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## PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

### Developing Interview Questions:

There are several types of interview questions that might be asked. Depending on the type of position that is being interviewed for, the content of these questions should be modified to reflect the level and complexity of the position being recruited.

When preparing for an interview, first review the job announcement. Study the duties and responsibilities of the assignment and the job requirements to determine the knowledge,

skills, education **(if required)** and abilities necessary to perform the job. It is essential to evaluate each candidate on an equal basis **All candidates should be asked the same set of interview questions (reviewed and approved by HR)**. Preferred qualifications listed on the position description should also be a consideration.

#### Qualifications Appraisal Rating Form:

All members of the Qualifications Appraisal Rating Board must complete the Qualifications Appraisal Rating Form. The overall score for a candidate should be supported by the checks in the scoring columns. All scores will be averaged to determine the overall ranked order of applicants. Scores below a 70 must be justified with notes in the corresponding candidate's comments block on the Qualifications Appraisal Rating Form.

#### Interview Question Notes:

It is important for all members of the Qualifications Appraisal Board to document candidate responses to all interview questions.

### INTERVIEW QUESTION EXAMPLES

#### OPENING & CLOSING

##### OPENING:

- x Briefly summarize your experience and how it is relevant to the position.
- x Why do you want to work for the (insert name of department) and what is your understanding of the department's function?
- x Tell us a bit about your work background, and then give us a description of how you think it relates to our current opening.
- x Why are you interested in this position?
- x What qualities and skill

- x Can you give an example of a project or task that didn't go as planned? How did you adapt your approach to still achieve success?
- x Tell me about a time when you had to step into a new role or take on additional responsibilities at work. How did you approach the transition?
- x How do you handle feedback or constructive criticism about your work? Can you give an example of a time when you used feedback to adapt and improve?
- x Give an example of a time when you were trying to meet a deadline, but you were interrupted and did not make the deadline. How did you respond?
- x Give an example of a time when you had to quickly change project priorities. How did you do it?
- x Suppose you are in a situation where deadlines and priorities change frequently and rapidly. How would you handle it?
- x People react differently when job demands are constantly changing. How do you react to this?
- x Have you ever disagreed with a decision that your boss has made? What did you do?

#### ATTENTION TO DETAIL

- x We are seeking employees who focus on detail. What strategies have you used to prevent making mistakes?
- x When there is a decision for a new critical process, how do you communicate by-step processes to ensure other people understand and will complete the process correctly?
- x Tell us the steps you take to monitor the quality of your work in your current job.
- x How do you decide when something is good enough or when it needs to be as close as possible to perfection? When have you had to make this determination? Explain.
- x Tell us how the qu(ne)-12.2 (-6.4 (e).18.9 (b)egy.1 (oc)-8 (s( y)-8 (o)-1212.2 ( pr)-6.u( w)-2.9 (or)-6.3 (k)-8.

## CAREER GOALS AND SELF DEVELOPMENT

- x What career path have you established for yourself and how does this position fit into your plan?
- x How do you measure success on the job?
- x What keeps you challenged and motivated to do your best?
- x What have you done to be more effective in your position?
- x What are you currently doing to improve your overall performance?
- x Can you describe your short-term and long-term career goals, and how you plan to achieve them?
- x How do you prioritize self-development and continuous learning in your professional life?
- x What strategies do you use to stay updated with industry trends and developments?
- x Can you discuss a time when you took the initiative to enroll in a training program or seek out a mentor to further your professional development?
- x Can you provide an example of a time when you identified a skill gap and took steps to address it?
- x How do you prioritize your professional development and ensure continuous learning?
- x What achievements were you most proud of in your most recent position?

