tell me about a recent situation in which you have deliberately built and maintain a relationship with an internal or external contact. Why was the relationship important? How did you build this relationship? How has you maintained the relationship since that time? What benefits has this had to the other person?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Comes across as highly genuine and caring
- Warm, empathetic, friendly and sincere
- Diplomatic
- Drawn to other people naturally
- Can talk about almost anything

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Does not treat relationships with high priority
- Insensitive to the feelings of others
- Tends to put people on the defensive
- Tries to get one up on people
- Avoids people and cannot relax with people
- Uses people
- No sense of humour

Negotiating Skills

Q. What are the toughest negotiations you have ever been involved in? Please be specific with your examples. Why were they tough? What were the outcomes?

Q. Please provide me with an example of when a negotiation did not result in a win/win situation for both parties. Why not? What was the outcome?

Q. What has been the most satisfying win/win agreement you have negotiated? How did you create this agreement? What did you learn from this?

Q. How would you describe your negotiation style?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Quick response
- Good memory
- Quick on feet
- Pleasant and evenly disposed
- Works towards win/win outcomes
- Diplomatic style

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Clearly shows emotional feeling inappropriately
- Poor oral communication
- Poor memory or recall
- Irrational, immature, holds a grudge
- Aims for win/lose outcomes
- Unable to resolve conflict

Detail Orientation and Methodical Work Practices

Q. Describe the methods you use to control errors in your work. When was the last time these helped you?

Q. Tell me about the last time you found errors in your work? What caused these errors and what did you do?

Q. In your experience have you noticed any process or task that has been done consistently incorrectly? How did you notice? How did you fix it?

Q. When times are busy how do you prevent items from slipping through the cracks? When was the last time something slipped through the cracks? What did you do to fix it?

Q. Please describe an example of when your detail orientation has worked to your advantage?

Q. Please describe an example of when a more methodical approach has served you well.

Q. Tell me about a time when you had to undertake a complex task or project. What was it? How did you go about the task or project, overcoming the complexity? What was the outcome?

Q. We've all had occasions when we were working on something that just "slipped through the cracks". Can you give me some examples of when this happened to you? Cause? Results?

Q. Describe your system for controlling errors in your work.

Q. Can you give me some examples of times when you found errors in your work? Causes? Results? How did you handle this?

Q. We've all had times when we just couldn't get everything done on time? When and why has this happened to you?

Q. We all have experienced situations when due to the pressures of the day we have little time to allocate to each individual task for the day. Describe the last time this happened to you. What implications did this have on the quality of your work? How did you ensure that the task was done properly? What would you do differently in the future.

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Breaks down information
- Routine and systematic work patterns
- Anally retentive
- Pride in accuracy
- Pedantic in attention to detail
- Quality conscious
- Checks and rechecks

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Avoids documentation and paperwork
- Non-commercial
- Carefree, 'she'll be right" approach
- Focuses on strategic outlook

Commercial Acumen

Q. What can improve the profitability of your present company? Please provide specific examples?

Q. How do you guide/influence the bottom-line? Please provide a specific answer.

Q. What are the major threats and opportunities for your business?

Q. What do you do to keep up to date with your own commercial and business knowledge? When was the last time your abilities in this area were of benefit?

Q. Why do customers choose your products and services? What benefits do they have for your customers? How could you make the products and services more attractive to customers? What other market trends affect the organization?

Q. What is the most important thing you have done to increase profit? What prompted you? What long-term impact did you have? How could you have increased this further?

Q. Give an example of a time when you spotted a good business opportunity. What was this opportunity? Why did you think it was so worthwhile? What was the result of your efforts?

Q. What sort of opportunities do you have to reduce costs? Tell me about a time when you have made some cost savings in the past. How did you choose where to make savings? How much money do you think you saved?

Q. Tell me about the major competitive threats to your organisation's future business.

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Keen awareness of profit and margins for market share
- Uses commercial language
- Knows how and where costs can be produced
- Has a commercial outlook
- Aware of competitor activity
- Aware of competitor products and services
- Spots business opportunities
- Aware of organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- Appreciates market trends
- Informed about market situation
- Is profit-conscious
- Has often introduced ways to reduce costs
- Can see how own performance affects profits

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Focuses totally on technique and product
- Lack of knowledge of budgets, profit margins etc
- Lack of awareness on business results and forecasts
- No planned approach for business growth
- Reacts to short-term gain against long-term benefit
- Unconcerned about competitor activity
- No knowledge of competitor products or services
- Slow in spotting business opportunities
- Limited awareness of organizational strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- Little thought given to changes in customer demand
- Poorly informed about market situation
- Not very profit conscious
- Rarely made cost savings
- Sometimes distances themselves from organizational success and performance

Achievement Orientation

Q. What is your primary focus in the workplace?

Q. How do you see this role contributing to your future career plans?

Q. What are the major achievements you have been most proud of within your life?

Q. How do you know that you are doing a good job?

Q. In your recent career, what do you feel is your greatest achievement?

Q. All jobs have frustrations and problems. Describe some examples of specific job tasks or assignments that have been dissatisfying to you. Exactly why dissatisfying?

Q. Can you give me some examples of experiences in your current job that are most satisfying to you? Why are they so satisfying?

