## Examples of Behavioral Interview Questions

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<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Interview Question Examples</th>
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| **Decision Making** | • Give an example of when you last made a quick and definitive decision.  
• On which decision did you deliberate the longest? Tell me about it?  
• What was the last business decision you faced? How long did it take for you to make your decision about what to do?  
• When making a decision in conjunction with others, how have you sought their opinions? Give an example of a recent group-based decision process.  
• What methods have you used to ensure that a decision you have made was an effective decision? Give a recent example of using those methods to ensure a quality decision.  
• When making a decision that affects others either inside or outside your work group, what methods do you use to communicate that decision to others?  
• Give an example of a decision that you made and how you communicated it. |
| **Self Confidence** | • Describe a situation when you demonstrated confidence in your viewpoint despite opposition.  
• Describe a time when you had to trust your judgment to make a difficult decision. |
| **Autonomy**      | • Describe a situation when you worked without guidance in an unusual situation.  
• Tell me about a time when you had to act quickly in order to take advantage of a limited opportunity, but were unable to consult with others.  
• Describe an incident in which you took matters into your own hands although, it should have been handled by your boss.  
• What are the limits of your authority in your job? Have you ever gone over those limits? |
| **Integrity**     | • When have you taken a stand against a group on what you felt to be a matter of principle?  
• What conflicts of interest have you experienced or could you experience in your present role? How have you/would you resolve these? |
| **Working Under Pressure** | • Describe the last time you felt upset or angry at work.  
• Describe a time when you had to work under a high degree of pressure.  
• Describe an example of when you had to work to meet an important deadline. |
| **Persuasiveness** | • Describe your most satisfying (or disappointing) experience in presenting to, and gaining the support of top management for an idea or proposal.  
• Tell me about a time when you needed to persuade others to commit to a course of action.  
• Give me an example of a time when you were unable to persuade someone to your point of view. |
| Communication Skills                      | • Tell me about a presentation which you gave recently.  
|                                         | • Describe a situation where you had to convey complex information to someone.  
|                                         | • What is the worst communication problem you have experienced?  
|                                         | • What differing approaches do you employ in talking with different types of people?  
|                                         | How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches?  
|                                         | • Give an example of when you had the choice of either writing a report or giving an oral report. Which option did you take and why? What was the impact of this decision? |
| Relationship Building                   | • When you last found yourself with a new group of people to work with, how did you get to know them?  
|                                         | • Tell me about a time when you quickly developed a relationship with a new colleague or client.  
|                                         | • What do you know about the personal interests of some of your subordinates? How did you find out? |
| Collaboration and Teamwork             | • Describe a situation where there was a disagreement among members of your team.  
|                                         | • Describe the skills and personal qualities you believe are valuable, and those you have personally contributed, to a group task or project.  
|                                         | • Tell me about a time when you have consciously participated as a group member rather than a group leader? What did you actually do?  
|                                         | • What have you done to build good working relationships within a team? Give an example? |
| Drive and Energy                        | • Describe a time when you had a challenging target to achieve.  
|                                         | • Tell me about a situation that required you to work harder than normal.  
|                                         | • How do you catch up on an accumulated backlog of work after a holiday or conference?  
|                                         | • Give me some examples of projects or tasks where you postponed immediate action. Why? |
| Initiative and Innovation               | • Tell me about a project you worked on that required you to personally generate a lot of new ideas.  
|                                         | • Describe a change you introduced to an existing work process.  
|                                         | • What have you done to make your job easier or more rewarding? What projects have you started on your own this year? Tell me about one. |
| Self-Motivation                         | • Describe when you worked the hardest and felt the greatest sense of achievement.  
|                                         | • Tell me about a time when you felt that you just couldn’t get anything done. Why? What did you do? How? |
| Work Standards                          | • What are your standards of success in your job?  
|                                         | • Are you satisfied with your department’s performance? Why or why not? |
