



Interview Question Bank™

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The **job-interview.net** Interview Question Bank™ lists over 500 hundred possible interview questions for 44 different job skills and abilities. There are over 100 behavioral interview questions. Use our exclusive Interview KeyWords™ and Answer Points™ to help you answer the questions naturally and in your own words.

INTERVIEW KEYWORDS™ AND ANSWER POINTS™

We've identified 44 keywords that are most frequently used in job announcements and advertisements. Match the keywords to the job announcement or advertisement that you're interviewing for and you'll have a list of possible interview questions to prepare for.

To make your preparation even easier and more effective, under each keyword we've listed possible interview questions. We've grouped similar questions and Answer Points™ under each heading. For example:

1. How adaptable are you?
 - a) Give us an example of your adaptability.

Answer Points

- ✓ You are your own worst critic. When you are asked to rate your ability, give yourself the benefit of

ANSWER STRATEGY

Here are three basic types of questions and how to structure your answers:

- **What I know** – What I know questions are based on your knowledge. Review basic concepts and think about new developments and trends. For example, a receptionist will review telephone and customer basics along with e-mail and electronic scheduling.
- **What I've done** – What I've done questions focus on your experience as it applies to the duties of the position that you're interviewing for. Your experience includes what you did, how you did it, what you learned from your experience, and whether you would do it the same or differently.

Effective answers will integrate your knowledge along with specific examples of your experience in applying your knowledge. Use examples that track as closely as possible to you're the requirements of the new job that you're interviewing for.

- **What I can do** – You'll be given a situation where you'll have to identify the key facts and then apply your knowledge and experience. The keys to successfully answering these questions are to listen carefully for all the facts, identify the problem, and then apply the appropriate knowledge and experience. Have the interviewers repeat the question as necessary.

Behavioral questions are an important tool for interviewers. We've categorized behavioral questions as either "experience" questions or "situation" questions.

Experience questions require you to draw on your experience and tell the interviewers how you have behaved in the past. Experience questions are a statement of what you've done. Since experience questions are based on your experience, only you will have the answer to the question. Review the significant events, successes and failures in your career and what you learned from them. You'll find that one event can apply to several possible experience questions. Your greatest success may also be a shining example of your working under pressure or working effectively with others.

Situation questions require you to use your experience, listen to the question and tell the interviewers what you would do in the given situation. Situation questions are a statement as to what you will do given the circumstances of the situation.

ADAPTABILITY

1. How adaptable are you?
 - a) Every assignment you'll receive will be different. How will you adapt to changing circumstances?

Answer Points

- ✓ *You are your own worst critic. When you are asked to rate your ability, give yourself the benefit of the doubt. You can't expect the interviewers to have confidence in you, if you don't have confidence in yourself.*
- ✓ *Review the job requirements for the job that you're interviewing for. If adaptability is essential to the new job then you should have a strong answer that illustrates your adaptability.*

Experience

1. Tell us about the last time there was a significant change to your job. Did you view the change as positive or negative? Why and what did you do?
2. Give us an example of your adaptability.
3. How would your coworkers have described your behavior during the last major change in the work environment in your current position?

ANALYTICAL SKILLS

1. Tell us about your analytical skills.
 - a) Are you analytical? Give us one example of your analytical abilities.
 - b) What steps do you take when analyzing complex problems?
 - c) How would you rate your analytical ability? Why?
 - d) How would your manager rate your analytical ability?

Answer Points

- ✓ *You are your own worst critic. When you are asked to rate your ability, give yourself the benefit of the doubt. You can't expect the interviewers to have confidence in you, if you don't have confidence in yourself.*
- ✓ *Review the job requirements for the job that you're interviewing for. If analytical skills are essential to the new job then you should have a strong answer that illustrates your analytical skills.*

Experience

1. Tell us about a particularly difficult problem that you analyzed and what was your recommendation.
2. Tell us about a situation where the analysis that you performed was incorrect. What would you have done differently?

ATTITUDE

1. Describe your attitude while at work.
 - a) How would your coworkers describe your attitude?
 - b) How would your supervisor describe your attitude?
 - c) How do you maintain a positive attitude towards your work?
 - d) When was the last time you were angry at work?
 - e) When do you find that you need an attitude adjustment with regards to your work? How often does this happen?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Would you want to work with or supervise someone with a bad attitude? Most people wouldn't. This is an opportunity to highlight your positive attitude.*
- ✓ *Have a work-related example ready for the interview.*

Experience

1. Tell us about a situation in which your attitude had a positive impact on your coworkers.
2. Tell us about a situation in which your attitude had a negative impact on your coworkers?

