

Interview Question Guide

All questions must be job-related. Ensure that:

- the answer to the question measures or predicts job performance
- the same questions are asked of every applicant
- the questions focus on job-related functions and the applicant's ability to perform those functions
- the questions are based on the knowledge, skills, and abilities listed in the job description

Sample Job-Related Questions:

A variety of job-related questions are listed below. They are designed to assist hiring managers to obtain pertinent information from applicants.

1. Questions To Learn How The Applicant Regards Current or Past Positions

- Would you tell me about your present (last) position?
- How would you describe a typical work day?
- What activities did you enjoy most at your last job?
- What do you feel you do best? Why?
- What job functions are most difficult for you? Why?
- What problems do you encounter on the job? Which frustrate you the most? Why? How do you deal with them?
- What was your greatest contribution in your present (past) position?
- What are the reasons you left your last job?

2. Questions To Probe The Applicant's Relationships With People

- What do you feel are your supervisor's greatest strengths? Why? Weaknesses? Why?
- For what kinds of things have you been recognized? Criticized?
- How would you characterize your coworkers?
- What disagreements have you had with coworkers?
- How would you describe your relationships with people in other departments?
- What kind of people do you enjoy working with? What kind do you find difficult?
- What do you consider essential in the management of people?
- What types of committees have you worked on? What did you contribute?
- What types of teams have you been a part of? What was your role on the team?

3. Questions To Stimulate Self-Assessment

- As an employee, what do you consider your greatest strengths?
- In what areas would you most like to improve? Why?
- What motivates you?
- Why did you select this particular field of work?

4. Questions To Determine How The Applicant Would Apply Skills, Experience, and Knowledge To The Vacant Position

- What attracts you to the job for which you are applying?
- What do you believe qualifies you for this position?
- What elements of this job would be new to you?
- What additional training do you feel is required to achieve full proficiency?

A common type of job interview is the **behavioral interview** or **behavioral event interview**. In this type of interview, the interviewers tend to ask questions about general situations, with the applicants asked to describe how they did or would handle a specific situation.

5. Questions To Determine Behaviors the Applicant would display in certain situations

- Describe your most challenging customer service situation and explain how you handled it.
- What has been your greatest professional mistake and what did you do to recover from it?
- Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation and how you handled it.
- Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic in solving a problem
- Give me an example of a time when you set a goal and were able to achieve it.
- Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and you were required to prioritize your tasks.
- Describe your typical way of dealing with conflict and please include an example.
- Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the last year.
- Give me an example of a time when something you tried to accomplish failed.
- Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead on a project.
- Tell me about a recent situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or co-worker.
- Give me an example of a time when you motivated others.
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
- Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.
- Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures.
- What do you do when your schedule is interrupted? Give an example of how you handle it.
- Have you had to convince a team to work on a project they weren't thrilled about? How did you do it?
- Tell me about how you have worked effectively under pressure.

Permissible Inquiries During Interviews

SUBJECT	PERMISSIBLE INQUIRIES	NON-PERMISSIBLE INQUIRIES
Name	Whether applicant has worked for the University under a different name. Whether any additional information relative to change of name or use of an assumed name or nickname is necessary to enable a check on applicant's work and educational record	Inquiries about the name that would indicate applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, or descent. Inquiries into previous name of applicant when it has been changed by court order, marriage, or otherwise.
Marital and Family Status	Whether applicant can meet specified work schedules or has activities, commitments, or responsibilities that may hinder the meeting of work attendance requirements. Inquiries as to duration of stay on job or anticipated absences that are made to males and females alike.	Any inquiries indicating whether an applicant is single, divorced, engaged, etc. Inquiries about number and age of children. Any such question that directly or indirectly results in limitation of job opportunity in any way.
Age	If a minor, require proof of age in form of a work permit or certificate of age. Require proof of age by certificate after being hired. Whether applicant meets the minimum age requirements as set by law; or statement that upon hire, proof of age must be submitted. If age is a legal requirement, whether applicant, if hired, can furnish proof of age; or statement that hire is subject to verification of age.	Requirement that applicant state age or date of birth. Requirement that applicant produce proof of age in the form of a birth certificate or baptismal record before hiring. (The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 forbids discrimination against persons who are age 40 and older.)
Citizenship	If applicant is not a U.S. citizen, whether he or she has the legal right to remain permanently in the U.S. Statement that if hired, applicant may be required to submit proof of citizenship. If not a citizen, whether applicant is prevented lawfully from becoming employed because of visa or immigration status.	Inquiries into applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, birthplace, mother tongue, or national origin of applicant's parents or spouse.
Ancestry or National Origin	There are no acceptable pre-employment inquiries regarding race, color, or national origin. It is unlawful to discriminate against an applicant on the basis of race, lineage, ancestry descent, place of birth, or national origin/citizenship. Inquiry should be limited to asking whether applicant is legally eligible to work in the United States.	Inquiry asking specifically the nationality, racial, or religious affiliation of a school. Inquiry as to applicant's mother tongue or how foreign language ability was acquired.

SUBJECT	PERMISSIBLE INQUIRIES	NON-PERMISSIBLE INQUIRIES
Education	Inquiry into applicant's academic, vocational, or professional education and schools attended. Inquiry into language skills such as reading, speaking, and writing foreign languages.	
Experience	Inquiry into applicant's work experience, including names and addresses of previous employers, dates of employment, reasons for leaving, and into other countries visited.	
General	Are there other factors that we have not discussed that would impact your decision to accept this position if offered?	
Address or Duration of Residence	Inquiry as to applicant's address and place and length of current and previous addresses. Inquiry into how long applicant has been a resident of the state or city.	Specific inquiry into foreign addresses that would indicate national origin. Inquiry into names or relationship or persons with whom applicant resides. Whether applicant owns or rents home.
Military Record	Inquiry into type of education and experience in service as it relates to a particular job, dates of service, branch of service.	Type of discharge.
Photograph	Statement that it may be required after hiring for identification.	Request photograph before hiring. Requirement that applicant affix a photograph to his or her application. Request that applicant , at his or her option, submit photograph. Requirement of photograph after interview but before hiring.
Disability	May ask about an applicant's ability to perform specific job functions. May ask applicants to describe/demonstrate how they would perform job tasks. Once a conditional job offer is made, disability-related questions and medical examinations are permissible if required for all employees in the job category.	Inquiries about an applicant's physical and/or mental condition. Disability- related questions or request for medical examination prior to making a conditional job offer to the applicant.