## ANALYTICAL, PROBLEM SOLVING, CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND CREATIVITY

- x Have you ever had to persuade a peer, group or superior to accept a proposal or idea? How did you go about doing it? What was the result and how did you feel about it?
- x Describe a time you recommended a change to procedure. What did you learn from that experience? How did you apply that learning in other situations?
- x Tell us about a time when big changes took place in your job. What did you do to adjust to the change?
- x Tell me about a time when you've had to use your analytical skills to solve a problem.
- x Have you ever had to introduce a change into your department that was met with resistance? How did you handle the situation?
- x How often has your work been interrupted by unforeseen circumstances? What do you do when this happens?
- x Tell me about a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures.
- x Have you ever had to make an important decision when your boss was away? What were the circumstances and outcome?
- x Have you ever had to champion an unpopular change? What was the situation and how did you handle it?
- x Can you provide an example of when you had to think critically to identify the root cause of a problem?
- x How do you assess the validity and reliability of sources when conducting research or gathering information?
- x How do you prioritize tasks when faced with multiple competing demands and limited resources?
- x Give an example of a situation where you had to make a decision based on incomplete information. How did you approach the decision-making process?
- x Can you discuss a time when you had to identify assumptions underlying a problem or argument and evaluate their validity?
- x Can you describe a project or task where you had to come up with creative solutions to overcome a challenge?
- x If you were tasked with improving [a specific process or product], what innovative ideas would you propose?
- x Please describe a project where you used graphics or marketing materials that effectively communicated a brand's message or campaign.
- x Tell me about a time when you had limited resources and were able to bring a project to the finish line.
- x Describe the most challenging work problem you faced in your last job.
- x Walk me through a scenario of a process you invented or improved.
- x Describe the most complex problem you had to solve in your current/previous position.

## COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- x Tell me about how you delivered project results to your manager.
- x Describe a time when you resolved a conflict with a colleague in your past role.
- x Give an example of how you carefully considered your audience prior to communicating with them. What factors influenced your communication?
- x Describe a time you used your communication skills to negotiate with a difficult person.
- x Have you ever given a presentation to a group? How did you prepare for it? What would you do differently?
- x Describe a time when you were able to overcome a communication barrier(s).







- x Can you discuss a project where you used quantitative analysis to assess risks or opportunities? What methodologies did you employ?
- x What office software and finance/accounting systems do you have experience with? What was your role (i.e. end user, maintenance, primary contact person, etc.)?
- x Tell me about your experience with journal entry preparation, account reconciliation, and variance analysis (i.e. budget vs actuals, trends, etc.).
- x What experience do you have with preparing for audits and working with auditors?
- x What experience do you have with interpreting policies and procedures?
- x Describe your experience with reconciling reports to prepare journal entries, and billing reports that charge back to multiple accounts.
- x This role is responsible for preparing financial statements, operational budgets for the various accounts units and departments. This will also include monthly review of actuals vs budget for all funds. Please explain your experience in this area.

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## TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION

- x Tell me about a time when you had to adjust to a colleague's working style in order to complete a project successfully.
- x Describe a situation when working with others produced more successful results than if you had completed the project on your own.
- x Recount a time when you worked with a colleague who was not doing their share of the work. How did you handle it?
- x

- x Tell us about a time when you identified a need for a new approach.
- x Tell us how the duties and responsibilities of your current (or past) position related to the organization's business strategy.
- x Is it more important to be a detail-oriented person or a big picture person? Explain.
- x What do you think is the role of this position in strategic planning for the organization?
- x Tell me about a time where your ability to keep your eyes on the future proved to be a benefit to your organization/department/team?
- x Tell me about a strategic initiative or opportunity you identified and pursued.
- x Give me an example of a strategy you developed to achieve a long-term business need goal, or objective.
- x Give me an example of a time you failed to align the strategic priorities of your department/team with the strategic priorities of the organization.

#### MANAGEMENT & SUPERVISORY

- x Give an example of a time when you needed to help other employees learn a new skill set. What did you do?
- x Have you ever managed a situation where the people or units reporting to you were in different locations? Tell us how this worked.
- x

- x What do you do to stay knowledgeable about current ~~industry~~ <sup>related</sup> legislation or trends?
- x Describe your procedures for evaluating your direct reports.
- x Tell me about a major project you manager. How did you assign tasks to your direct reports? How did you monitor Progress? How did you measure success?
- x Give me an example of a time you had to take disciplinary action with a direct report.
- x What do you consider to be your key accomplishments?
- x What do you believe your strengths to be? What do you feel you could most improve upon?
- x What skills, knowledge, or experience make you a fit for this position?
- x



- x In your position, how would you define doing an excellent job? On what basis was your definition determined?
- x When judging the performance of your subordinate, what factors or characteristics are most important to you?
- x Tell me about the methods you use to keep informed of your employees' activities, achievements, progress toward objectives, etc.
- x Describe your procedures for evaluating your direct reports.
- x Tell me about a time where you were not as effective as you would have liked to have been managing an employee's or a team's work.
- x Give me an example of a time you had to tell a direct report that you were dissatisfied with their