CAREER GOALS

1. Where do you want to be 5 years from now in your career?
 - a) What are your long-term career goals?
 - b) Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?
 - c) Five years ago, where did you see yourself today?
 - d) What is your career goal?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Make sure your goals are appropriate for the company and the job that you're applying for. For example, if you're applying for a trainee position in the healthcare industry don't tell the interviewers that your career goal is to become an attorney specializing in consumer affairs.*
 - ✓ *State your goal(s) and discuss the means by which you will work to accomplish those goals. For example, pursuing a degree or professional certification.*
 - ✓ *Think about how the job that you're interviewing for fits within your career goals.*
2. Why are you seeking a career change?
 3. How have your career goals changed in the last 5 years? What prompted that change?

CHANGE

1. How do you deal with change?
 - a) What changes have occurred in your current job? What do you think of these changes?
 - b) What type of change would you view as a positive change in your current job?
 - c) What type of change would you view as a negative change in your current job?
 - d) How has your current job changed since you first started and how have you contributed to these changes?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Change is accelerating in the workplace. If you know that change is coming through the industry and/or company that you're interviewing for, you need to address these changes constructively in your interview answers.*
- ✓ *What changes have you gone through in your career that will help you contribute in the job that you're interviewing for? An example might include how you took classes or bought a personal computer to develop computer skills.*

Experience

1. Tell us about any change you've brought about in your job.

Situation

1. You've just mastered a new process at work. The latest management bulletin announces that the process has changed. How do you feel about the change?

CLOSING

1. Do you have anything to add?
 - a) Is there anything you'd like to address?
 - b) Have we missed something that you'd like to add?
 - c) Is there anything else?
 - d) Have we covered everything?
 - e) Is there anything you would like to add?
 - f) Have I missed anything?
 - g) Do you have any questions?
 - h) What else should we know about you?
 - i) Do you have any closing comments?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Your closing is the last formal opportunity in the interview to emphasize your qualifications for the job. Use it!*
- ✓ *Re-emphasize your most compelling qualifications for the job. Also, cover any important points that you missed from your opening.*

COMMUNICATIONS

General

1. How do you effectively communicate with others?
 - a) How important is listening to effective communications?
 - b) What steps do you take to establish a rapport with others?
 - c) What are some of the characteristics of a good listener?
 - d) Tell us about a situation where you demonstrated good communications skills.
 - e) Tell us about a situation where you demonstrated poor communications skills. What would you have done differently?
 - f) How would you rate your communications skills? Why?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Communications is two-way. Listen.*
- ✓ *Communications is essential to every job. Demonstrate in the interview and in your answers your ability to communicate effectively. As appropriate, use examples of difficult situations and how you succeeded in those situations. For example, your duties might have included working the return desk at a retail store or handling customer complaints by telephone.*
- ✓ *Also, consider instances that demonstrate that you can communicate with a wide variety of people.*

Co-workers

1. What are some rules to follow to insure effective communications with your coworkers?
 - a) What are some of the means of communication in the workplace?
 - b) How would your co-workers rate your communications skills?

Subordinate Staff

1. How can a supervisor establish effective communications with staff?
 - a) What means of communication may be used to effectively establish a new policy?
 - b) Are there different considerations in communicating to groups of employees versus individual employees?
 - c) What are some good rules to keep in mind when directing employees?
 - d) In what instances, is written communication better than verbal communications?

Supervisor

1. Your supervisor has given you a high profile assignment. You missed the due date. How would you tell your supervisor that you failed to complete the assignment by the due date?
 - a) How would your supervisor rate your communications skills?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Tell your supervisor as quickly as possible without disrupting his/her work, develop a plan to complete the assignment, take responsibility for the failure, and get approval for the recovery plan.*

2. What are the reasons for communicating upwards to your superiors?
 - a) Communicating with your supervisor is an important aspect of all of our jobs. In addition to being brief, what guidelines should you follow to communicate effectively with your supervisor?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Keep your supervisor informed about major milestones, potential major problems, don't let your supervisor be surprised.*

E-Mail

1. What are the rules for e-mail etiquette?
 - a) Which e-mail programs are you familiar with?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Don't send an e-mail with all capital letters. Use of capital letters is the equivalent of shouting in conversation.*

Telephone

1. What are the rules for telephone etiquette?
 - a) What steps do you take to establish a good rapport with people over the telephone?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Establish a good rapport by smiling when you speak and listening to the other person.*

Situation

1. Your supervisor has given you a high profile assignment. You missed the due date. How would you tell your supervisor that you failed to complete the assignment by the due date?
2. A customer approaches you. The customer asks a question using broken English and a language that you're not familiar with. How will you serve the customer?

