

Student Employment Interview Question Bank

CAREER MANAGEMENT

Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

These questions can also be used to break the ice and get to know your applicant.

1. Tell us about yourself.
2. Tell us a bit about your work background, and then give us a description of how you think it relates to this position.
3. Why are you interested in this position?
4. What do you know about our department/program?
5. What are your short-term and long-term career goals?
6. In what areas would you like to develop further? How can this job help?
7. Tell us about an issue that you are particularly passionate about. How has that passion impacted your career goals?

CRITICAL THINKING/PROBLEM SOLVING

Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

1. Tell us about a time that you have had to troubleshoot a complicated problem or issue. What steps did you take and what were the results?
2. Provide an example of a time in which you had to use your fact-finding skills to gain information.
3. Describe a situation in which you identified a problem and explain how you resolved it
4. Have you ever had people give you assignments without complete instructions? How did you handle it?
5. Provide an example when you used tools such as survey data, research or statistics to define or solve a problem.
6. Tell us about a situation where you have had to analyze a large quantity of data. What tools and approaches did you use, and what did you learn from the analysis?
7. Tell us a time when you had to carefully analyze a situation in order to make a decision.
8. Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
9. Tell us a time in which you had to not finish a task because of a lack of information. How did you handle it?
10. Tell us about a time when you had to make an important decision. What process did you go through to make this decision?
11. Describe the most difficult decision you've made.

Creativity

12. What do you do to maintain your creative energy and inspiration?
13. Describe the most creative way you have solved a problem.
14. Describe the most creative project you have carried out.
15. Describe an ideal work environment or "the perfect job."
16. In what way(s) do you express your personality in the workplace?
17. What unique qualities or experiences would you bring to this position?

Entrepreneurial Skills

18. Give us an example of a time when one of your suggestions was put into practice by your supervisor.
19. Tell us about an accomplishment that you are very proud of and why it means so much to you.
20. What ways have you found to make a job easier or more rewarding?
21. Can you tell us about a time during your previous (or current) employment when you suggested a better way to something?

ORAL/WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

1. Describe the most significant piece of writing you have had to complete.
2. Give us a recent example that best shows your ability to communicate effectively.
3. Give us an example of an organizational policy, and explain how you would communicate it.
4. Describe an experience in which you had to speak up to be sure that other people knew what you thought or felt.
5. Relate a time in which you had to use your verbal communication skills in order to get an important point across.
6. Describe a job experience when you successfully communicated with someone that did not personally like you.
7. Tell us about a situation where you had to use your ability to negotiate.
8. Tell us about a time that you were able to persuade someone to adopt your point of view or sell an idea/concept.

TEAMWORK/COLLABORATION

Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

1. Describe how you contributed to the success of a team of which you were a member.
2. What did you do in your last job or project to create a culture of teamwork?
3. What role do you usually play when working in a group? Please provide an example.
4. When working on a team, what role do you usually take? Why?
5. How did you handle a time where others on your team were negative?
6. Tell us about a time when you were on a team and one of your teammates was not pulling his/her weight. How did you handle it?
7. Tell us about a time when you were a part of a great team. What was your part in making the team effective?
8. What do you think are the best and worst parts of working in a group? How do handle working in groups?
9. Tell us about time you were part of a team. What was your primary contribution/achievement? Biggest challenge?
10. What is your definition of a team player? Do you prefer working as a team member or as an individual? Explain your preferences and how it has impacted your prior work experience.

Interpersonal Skills

11. Describe how you developed rapport with a peer, supervisor, or customer.
12. Tell us about a time when you made a lasting, positive impression on a customer.
13. Describe your experience interacting with people from different backgrounds.
14. Provide an example of how you resolved a conflict with you and another person when you disagreed with each other.
15. Tell us about a time when you had to work with a difficult person, and describe how you handled this situation.
16. Please tell us about a time you disagreed with someone. How did you manage this situation?
17. Give us an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that person may not have liked you.
18. How would people who know you well describe you?
19. Describe a situation in which you helped an irate student, customer, or coworker. What was the outcome?
20. Describe how you like to be supervised, and the best relationship you have had with a boss.
21. Tell us about a time when you asked for feedback on your customer service skills from your manager or co-worker and then used that response to improve your work.
22. Tell us about a time when you had to say "No" to a customer because it was against policy.
23. Tell us about a time when you had trouble working with a difficult or demanding customer. How did you handle this?
24. Tell us about a situation in which you did not do your best with a customer. What did you do about this?

