



Sample interview question list

Category A Introductory questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why would you like to work for this organisation?
3. So what attracts you to this particular opportunity?
4. What skills and experience do you bring to this role?

Category B Motivational drivers

1. How did you go about choosing which study area to specialise in?
2. How have you prepared for this interview?
3. How have you gone about balancing your time between studies, work and extra-curricular activities?
4. What were your most important considerations when you chose which career opportunities to apply for?
5. Which other organisations are you also applying for?
6. What inspires you?
7. Describe your ideal job.
8. Walk me through a typical day at work for you.
 - Which is your favourite part?
 - What are your least favourite parts?

9. How would your work (*alternatively study*) colleagues say you show anger and frustration?
10. What's something you've done recently purely out of personal interest?
11. What role or responsibilities do you usually play in a group or team?
 - What's a specific example of where you behaved in this manner?
12. Are there team responsibilities or roles which you don't get many opportunities to take on, but which you want more of?
 - What stops you from getting to play your preferred role or roles in groups?
13. Describe a recent group or team which you did not want to be a part of.
14. To what extent do your extra-curricular activities contribute towards your professional career?
15. Outside your formal studies, what have you done to further your professional development?
 - How do you stay up-to-date with changes in your chosen industry?
 - What's your strategy for developing a professional network?
16. Do you have any questions for me?

Category C Accomplishment orientation

1. What methods have you used to plan and track progress against projects or activities?
2. What accomplishment in life you are most proud of?
3. In what ways have your university studies equipped you to work with us?
4. How would you describe your main strengths?
5. How do you see employment with this organisation helping you to achieve your long-term aspirations?
6. Thinking back to 12 months ago, what were your principal goals for the year?
 - To what extent was each of your objectives achieved?
7. What have you learned from your current (*alternatively last*) job which has prepared you for greater responsibility now?
8. In your current (*alternatively last*) job, what have you contributed towards a positive work environment?
9. When have you significantly exceeded someone else's expectations?
 - How would you convince me this wasn't just one-off luck?
10. In a minute or less, explain your technical expertise as if communicating with a person who has no technical background.

Category D ‘Behavioural’ questions

- 1. What is your biggest disappointment in life?**
 - Describe how you picked yourself up subsequently?
- 2. Describe the most adverse situation you’ve faced where others gave up, yet you kept going?**
 - Why did you persevere?
- 3. What is the most significant hurdle you’ve had to overcome on your way to success?**
 - How did you handle the challenge and constraints?
- 4. Reflect on a situation when you had to adjust to significant change over which you had no control.**
- 5. How did you go about estimating all costs associated with a planned project or activity?**
 - How did you then track whether you were on target, financially?
 - What do you now assess as the return on investment for the project or activity?
- 6. Tell me about a time when you had to take the lead, by doing something different to everyone else?**
- 7. Describe a situation where you were playing an important role – one where others were relying heavily on you.**
- 8. What works with one person doesn’t necessarily work with all : tell me when you’ve had to be very flexible in your personal style, to relate to someone in your group or team with whom you did not have a close relationship.**
- 9. What steps have you needed to take in order to clarify a major misunderstanding.**
- 10. Tell me about an important relationship, one which you’ve needed to maintain under difficult circumstances.**
 - How did you go about strengthening the relationship?
 - How is the relationship today?
- 11. What is the most controversial decision you’ve ever made – one which impacted greatly on others?**
 - How did you go about gaining support in the face of opposition?
- 12. Describe your most successful experience persuading someone to do something which they were, initially, very reluctant about.**
- 13. Can you tell me about a time when you successfully influenced a significant decision.**
 - How did you ensure your input was heard?
 - Whose needs were most important during the decision-making process?
- 14. What is the most frustrating or stressful situation you’ve ever been faced with?**
 - How did you try to maintain your composure?
 - How successful were your attempts?
- 15. Discuss a time when you felt your integrity was being challenged.**
 - How did you feel at the time?