COMPUTER SKILLS

1. Which personal computer applications are you familiar with?
 - b) What have you done in the past year to improve your personal computer skills?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Don't forget to include not only formal training, but also your own efforts such as buying a personal computer and learning at home or as a community volunteer.*

CONFIDENCE

1. How much confidence do you have in yourself?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Again, you can't expect the interviewers to have confidence in you, if you don't have confidence in yourself.*
- ✓ *Your answer should communicate that you have a strong sense of self-confidence. Avoid using wishy-washy phrases – I think, I feel, I wish, maybe*
- ✓ *Find confidence in that while you may not always know the answer, you are confident that you can find the answer and get the job done!*

2. How do you deal with failure?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Everyone has failed. Focus on situations where you learned from your failure and bounced back to handle the same or similar situations successfully.*

Experience

1. Tell us about a situation that would demonstrate your self-confidence.
2. Tell us about a situation that would demonstrate the level of confidence your manager has in you.
3. Tell us about a situation that would show the confidence your coworkers have in you.
4. Tell us about a situation in which you had little or no confidence in yourself and how did you overcome it.
5. In which situations are you the most confident?
6. In which situations are you the least confident?

CONFLICT

1. How do you deal with conflict?

- a) How much conflict do you have in your current job? What is the source of that conflict?
- b) How much does conflict affect you?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Focus on how you deal with conflict constructively. Telling the interviewers about a situation that ends in a fight or where you quit the job is a sure way of removing yourself as a viable candidate.*

Experience

1. Tell us about a situation that involved conflict and how you resolved that situation.
2. When was the last time you encountered conflict on the job? What happened?
3. Relate to us a confrontation that you've had with your supervisor. Who was wrong and why?
4. Tell us about the last time you had a conflict with a coworker.
5. Tell us about a conflict that you've had with a client.
6. Tell us about the last time you had a conflict with your supervisor.
7. Tell us about the last time that you disagreed with your supervisor.
8. Think about your current job. In which situations do you typically encounter conflict?
9. Tell us about the last time that you had a disagreement with a coworker.
10. Tell us about the last time you had a disagreement with someone at work. Who was it and how much of it was your responsibility?

CREATIVITY

1. Are you creative? Give us an example of your creativity.
 - a) Describe a situation where you came up with a creative solution to a problem.

Answer Points

- ✓ *Creativity goes to thinking "outside of the box". Examples on the job or in your private life may work equally well. Creative examples might include solving a customer problem or fundraising at your children's school.*

Experience

1. Describe a situation where you came up with a creative solution to a problem.

CURRENT JOB

1. What prompted you to take your current job?
 - a) Why do you want to leave your current position?
 - b) What aspect of your current job do you enjoy the most? The least?
 - c) If you could eliminate any one of the duties on your current job, which duty would you eliminate?
 - d) What career or promotional opportunities have you created for yourself in your current job?
 - e) When was the last time that you left work at the end of the day happy?
 - f) When was the last time that you left work at the end of the day unhappy?
 - g) Describe a typical day in your current job.
 - h) What has been your most significant contribution in your current job?
 - i) What frustrates you the most about your current job?
 - j) In what ways have you grown in your current job?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Questions regarding your current job provide the interviewers with an insight into how you'll view your new job. The essential duties of the new job should not be the one of the dislikes on the old job. For example, if the new job requires working in teams, then you'll only raise questions if the change in your current job that seek is to work more by yourself. Similarly, the essential duties of the new job should be one of the more desirable qualities of the old job.*

CUSTOMER SERVICE / CLIENT RELATIONS

1. What are the steps involved in successfully handling an irate customer?
 - a) How do you feel about dealing with irate customers?
 - b) What makes you uncomfortable about dealing with irate customers?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Steps should include letting the customer vent, listening, identifying the problem, and trying to solve the problem and following-up with the customer to insure that the customer is satisfied.*