Q. What would be the best example of you giving a project or piece of work your absolutely best effort and being disappointed by the outcome? What would you do differently a second time?

Q. What steps have you taken in the last year to improve your own performance?

Q. Give me an example of when you worked the hardest and felt the greatest sense of achievement?

Q. Describe your involvement in a task or project that had to be done within an agreed timeframe and be of an excellent work standard.

Q. What are your standards of success on your job? What have you done to meet these standards?

Q. Tell me about a time when you weren't very pleased with your performance. What did you do about it?

Q. What do you consider to be the most important contributions your department has made to the organization? What was your role?

Q. In your position, how do you define doing a good job?

Q. What motivates/demotivates you about your current job? How do you know when you succeeded?

Q. How do you cope with unrealistic objectives? What are your feelings? What is your strategy?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Monitors performance
- Not satisfied
- Stretches self
- Ambitious
- Thinks goals through

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Avoids hassles
- Satisfied with his/her lot
- Does not push self
- Overly ambitious, unrealistic aims

Change Orientation

Q. Please describe a situation where you have introduced rapid change to your organization. What did you do and how did you do it?

Q. Tell me about a situation where you have been an agent of change. What was the situation? What was your role? How did you go about implementing the change? How effective were you in influencing and persuading participants and those affected? What was the outcome?

Q. Has there been a recent introduction of new methods and procedures in your new organization? How has this affected you?

Q. What major changes have you experienced in your recent career? What is a recent example? What did you learn from these changes?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Unstructured
- Flexible
- Able to provide examples

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Too unstructured
- Has done it all before
- Too reluctant to implement change

Action Orientation

Q. Have you ever been involved in a start-up situation? What did you do?

Q. How do you react in an emergency at work? Has there been a recent example of this in your work?

Q. What warrants your quick reaction at work?

Q. Please provide an example of when a situation at work has required immediate action?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Acts quickly
- Flexible and adaptable
- Quick to take action
- Minimal feat of failure

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Procrastinates on decisions
- Resists change
- Misses opportunities
- Slow to respond
- Afraid of failure and risk aversion

Quality Orientation

Q. What constitutes quality for you?

Q. Have you had any formal training in quality philosophies? If so, what type and when?

Q. How do you measure quality?

Q. How does your current role add to the quality of your organization? What is a recent example of where you have added to quality processes and policies in your organization?

Q. Give an example of when you had to have produced high quality work. Why did the work have to be of such a high standard? How did you ensure that these standards were met? What would you do to improve the quality of your work?

Q. What sorts of professional standards have you had to adhere to in the past? Why were the important? What difficulties did you encounter maintaining them? How did you ensure that others also complied with these standards?

Q. How did the standards which you set yourself compare to those of others? Which activities do these relate to?

Q. How do you elevate your performance? What feedback have you received from others about the quality of your work?

Q. Tell me about a time when you have set yourself high standards. What did you do to ensure that you met these standards? To what extent did you achieve these standards? How did you feel about the quality of your work?

Q. Give me an example of when time pressures prevented you from spending a lot of time on a task and attending to the required quality. What implications did this have for the quality of your work? How did you ensure that the task was done properly? What would you do differently in the future?

Q. Describe a time when you did not meet your usual standards for work. What alerted you to this? How did you overcome the problem? What were the long-term consequences?

Favourable Behavioural Indicators

- Consistently produces high quality work
- Pays high attention to detail
- Looks for ways of improving
- Finds difficult in compromising or lowering standards
- Produces quality work
- Takes pride in the quality of work
- Maintains high professional standards
- Sets very high standards
- Never compromises own standards
- Makes sure work is totally correct, thorough and accurate
- Hates cutting corners

- Gets work right the first time

Unfavourable Behavioural Indicators

- Shows little concern for quality
- Responds to problems with expediency
- Maximises speed at the risk of quality
- Lacks attention to detail
- Profit rather than customer focused
- Produces poor or mediocre work
- Shows little pride in the quality of own work
- Works inconsistently
- Struggles to maintain high standards
- Compromises easily
- Rarely checks work
- Omits points of detail or makes errors
- Relies on others to find mistakes
- Cuts corners
- Often has to repeat tasks to meet required standards

Proactiveness

Q. Please tell me about a time when you were in danger of missing a deadline. How did this come about? What did you do to ensure you met the deadline required? Did you meet the deadline and what was the outcome?

Responsiveness

Q. Tell me about a time you had to learn something new in a short time. How did you go about teaching yourself? Did you succeed?

Confidence

Q. Tell me about a time when you found yourself with little direction or guidance. What happened? What did you do to overcome the situation? What was the outcome?

Q. Give me an example of a work related incident/occasion where one or more of your strengths aided your performance. Describe your surrounding situation. What do you recognize as your strengths? Explain how your strengths aided your progress? How did your "limitations" impact in this situation? What did you learn from this situation?

Q. Describe a situation where you participated in a forum type gathering. Describe the gathering. What was the purpose of the gathering? What were the ideas you contributed? How comfortable were you in this situation?

Multitasking

Q. Tell me about a recent situation when you were faced with an excessive workload or competing priorities. What happened? How did you go about organizing yourself in that situation? What was the outcome?