### **ASA Interview Question Examples:**

- x Describe your experience in working with the general public, academic personnel, and/or university students.
- x What is your experience with logging and tracking data in spreadsheets? What programs did you use?
- x What is your experience working with Microsoft products such as Word, Outlook, and
- x How often has your work been interrupted by unforeseen circumstances? What do you do when this happens?
- x Describe your experience with scheduling, coordinating events, and calendaring.
- x Tell us about a time that you willingly took on more work even though you were already busy you able to get everything done?
- x What have you done to be more effective in your position? What are you currently doing to improve your overall performance?
- x Tell us about a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventative measures.
- x Describe a time when you were faced with multiple priority tasks and how you completed the tasks.
- x Give me an example of a time when you found errors in your work. What caused the errors? How did you correct your mistakes?
- x How do you keep yourself organized, and how do you manage details so that things don't fall through the cracks?
- x Give an example of your ability to work well under pressure, with frequent interruptions in a fast environment, while still performing accurate work.
- x How do you prioritize incoming calls when faced with a high volume?
- x Can you describe a time when you had to deal with an irate customer over the phone? How did you handle the situation?
- x How do you ensure accuracy and attention to detail when taking messages or transferring calls?
- x How do you ensure clear and professional communication when answering calls, even during busy periods?
- x How do you manage multiple tasks at the front desk, such as answering calls, greeting visitors, and handling administrative tasks?
- x How do you keep track of calls and messages to ensure nothing is missed or forgotten?
- x What steps do you take to ensure that each caller feels valued and heard, even when you are very busy?
- x How do you handle a situation where multiple lines are ringing simultaneously?
- x How do you handle confidential or sensitive information over the phone?
- x What phone systems and office software are you familiar with? How comfortable are you with learning new technologies?
- x How do you ensure accurate and timely entry of information into the computer system while managing phone calls and front desk duties?
- x How do you greet and welcome guests or customers who approach the front desk?
- x Can you describe a time when you had to handle a difficult or upset guest at the front desk? How did you handle the situation?
- x What does good customer service mean to you?

### **Budget Specific Questions for ASA:**

- x How frequently do you think you should update a budget spreadsheet and what steps would you take to keep it organized?
- x How do you verify the accuracy of the expenses entered?
- x How would you resolve a discrepancy that you identified with the data reported?







- x Please describe any experiences you've had working with first generation college students (if any). What traits do you feel are important for an advisor to have in supporting this student population?
- x What experience do you have explaining complicated or ~~subtle~~ processes to students?
- x This position has several areas of responsibility, including programmatic, student services, and faculty support. Can you tell us what strategies you use to prioritize your ~~work~~ workflow?
- x

- x The size and scope of CSU Bakersfield's athletics program may differ from your previous experiences. How do you plan to familiarize yourself with our institution and its unique needs and challenges?

**IST Question Examples:**

- x What laboratory equipment do you have experience using?
- x Do you have experience with maintaining laboratory equipment?
- x What steps do you take to maintain a safe laboratory environment?
- x How to you properly store and handle chemicals?
- x Do you have experience with maintaining inventory? If so, please provide details.

- x Can you explain how you would troubleshoot a computer that would not power on?
- x Describe any experience you have with deploying computers on a large scale.
- x You discover a vulnerability in a system. How do you proceed?
- x Can you describe your experience with remote desktop applications?
- x How do you handle software installation and updates?
- x Explain the steps you would take to resolve a slow network issue.
- x What steps do you take to ensure a customer is satisfied with your support?
- x How do you explain technical issues to someone who is not a tech?
- x A user reports that they cannot access their email. What steps would you take to troubleshoot the issue?
- x A critical system goes down, and several departments are affected. What do you do?
- x You have two urgent tickets: one from a VIP user and one from a regular user. How do you prioritize them?
- x Describe your approach to handling a recurring issue that seems to have no permanent fix.
- x How do you ensure the security of sensitive information when providing remote support?
- x What are some best practices you follow for password management?
- x Describe your experience with IT ticketing systems. Which ones have you used?

### Closing Summary

In conclusion, preparing for an interview involves a thorough understanding of the job requirements and responsibilities. Interview questions should help objectively evaluate a candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities, ensuring that all candidates are assessed equally and fairly. By structuring questions to elicit comprehensive responses and maintaining consistency in the interview process, the