2. What does good customer service involve?
 - a) What do you think your customers would say about your work?
 - b) Tell us about your experience in working a service counter.
 - c) Name five criteria essential to establishing effective service standards.
 - d) Name some of the criteria that may be included in a citizen satisfaction survey.
 - e) What are some of the ways to measure customer/user satisfaction?
 - f) What steps can you take to establish a "customer first" attitude in the organization?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Is customer service an essential skill for the job that you're interviewing for? If so, review the basics of good customer service. If customer service is essential, then one of your weaknesses or least liked aspects of the job should not be dealing with people. Likewise, strengths and most liked aspects might include working with people or solving problems for customers.*
- ✓ *If you don't have specific customer service experience, public contact can also be mentioned.*

3. What is my name?

Answer Points

- ✓ *This is a question asked by the interviewer well in to the interview. Listen carefully during the introductions and make sure that you have the interviewer's name.*

Experience

1. Tell us about how you have handled a dissatisfied customer in the past.
2. Tell us about your experience in dealing with the public.
3. Give us an example of a situation you handled exemplifying superior customer service.
4. Tell us about your experience in working a service counter.
5. Tell us about a situation in which you dealt with an irate customer and what you would have done differently.

Situation

1. Two customers are fighting over a one-of-a-kind sales item. What will you do?
2. A citizen calls in and states that one of your company's trucks ran over her mailbox. How will you handle the citizen?
3. One of the patients is always late for their appointment. How might you address the tardiness?
4. The doctor is running late. One of the patients having arrived on time is becoming more and more irate and demands to see the doctor now. What will you do?
5. A customer becomes irate because his special order item cannot be found. How will you handle the customer?
6. A customer calls and is angry because she has been billed twice for the same item. What will you do?
7. A child of one of the customers is running around the store and knocking down display items. What actions will you take, if any?
8. Two children are using shopping carts and racing around the sales floor. What actions will you take, if any?
9. A customer is returning an item that is unique to the store and is in new condition. However, policy states that returns cannot be made without a receipt. The customer has lost his receipt. What will you do?

DECISION-MAKING

1. What type of decisions do you make in your current position?
 - a) What decisions are easiest for you to make and which ones are the most difficult? Why?
 - b) How would you rate a job that requires you to constantly make decisions?
 - c) How do you feel about being held responsible for the decisions that you make?
 - d) How do you go about making difficult decisions?
 - e) How would you rate a job that requires you to constantly make decisions?
 - f) Which decisions do you tend to procrastinate?

Answer Points

- ✓ *In addressing the decisions that are the most difficult for you, don't cite decisions that are essential to the job that you are interviewing for.*
- ✓ *For the decisions that you do cite, you may want to expand your answer by telling what steps that you're taking to improve your decision-making.*

✓ *Remember, there are no perfect decisions.*

2. What steps are involved in making a decision?
 - a) When making decisions are you methodical or do you act quickly?
 - b) What items of information do you typically need before you make a decision?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Good decision-making typically requires identifying what information is required, knowing who has the information and where it can be found. Also required is an assessment of the risk involved.*
- ✓ *Look to past experience for guidance and use examples of your past experience to demonstrate to the interviewers that you're capable.*

Experience

1. Tell us about the most difficult decision you've had to make.
2. Give us an example of your ability to make decisions under pressure.
3. Tell us about the worst decision that you've made on the job.
4. Tell us about the best decision that you've made on the job.
5. Tell us about the last time you decided not to make a decision. How did it turn out?

DETAIL

1. How do you feel about performing tasks that require a lot of detail?

Answer Points

- ✓ *The key is working calmly and producing accurate results.*

Experience

1. Give us an example of your ability to deal with detail accurately.

DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT

1. How do you deal with a work environment that is continually changing?
2. How do you feel about working in an organization where the goals are clear, but the processes are very general and the work flow is always changing?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Change is accelerating in the workplace. If you know that change is coming through the industry and/or company that you're interviewing for, you need to address these changes constructively in your interview answers*
- ✓ *Do you like to do different tasks and have an ever-changing variety of work? If not, you may not want to work in a dynamic environment.*

Experience

1. Tell us about your experience in working in a dynamic environment.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1. How does your experience and education qualify you for this job?
 - a) How does your education qualify you for this job?
 - b) Why did you choose to attend the college that you are attending?