- Did you react to the challenge?
16. Can you tell me about an occasion when you've needed to be strongly critical of someone else?
- What was their reaction?
 - What happened subsequently?
17. What is the most difficult ethical judgement or decision you've made?
- What was your thought process before deciding what to do?
 - What was the outcome?
18. What is a time when you have had to make a significant decision based on incomplete information?
19. Can you describe a time when you had to assimilate a lot of new knowledge quickly, then apply it.
20. What is your best example of when you had to learn something new and complex in only a short period of time.
21. Reflect on a time you were held personally accountable for a significant error.
- What criticism did you receive and how did you feel about this?
22. Give a work example (*alternatively from an extra-curricular activity*) where you went significantly beyond your normal responsibilities in order to exceed expectations.
23. I'd like to hear about an instance when you identified a major problem – preferably where you anticipated it before it arose.
- What corrective action did you subsequently take?
24. What has been your most successful negotiation to date?
25. Describe a new project or idea that involved some risk, but was implemented primarily because of your effort.
26. Tell me about the time when you most struggled to allocate important tasks to one or more other people.
27. What is the most difficulty you've had explaining something complex to somebody?
28. Every now and then everyone has to break or bend the rules a little : what is your best example of how you've managed this kind of situation?
29. Who is the most upset person you've managed to assist in some way?
- Walk me through the specific steps you took and, at every stage, the reactions.
30. What is the most impressive thing you have achieved within a cross-disciplinary team?
- In what ways was it a significant factor that people were from different disciplines?
 - How did you manage to work with those differences?
31. What is the toughest deadline you've ever faced?
- How did you go about meeting it?
32. Thinking about a time when you did not achieve a significant goal or deadline, what happened?
33. What's the most pressure you've ever been under and how did you manage it?

34. Tell me when you have successfully juggled multiple and fast-changing priorities.
35. Describe when you've managed to make a major contribution towards a key goal of some group or organisation you've been a part of.
36. What's your best example of when you've needed to prepare and present complex information?
37. What is the most entrepreneurial thing you ever attempted?
38. What is the most innovative thing you have ever tried?

Category E More challenging questions

1. What do you see as the major challenges facing our organisation (*alternatively, facing our industry or field*)
2. What do you think makes for an excellent employee in this organisation?
 - In which of those areas would you say you do not currently excel?
3. What do you expect your most impressive contributions will be to this position?
4. What do you see as the pros and cons of employing a diverse workforce?
5. If you had 12 months off from tomorrow – with no obligations or constraints – how would you fill your time?
6. According to your own definition, how successful have you been so far?
 - What major challenges still lie ahead of you?
7. What is your biggest regret?
8. What would you say is unique about your application?
9. We have shortlisted some very talented applicants : why should you be hired over them?
10. If everything had gone perfectly, how much better might your academic performance have been?
 - So why were your grades not higher?
11. Personally and professionally, what do you hope to be doing in 3 to 5 years' time?
 - How do you plan to accomplish this?
12. What is the most useful piece of feedback you've been given?
 - What has changed since you received the feedback?
13. What is your greatest weakness?
 - And what's your second biggest weakness?
14. What would you say are the limits to your potential?
15. What is the most notable area which someone else has identified about you which could be improved?
 - What have you done since about the person's feedback?

16. What is the most generous thing you've ever done?
17. When have you said 'no' to more work – or to greater responsibility?
18. Tell me of a situation when you were able to communicate successfully with someone who didn't seem to like you. (*alternatively, with someone who wasn't pulling their weight*)
19. Describe a politically complex situation where it was necessary to meet a key objective, but where you found it challenging to adjust to another person's different style.
20. When in the past have you come into conflict with someone from a different background to yourself?
21. Tell me about a time when you disagreed with someone who was more knowledgeable than you.
22. What is the most notable time you have needed to breach confidentiality?
23. If we have a confidential chat with your current and previous bosses and colleagues (*alternatively, with people who have observed you during academic and extra-curricular groupwork*), how will they really describe you?
24. What qualities have you liked and disliked in your bosses?
 - Why?
25. What salary do you think you're worth?
26. What's the most recent book or publication you've read?
 - Tell me something interesting about it.
27. How much does it matter when people use the terms 'strategy' and 'tactics' interchangeably? (eg. "We need a number of strategies to address this problem.")
 - What's an example from your own experience of an overarching strategic goal, and tactics to achieve strategy?
28. How many table tennis balls do you think will fit into the boot of a Holden FJ series?
 - Talk me through how you'd try to solve this problem?
29. How many words have I read throughout my life to date?
 - Talk me through how you'd try to solve this problem?