| Commitment                              | • Tell me about some times when you have gone an “extra mile” for your organization.  
|                                         | • How is your present job important to your present organization?  
<p>|                                         | • What do you do to ensure that the importance is realized in practice? |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Resilience</th>
<th>Customer Service</th>
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<td>• Tell me about a time your enthusiasm dwindled regarding a work project or situation.</td>
<td>• What do you do to find out about your customers’ needs?</td>
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<td>• Tell me about some disappointments you have had at work. How did you respond?</td>
<td>• Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond your job requirements to meet a client’s expectations.</td>
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<td>• Have you ever had a run of bad luck at work? What happened?</td>
<td>• Describe a situation that required you to work with a difficult client to provide a very high quality service.</td>
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<td>• Have you ever got all geared up for a major job or project that was cancelled at the last minute? What did you do?</td>
<td>• Can you think of a time when you turned around a complaint and the company received praise? (If necessary) tell me about that?</td>
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<td>• Provide an example of a time when you consulted closely with a client to identify and formulate a value adding initiative.</td>
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<td>• Tell me about a time when you had an angry customer, either on the telephone or in person. What was the situation, and what actions did you take to deal with the customer?</td>
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<td>• Give an example of a time when you demonstrated exemplary customer service. What was the situation, what did you say or do?</td>
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<td>• Give a recent example of a time when you were unable to satisfy either an internal or external customer. What was the situation and what did you say or do?</td>
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<td>Creative Thinking</td>
<td>Vision</td>
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<td>• Describe a time when you generated a new approach to an existing work procedure.</td>
<td>• Tell me about any strategic planning activity in which you were involved that went well. What was your own direct involvement?</td>
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<td>• Provide an example of a time when you generated creative ideas to solve a problem.</td>
<td>• What range of issues determines the success or otherwise of your present organization?</td>
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<td>• Describe a time when you implemented an improvement to a process, service or product. What is the most imaginative or innovative task you have done in your present position?</td>
<td>• What are some of the goals of your present organization? What part have you played in setting these?</td>
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<td>• Tell me about a new business idea that you have had in the last twelve months.</td>
<td>• How far ahead do you plan? Can you give me an example?</td>
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<td>Judgment</td>
<td>Commercial Orientation/Entrepreneurial</td>
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| • When have you included subordinates in your decision making? Tell me about a specific example? How did you incorporate their input?  
• What is the biggest decision you made in the last year? What alternatives did you consider? Why did you do it that way?  
• Describe a situation when it was difficult to reach a judgment quickly.  
• Give me two examples of good decisions you have made in the last six months? What were the alternatives? Why were they good decisions? | • Tell me about some successful business initiatives that you have taken in the last five years.  
• Tell me about a time when you have followed an opportunity that others were doubtful about. What happened?  
• Provide an example of when you had to reach a quick understanding of the commercial implications of a new issue.  
• Tell me about a time when you balanced the competing priorities of a number of stakeholders.  
• Tell me about a time you suggested a competitive marketing strategy for a business. | • Describe a time when you critically evaluated information in order to solve a problem.  
• What problems are you currently working on that came as a surprise? How much advance notice did you have of the problems?  
• Outline a particularly challenging analytical problem you worked on.  
• Describe the biggest problem you have encountered in your last role? How did you handle it? What steps did you take after you identified the problem?  
• What sources of information do you use to keep aware of the problems and issues within your organization?  
• Describe a time you have had to remain aware and on alert of potential problems. Provide an example of a time when you used a non-standard approach to solve a problem.  
• When you are leading a group through a problem solving process, what are the steps in that process? Please describe a recent situation in which you used a problem solving process and discuss each step.  
• Give an example of a time you were trying to solve a problem on your own. Specifically, what was the situation, and what did you do to determine the potential solutions?  
• Describe a situation in which you thought you had solved a problem, only to have it resurface. What was the situation, and how did you approach the problem differently? What did you learn that you applied to subsequent problem solving processes? |