- c) What aspect of your education applies to this position?
- d) What training have you received that qualifies you for this job?
- e) What have you done outside of formal education to improve yourself?
- f) What training opportunities have you taken advantage of and why?
- g) What additional training will we have to provide for you if we hire you?
- h) What additional training will you require in order to successfully perform the duties of the position?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Focus on the education and training most relevant to the job that you're interviewing for. As a general rule start with the most relevant and the most current education and training.*
- ✓ *Include any plans for future education, particularly if those plans support the job/career that you are interviewing for.*

EXPERIENCE

1. Tell us about yourself.
 - a) How are you qualified for this job?
 - b) How does your current job qualify you for this position?
 - c) How does your experience qualify you for this job?
 - d) Describe a typical day at your present position.
 - e) What were your three greatest accomplishments on your last job?
 - f) What are some of the things on your current job you have done well?
 - g) What is the most difficult assignment you have had?
 - h) What accomplishment on the job are you the most proud of?
 - i) What steps have you taken to improve your job skills?
 - j) What significant contributions have you made to the operation of your work group?
 - k) How has your current position prepared you to take on greater responsibilities?
 - l) What makes you more qualified than the other candidates?
 - m) Why do you want to leave your current job?
 - n) How has your job prepared you to take on greater responsibility?
 - o) Tell us about your qualifications for this position.
 - p) What actions have you taken in the past five years to prepare you for this position?
 - q) What steps have you taken in the past two years to improve your qualifications?
 - r) In the areas where your experience falls short for this job, what steps will you take to make up for this shortfall?
 - s) Describe yourself.
 - t) What skills and abilities do you have?
 - u) Recall an incident where you made a major mistake. What did you do after the mistake was made? What did you learn from this mistake?
 - v) What action on the job are you the least proud of?
 - w) Tell us about a difficult situation that you encountered and how you resolved it.
 - x) You have five minutes to convince us that we should hire you. Start.

Answer Points

- ✓ *Review your resume or application.*
- ✓ *There is no right or wrong answer regarding experience. Your experience is your experience for better or worse. How you relate your experience to the job that you're interviewing for may make the difference in getting hired.*

- ✓ *The most qualified person to do a job is someone who has already done the job. If you were to hire someone to fix the plumbing in your house, whom would you hire? Someone who has never fixed the plumbing or someone who has? As you answer the interview questions, cite your work and life experiences as examples to reinforce to the interviewers that you've already done what they're looking for, and you've done it successfully.*
- ✓ *Many candidates make the mistake of emphasizing the number of years they've been on the job without providing detail as to the quality of their experience. Without the detail as to the quality of your experience, all else being equal, a candidate with more years on the job will be more qualified than you are.*
- ✓ *Preparation Tip - Start with the broad question of how your experience qualifies you. If you're asked about your current job or some aspect of your experience, break out the portion of your answer to the broad question that applies.*

FAILURE

1. How do you deal with failure?
 - a) How do you deal with rejection?

Experience

1. Tell us about a situation in which you failed. What did you learn from your failure?
2. What is the greatest failure you've had? What would you have done differently?
3. What one decision or action in your career are you the least proud of?

FAST PACE (see also DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT and PRESSURE)

1. Our department is fast-paced. What experience do you have in working in a fast-paced environment? Do you anticipate any difficulties?

Experience

1. Our department is fast-paced. What experience do you have in working in a fast-paced environment? Do you anticipate any difficulties?

FIRST JOB

1. How has your education prepared you for this position?
 - a) Which courses did you take that will contribute the most to your effective performance in this job?
 - b) What was the single most important lesson that you have learned in school?
 - c) What do you like the most about the career that you're seeking?
 - d) What do you like the least about the career that you're seeking?
 - e) Why did you choose the college that you attended?
 - f) Why did you select the major that you that you selected?
 - g) Tell us about your extra-curricular activities in school. In which instances did you undertake a leadership role?
 - h) Discuss the most rewarding experience you had in college.
 - i) Which course did you find the most challenging? Why?
 - j) Which course did you find the least challenging? Why?
 - k) Did you drop any course during your college or graduate study? Which courses and why?
 - l) What aspects of your education will assist you in the job that you are seeking?
 - m) How will your degree help you succeed in the job that you are interviewing for?

