Interview Questions

Note: The further you can move your interviews questions away from outdated behavioral techniques and toward achievement- and evidence-based selection, the quicker your hiring effectiveness will improve. Eighty-percent of a manager’s job is hiring the right people. The other 20 percent is leaving them alone so they can do what you hired them for.

**Question #1: "Tell me about yourself and your past work experience."**

This question will help get the interview started. Watch for eye contact and body language. Are they nervous, do they sound confident; do they speak in industry terms specific to the job that they are applying for? Listen for the reasons they moved from one position to another. Look for key words they use that match your company`s core values or guiding principles.

**Question #2: "What do you know about our company? Have you visited our website? "**

This will demonstrate whether or not the candidate took initiative to inform themselves about the company they may be joining. It reveals the desire to take initiative, of being prepared and informed and should give them a platform to ask relevant questions at the end of the interview.

**Question #3: "Tell me what you learned from your very first paying job."**

This is a key question interviewers should ask because our earliest learning experiences set the patterns and expectations for later experiences. (Hiring Hint: The story makes a lot more sense when you hear it from the beginning. Follow this up by asking them to talk briefly about each successive job and what was learned at each.)

**Question #4: "Which work achievements or accomplishments to-date are you most proud of?"**

The achievements we value most reveal both our strongest character traits and our strongest desires. Identifying these speaks volumes about the kind of employee the applicant can become. (Hiring Hint: The number of achievements or accomplishments is not as important as the motivations that drove it.)

**Question #5: "On a scale from zero to ten, how would you rate yourself as a (job title) and why?"**

Because we seldom see ourselves as others do, the specific number is not as important as the fact that you will be able to verify if the applicant’s number is higher, lower, or the same as perceived by the applicant’s former managers or supervisors when you check references. (Hiring Hint: Would you rather have an employee who undervalues or overvalues their contributions reporting to you?)

**Question #6: Tell me about your experience at Company X and how that work applies to this job.**

In other words, how does their past experience relate to the job you are currently hiring for? When answering this question, they should demonstrate to you that they can hit the ground running and bring value to the team by providing specific examples that resulted in successful outcomes. It’s also helps to identify how this position and their last position differ.

 **Question #7: How would people you have worked with describe you?**

This question centers on how they work with others and their ability to manage relationships with peers, managers and direct reports. Ask them to give examples of situations that illustrate how they work with people across various functions.

**Question #8: What is your greatest weakness?**

Often dreaded by job candidates, the key to answering this question for them to be honest including what they are doing to overcome their weakness. Ultimately, they need to show you that they are self-aware, thoughtful and proactive about their strengths and weaknesses.

**Question #9: Tell me about a time you had to deal with a difficult customer**

They should be able to give an example that demonstrates the ability to handle conflict and promote great customer service. Think about your company values and guiding principles to see if how they handled the situation is in line with your expectations of how they should have handled the situation.

**Question #10: What are the first three things you would do on the job if you were hired for this position?**

You should gain an understanding of what the applicant deems important, their understanding of the requirements of your job, and how the candidate approaches a new situation.

**Question #11: Describe the work environment in which you will most effectively be able to contribute**

The candidate’s response tells you whether your work environment is congruent with the candidate’s needs. It also should tell you what type of leadership they are looking for and how best to manage them if they are hired.

**Question #12:**  **What prompted you to apply for this job? What interested you the most about this position?**

You want to know what the prospective employee is most interested in related to your position. The answer will tell you about what motivates the individual and what is important to the applicant. Is it about location, a promotion, a chance to learn new things, or are they leaving a volatile situation?

**Question #13: Why are you the best person for this position?**

In asking this question, you are looking for the candidate to succinctly convey what sets them apart from the other candidates. They should convey their unique strengths that closely relate to the job description and be able to pitch themselves that clearly illustrates the skill set and qualities you want them to bring to the table.

**Question #14: "What would you like to ask me about the job or our company?"**

The answers to this one reveal the applicant’s concerns and motivators or simply point out basic job information (benefits, hours, policies) that have not yet been communicated. (Hiring Hint: Follow this up by allowing the applicant one or two more questions for even more insight.)