| Numerical Analysis | What numerical analyses do you run through fairly routinely in your work?  
|                   | What numbers give critical signs of the well-being of your organization or department?  
|                   | Tell me about a time you had to undertake considerable numerical analysis. Did you enjoy it? |
| Delegation        | Prior to being off work for a holiday, what did you do before you went away to organize your work?  
|                   | Give an example of how you decided what to delegate and to whom.  
|                   | Give an example in your own experience where you have been faced with delegating authority. How did it work? |
| Leadership        | Provide an example of a time you implemented a plan with your team.  
|                   | Describe a time when you promoted a clear sense of purpose amongst your team.  
|                   | Tell me about a time you motivated others to reach team goals.  
|                   | Have you ever had a problem in getting your subordinates to accept your ideas or departmental goals? What approach did you use? How effective was it?  
|                   | Provide an example of a time when you successfully led a team to overcome a problem.  
|                   | Describe a situation where you inspired a positive attitude amongst others within your team.  
|                   | In some situations, a person who does not have formal leadership authority can assume a position of informal leadership. Think of a situation in which you were not the formal leader but assumed a leadership role. Tell me specifically what the situation was, and how you demonstrated being a leader.  
|                   | Leading others combines many skills and behaviors. One of those skills is communicating to influence others, perhaps to win resources or gain a decision to enable implementation. Tell me about a time when your communication skills were powerful enough for you to influence others' actions. What was the situation and exactly what did you say or do?  
|                   | Occasionally, you have to make a decision that you know will not be well received. Give me an example of a time when you made a decision that was unpopular. What was the situation, and specifically, what were your actions to communicate the decision and address negative feedback?  
|                   | Think of a time when you received feedback from an employee that was constructive in nature and not very positive. In detail, tell me about the feedback and exactly how you responded? |
| Management Control | What methods do you usually use to keep informed of what is going on in your area of responsibility? What reports do you use? What controls do you have?  
|                   | What do you do when you find that your techniques for regulating activities are loosely adhered to by your subordinates?  
|                   | Have you experienced a situation that seemed to be slipping out of control? (If so) what have you done to correct it? |
| Strategic Focus | • Describe a situation where you approached a task from a broad perspective.  
• Tell me about a task or project that required long term planning to meet your objectives.  
• Describe an occasion when you had to analyze data to interpret market conditions or trends.  
• Provide an example of a time you had to make a strategic decision on the basis of ambiguous information. |
| --- | --- |
| Development and Coaching | • Give me an example of a time when you made a significant investment into your own professional development?  
• Provide an example when you considered the development priorities of someone on your team.  
• If you are promoted tomorrow, do you have a replacement? What did you do to develop him or her?  
• Tell me about a time you helped plan the professional development of someone in your team.  
• Tell me about some of the people who have become successful as a result of your management. |
| Organization and Planning | • Describe the last important deadline you had to meet.  
• Describe an occasion when you had to organize work in an unstructured setting? What were your priorities? How did you establish them? Describe an occasion where you had multiple competing deadlines.  
• Tell me about a complex project you worked on that required significant planning and accuracy of planning.  
• Tell me about a strategic planning activity in which you were involved that went well. What was your direct involvement?  
• Think of a recent project in which you had to plan and describe what tools you used for your planning purposes. How did you use them to plan what was needed to successfully complete the project.  
• Provide an example of a time when you managed a project under significant constraints or setbacks. Tell me about a time in which you effectively dealt with emergencies or surprises. Specifically, explain how your planning efforts helped you to deal with the unexpected.  
• Think of a recent experience you had in planning work. What was the situation and specifically how did you proceed, once you identified your goal?  
• Tell me about an experience in which your project plan did not accurately reflect the difficulty or length of time needed to complete a project. At what point did you discover the inaccuracy and what steps did you take to address it? |
| Achieving Results | • What methods or tools have you used to achieve pre-established results? Give an example of a recent time when you had to manage yourself to achieve results.  
• Tell me about a time when you were unable to achieve a desired result. What was the situation, how did you determine that you would not achieve the result, and what did you do about it?  
• What is the process you use to set goals and monitor progress on goals within your work group? Give a recent example that demonstrates how you set and monitor work group goals. |
### Communicating Verbally