- n) If we were to ask your professors what single quality that you possess is the most outstanding, what would they say?
- o) We've interviewed a number of highly qualified students for this position. What sets you apart from the others? Given your lack of work experience, why should we give you an opportunity over candidates with more work experience?
- p) What is more important, salary or job satisfaction?
- q) How do you define success?

Answer Points

- ✓ *In the absence of work experience, use specific examples from school or your private life that are relevant to the knowledges, skills and abilities that you've identified for the job.*

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

1. What do you think your supervisor would say about your work?
 - a) What do you think your coworker would say about your work?
 - b) What would your boss say about you - both positive and negative?
 - c) What would your subordinates say about - both positive and negative?
 - d) What would your co-workers say about you - both positive and negative?
 - e) What three keywords would your peers use to describe you?
 - f) What one thing would your boss say that he or she has the greatest problem with you?
 - g) How would your subordinates describe you?
 - h) How do you maintain an effective working relationship with your coworkers?
 - i) How would your best friend describe you?
 - j) How would your worst enemy describe you?
 - k) What situations make you lose your temper?

Answer Points

- ✓ *All jobs require you to deal with people. If you don't communicate the fact that you have effective interpersonal skills, then you are providing the interviewers with a significant reason not to hire you.*
- ✓ *Demonstrate your interpersonal skills in the interview by being relaxed and establishing a rapport with the interviewers.*
- ✓ *Smile*
- ✓ *Use work examples and personal examples to illustrate your interpersonal skills.*

Experience

1. Tell us about the last time that you lost your temper.
2. Tell us about the worst supervisor you've worked under.
3. Tell us about the best supervisor you've worked under.
4. Tell us about a confrontation that you've had with a coworker.
5. Describe a situation in which your work was criticized?

INITIATIVE

1. What do you do when you don't know the answer to a question or the proper procedure?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Ask! If there's no one to ask, research. Be proactive - observe, listen and take notes to reduce the chances that someone will ask a question that you don't have any knowledge of. But if you don't have the answer, be honest. Tell the person you don't know, but you'll get back to them.*

- ✓ *Do you volunteer for more work or new assignments? Are you more concerned with getting the job done than who does it?*

Experience

1. Tell us about a situation that demonstrates your initiative.
2. How do you show initiative on your current job?

INTEGRITY

1. Tell us about your morals and integrity.
 - a) Describe for us your ethics.
 - b) What are your values?
 - c) How much trust does your supervisor have in you?
 - d) How much trust do your coworkers have in you?
 - e) Give us an example of your ability to work in a position handling confidential information.

Answer Points

- ✓ *Would you want to work with or supervise someone you don't trust or who doesn't do the right things? Most people wouldn't. A good way to show your integrity is to provide examples of your honesty or being given more responsibility because you can be trusted. For example, you might be the person who counted the money and closed the store when the owner wasn't at work or maybe you were always given the confidential or most sensitive assignments.*

Experience

1. Tell us about a situation that would illustrate to us how much your supervisor trusts you.
2. Tell us about a situation that would illustrate to us how much your coworkers trust you.
3. Tell us about a situation where you were honest and your honesty worked against you. What would you have done differently?
4. Relate to us the last time you dealt with an ethical question on the job and how did you handle the situation.
5. Tell us about a situation that would exemplify your integrity.

Situation

1. You are sitting next to a coworker who is consistently rude to others over the telephone. You realize that no one is aware of this. How would you handle this situation?
2. Your coworker is viewing adult Internet sites on his personal computer during working hours. Your coworker's actions are contrary to the company's policies on Internet usage and sexual harassment. What will you do?
3. Your co-worker continually comes over to your desk to complain about management. Your supervisor seems to be paying particular attention to the two of you. How will you handle this situation?
4. A vendor comes in to thank you for assistance in clearing up a past due invoice. The vendor offers you two tickets to a ball game. What will you do?
5. Your co-worker is consistently unconcerned with issues at work. You and your co-worker have a joint assignment, but the co-worker just shrugs you off. What steps will you take?
6. As you're walking out of the building, you notice an employee from another section carrying company equipment to their car. The equipment is clearly labeled and belongs in your section's work area. What will you do?
7. You work on a field crew using heavy equipment. After lunch, you notice the smell of alcohol on your co-worker's breath. How will you handle this situation?
8. Your friend, a coworker, asks you to clock in and clock out for him. He says his wife is sick and he needs to spend extra time with her in the morning and get home early in the afternoon. What will you do?