LEADERSHIP

Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

1. Give us an example of a specific occasion in which you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
2. Tell us about a time that you have been a coach or mentor to another individual or group. What did you learn from the experience?
3. Tell us about a time when you had to implement a change.
4. Describe a time that you had to influence an individual or group that was resistant.
5. Describe an experience when you had to serve as the leader in order to accomplish a goal.
6. Can you tell us about a time when you were able to effectively "read" another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their individual needs or values?
7. Can you tell us a time in which you felt you were able to motivate your workers or team?
8. Give an example of when you persuaded someone to agree with your perspective.
9. Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.
10. Tell us about a time when you had to teach someone a new skill or procedure.
11. Tell us about a time when your supervisor was not satisfied with the quality of your work. What actions did you take?
12. What are your strengths and areas for development? What have you done to improve in your areas of development? How might this job help you?
13. What would you do if someone in management asked you to do something you did not feel comfortable with?
14. How would best describe the way you prefer to learn new things or like to be trained?
15. What sort of direction do you want from a supervisor or someone who delegates work to you? Do you like detailed instructions or would you rather have highlights?
16. Tell us about a time in which you set an important goal in the past, and tell me about your success in reaching it.
17. Describe a time you had to set an important goal, and about your success in reaching it.
18. Tell us about an accomplishment that you are very proud of and why it means so much to you.
19. Tell us about a goal that you have accomplished and why it was important to you.
20. Describe for us a situation when you failed to meet a deadline or goal. What did you learn?

Organizational Ability

21. Give us an example of a time when you had too much to do. How did you organize and prioritize your work to meet deadlines?
22. Tell us about a time when you have had to handle a variety of assignments. Describe how you prioritized, and the results of your actions.
23. What did you do in your last job to organize and plan your work?
24. Tell us about a time that you have categorized and sorted data, objects, or items and how you went about doing that.

Resilience/Stress Management

25. What are your strategies for coping with stress? Tell me about a stressful situation you have experienced and the steps that you took to overcome it.
26. Describe a time you were faced with stresses which tested your coping skills.
27. Describe a situation in which you received critical feedback. How did you respond?
28. Give some examples of ways you minimize stress in your life.
29. Tell us about a time you had to work under pressure. How did you manage it?
30. Tell us about a time when you had to manage a lot of stress. How did you handle it?

Flexibility/Adaptability

31. Tell us about a time that you had to work under pressure. How did you meet the challenge?
32. Describe your experience interacting with people from different backgrounds.
33. Tell us about a time that you adapted to a new environment.
34. Give us an example of a time when your schedule or work was interrupted by unforeseen circumstances. How did you handle it?
35. Tell us about a time in which you felt it was necessary to change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
36. How would you approach the following scenario? It is 4pm on a Friday. Your boss needs a project done by 5pm. Your friends are chatting with you about your Friday night plans as a customer approaches you (looking less than happy) and your work phone starts ringing.

PROFESSIONALISM/WORK ETHIC

Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from mistakes.

1. Please give us an example of how you have acted with integrity or in alignment with your values in a work or school situation.
2. How would your co-workers or classmates describe your work style?
3. Explain the phrase 'work ethic' and describe yours.
4. Define professional behavior and/or conduct appropriate in the workplace.
5. If you saw a co-worker doing something inappropriate, what would you do?

Initiative

6. Tell us about a time you took initiative to do something that needed to be done, even though it wasn't your responsibility.
7. Please tell us about a class you excelled in and the actions you took to be successful.
8. Have you ever been given the responsibility to make a decision on behalf of your boss? If so, what were the circumstances and how did you go about making that decision?
9. If someone asked for your assistance with a matter that is outside the parameters of your job description, what would you do?
10. What strengths have you relied on to accomplish a goal?
11. Give an example of a situation in which you went above and beyond to get a job done. Explain the outcome. How did you feel when the job was done?

Detail-oriented

12. When you are working in the lab or field, how do you make sure you're paying close attention to details?
13. Describe how you ensure a high level of accuracy while performing repetitive tasks.
14. Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

1. Tell us about a time that you had to learn to use a new technology program.

Functional/Job-specific

2. Tell us about a time when you had to work with a new chemical or material. How did you go about the safety precautions and finding out about the chemical or material?

GLOBAL/INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY

Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates, openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.

1. What did you do in your last job or project to create a culture of inclusion?
2. How do you interact with people who think differently than you?
3. What kinds of experiences have you had in relating with people whose backgrounds are different than your own?
4. What skills or experiences do you possess that would enable you to communicate effectively with individuals with backgrounds different than your own?
5. How do you go about gaining the respect of others?