- Describe a time when you had to verbally communicate sensitive information to a group of people related to a change effort. How did you decide what to tell? How did you structure your verbal communication? Describe the situation and what you said or did.
- Give an example of a time when you were upset or offended by something that was said to you. Describe how you gave that person feedback about what they said?
- Tell about a time when you were ineffective in a verbal communication. What was the situation and what did you do differently as a result of that experience?

### Communicating in Writing

- Describe a time when you had to communicate, in writing, information that you knew would be received negatively. What was the situation and how did you structure your written communication to mitigate the negative impact?
- Tell me about a time when you had to communicate, in writing, very detailed procedural information or instructions. What was the situation? How did you structure your writing to address all the details?
- Give an example of a time when an email or a memo you sent to someone had an unintended effect. What was the situation and what did you learn from that experience that you incorporated into your subsequent writing projects?

### Managing Projects

- When managing a project with several people, what communication methods have you used to keep the group informed about project goals, milestones, and deadlines? Give an example of a project and communication methods you used to keep the group informed.
- What project management tools have you used to keep the project on track, both within timelines and within budget? Give a recent example that demonstrates your ability to use these tools to keep the project on track.
- When you are leading a project, how have you organized your workspace to be able to manage the details of the project? Give an example of a recent project you led.
- What actions have you taken at the close of a project? Give an example of a recent project that ended; describe your action steps.

### Measuring Results

- Think of a time when you completed a project. What steps did you take to ensure that the work met stated goals?
- Describe any tools that you use to measure results for a completed project or in any of your work.
- In your projects or work, how do you know you are completing the project or work as planned? Specifically, give an example of a recent experience in which you had to monitor your progress, how you monitored it, and what you did as a result of monitoring.
- What feedback mechanisms, aside from an annual performance appraisal, have you used to make sure your work, or the work of your staff, is on target? Describe them in detail.
| Resolving Conflict | • In conflict situations, it is often tempting to jump to a solution quickly without identifying the issues involved in the conflict. Tell me about a time when you resisted this temptation and worked in conjunction with others to obtain a result accepted by those involved.  
• Sometimes, people's emotions can get in the way of resolving a conflict. Describe a time when your communication skills helped diffuse a tense situation. What was the situation and what exactly did you do or say to help?  
• Describe a time when you were in a position to help resolve a conflict. Specifically, how did you demonstrate effective listening skills? Tell me what skills you used and the impact your listening skills had on the conflict situation.  
• Conflict can be an uncomfortable experience. Can you think of a time when you did not address a situation because of the conflict that might arise? Tell me about the situation and what happened as a result of your approach. |
| Supervising | • Describe a time when you had to give constructive feedback to an employee where you knew the feedback might not be well received. What was the situation and what did you say or do?  
• Tell me about a time when you had to intercede in a conflict situation between two of your employees. What was the situation, what did you do, and what was the outcome?  
• Using a recent example, explain how you stay informed about organizational initiatives and policies in order to interpret them for your employees. |
| Team Building | • Give an example of a time when you were responsible for creating a project team in order to accomplish work. Emphasize details that demonstrate your skill in building a team.  
• Think of a time in which you were leading a team and had to pay particular attention to team member morale and spirit. Describe the situation and your specific actions to improve team morale and spirit.  
• When you were last a leader or member of a team, describe the mechanisms you put into place that fostered open communication among the team members.  
• Tell me about a time when you were a team leader or member and had responsibility to develop a way to recognize team achievements. How did you determine what to recognize? What were the actions that you took to create and sustain team recognition? |
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<th>Individual Learning Style</th>
<th>Presenting</th>
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<tr>
<td>Give me an example of the last time you had to learn something new, such as a software application, or a procedure, or even directions to a new place. What was the situation and what steps did you take to learn that something new?</td>
<td>Give an example of a time when you had to manage group processes while giving a presentation. Describe the situation and your actions.</td>
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<td>The last time you received instructions about how to do something, what actions did you take to ensure you understood the instructions correctly? Tell me how you responded to the request.</td>
<td>Describe a situation in which you were giving a presentation and the direction was not well received. What actions did you take to change tactics in the middle of the presentation?</td>
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<td>When was the last time you learned a new skill, such as (give an example related to the open position)? After you learned the skill, what actions did you take to reinforce that new skill on the job? Tell me what the skill is and specifically how you reinforced it.</td>
<td>Rate your comfort level in giving presentations to large groups on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is low; 5 is high). What are the ways in which you seek to reduce stress and gain comfort before presenting to large groups?</td>
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<td>Sometimes a new skill is not truly learned because the opportunity to reinforce that skill through practice is missing. Can you think of a time when you were not able to ‘hold onto’ a new skill? Specifically, what was the skill, what was the situation in which you could not keep the skill, and what was the result?</td>
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