JUDGEMENT

1. In instances where you are required to assert yourself, what do you do to assert yourself effectively?
 - a) What did you do the last time you were asked to submit a report that due to time and resource constraints, compromised quality?
 - b) Under what circumstances is it acceptable to deviate from company policy?
 - c) What is common sense? Tell us how you use common sense in your current job.
 - d) To what extent have you been able to exercise independent judgment on the job?
 - e) Under what circumstances should you bypass your supervisor and go to your supervisor's supervisor?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Good judgment may be illustrated by citing examples of making the right decisions under pressure, difficult or stressful circumstances. These actions are confirmed by more responsibility, a commendation or a promotion/pay raise.*

Experience

1. Relate to us a confrontation that you've had with your supervisor. Who was wrong and why?
2. What did you do the last time you were asked to submit a report that due to time and resource constraints, compromised quality?
3. Describe a politically sensitive situation that you were in and how you handled the situation.
4. Tell us about a situation where you made a mistake. How did you handle the mistake and what was the resolution?
5. Give us a situation that illustrates your ability to exercise good judgment.

Situation

1. You are given a new assignment, but not given any instructions. How would you go about completing your assignment?

MOTIVATION / SELF MOTIVATED

1. One of the requirements for this position is that the individual be a self-starter. Give us an example of your ability to be a self-starter.

Answer Points

- ✓ *The example may relate what you did in an emergency situation. If this is an entry-level position, use an example from school, church, or other volunteer activities.*

2. How do you motivate yourself to complete unpleasant assignments?
 - a) This position involves very repetitive work. How will you keep yourself motivated?
 - b) What motivates you?
 - c) What aspects of your current job are difficult for you to get motivated for?
 - d) How do you motivate yourself to complete unpleasant assignments?
 - e) This position involves very repetitive work. How will you keep yourself motivated?
 - f) What motivates you?
 - g) What de-motivates you?
 - h) What aspects of your current job are difficult for you to get motivated for?

Experience

1. One of the requirements for this position is that the individual be a self-starter. Give us an example of your ability to be a self-starter.

2. Tell us about the last time you felt unmotivated at work.

MULTI-TASKING (see also PRIORITIES)

1. Tell us how you multitask on a typical day in your current job.
 - a) How do you manage multiple tasks?

Experience

1. Give us an example of your ability to multitask.

NEW JOB

1. What is the most attractive aspect of the job you are interviewing for?
 - a) What is the least attractive aspect of the job you are interviewing for?
 - b) What part of the job that you interviewing for do you look forward to the most?
 - c) What part of the job that you are interviewing for do you look forward to the least?
 - d) What aspect of our organization has the greatest appeal for you?
 - e) Knowing our organization and the position that you're interviewing for, where can you make the greatest contribution?
 - f) If you're hired, how long will it take before you start contributing?
 - g) How will the job you're interviewing for, fit into your career plans?
 - h) Why did you choose this profession and this specific job?
 - i) What do you think your responsibilities will be if you're hired?
 - j) Why are you interested in the position?
 - k) What are you seeking from this job?
 - l) What challenges do you think that you will face in moving from your current position to this position?
 - m) What aspect of the job announcement interested you the most?
 - n) In comparison to your current position, what do you think will be different in your new position?
 - o) Our company is more widely recognized than the current company that you're working for, why do you think that is?
 - p) Tell us why you believe you are ready to promote to the next level of management.
 - q) What can you contribute to our company?
 - r) What do you know about our company?
 - s) What interests you about a career in (field of new job)?
 - t) Why should we give you a chance to perform in this job?
 - u) Why should we hire you instead of the other candidates?
 - v) We have 12 candidates. A number of the candidates have more experience than you do. Why should we hire you instead of one of the other candidates?
 - w) Why do you want this job and how does it fit you?
 - x) What do you intend to accomplish as a (title of new job) with our company?
 - y) Why should we hire you?
 - z) What additional training or development will you need to perform in this position?
 - aa) How long do you plan on staying with our company?
 - bb) If you're hired, what will you do within the first 90 days to earn the respect of your coworkers?
 - cc) Why are you the best person for the job?
 - dd) How confident are you that you can successfully perform the duties of this position and why?
 - ee) In order to bring you up to speed as quickly as possible, what is the one action that your coworkers can do to assist you?

- ff) Which companies are you interviewing with?
- gg) What does our company have that makes us stand out in your job search?
- hh) What additional education will you need to meet the responsibilities of the job?
- ii) How long will you stay with us?
- jj) What sets you apart from the other candidates for this job?
- kk) Why should we hire you over everyone else?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Review the job description and how the job fits with your career goals.*
- ✓ *Here's are a few good reasons - working for a growing company, working in a dynamic industry, more responsibility, more pay, more opportunity and greater challenges are more compelling reasons than not liking your supervisor, being bored and looking for happiness.*

ORGANIZATION

- 1. How do you keep your work and files organized?
 - a) You're constantly working with customer correspondence and work files. How will you keep your work organized?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Keeping organized may include using electronic calendars, to-do lists, giving a customer your undivided attention, maintaining detailed logs and filing promptly in a logical manner.*

Experience

- 1. Give us an example of your organization skills.

PLANNING (see also ORGANIZATION)

- 1. How do you plan your work?
 - a) What is the importance of planning your work?

PRESENTATIONS

- 1. How would you rate your public speaking ability?
 - a) Take us through the steps that you go through in preparing to make a presentation.
 - b) What actions do you take during a training session when the participants start to talk and stop paying attention?
 - c) Tell us about your public speaking experience.

Experience

- 1. What was the most difficult question you've fielded during a public speaking engagement?
- 2. What was the most challenging presentation that you've made? How well did you meet the challenge?
- 3. Tell us about the worst presentation that you've ever made. What did you learn from that experience?

PRESSURE (see also FAST PACE)

- 1. How do you react under pressure?
 - a) What does it take to get under your skin?

- b) How do you maintain your calm?
 - c) Tell us about the pressure you encounter in your current job?
 - d) What types of pressure do you see in the job that you're interviewing for?
 - e) How will you handle the pressures in the job that you're interviewing for?
 - f) How do you deal with pressure in your current job?
 - g) Can you work under pressure? How will you deal with the pressure of this position?
 - h) Describe how you work under tight deadlines.
 - i) How do you work under tough and demanding supervisors?
 - j) Do you feel more pressure from working with deadlines or working with people?
 - k) What would your co-workers say about your performance under pressure?
2. What would your current supervisor say about your performance under pressure?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Cite examples that are as close as possible to the job that you are interviewing for.*
- ✓ *Key points that interviewers look for include the ability to keep calm, keep others calm, stay under control, keep things in perspective, use pressure and stress for energy and focus – thrive on pressure.*

Experience

1. Tell us about a pressure situation you were in that would demonstrate your ability to work under pressure.
2. Tell us about the pressure you encounter in your current job?
3. Tell us about the last time in which you did not work well under pressure.
4. Tell us about the last time that you failed to meet a deadline.
5. What experience have you had in pressure situations?
6. Provide us with an example of how you've asserted yourself in an emergency or high-pressure situation?

PRIORITIES

1. You are given a number of assignments. How will you prioritize the assignments?
 - a) After returning from lunch, you find five telephone slips from customers requesting that you return their telephone calls. How will you prioritize your return telephone calls?
 - b) Along with your other assignments, you've been given a rush assignment that has to be done. What adjustments or considerations will you make in trying to complete the rush assignment?
 - c) In your supervisor's absence, you have been asked to schedule the work of the group for the next two weeks. How would you schedule projects, assignments, and vacations?
 - d) To perform your duties more efficiently and reduce interruptions, what steps should be taken when given a new assignment?
 - e) Your new assignment is to establish a working area for one professional and two clerical employees. What would you consider in laying out the work area?
 - f) On what basis should a supervisor schedule and assign work?
 - g) What is the importance of prioritizing work?
 - h) How do you prioritize your work?
 - i) Your section supervisor has given you a rush assignment. The assignment is in conflict with an assignment that was given to you by the section supervisor's boss. How will you handle these assignments?
 - j) How do you deal with multiple priorities?
 - k) How do you deal with conflicting priorities?
 - l) What do you find most difficult about prioritizing your work?
 - m) How will you identify the priorities in your new position?

- n) How do you decide which decisions are important and which aren't?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Common criteria for prioritizing work are legal and regulatory requirements (OSHA, DOT or EPA requirements), what your supervisor/manager says, due dates and what can you complete versus doing piecemeal.*

Situation

1. Your section supervisor has given you a rush assignment. The assignment is in conflict with an assignment that was given to you by the section supervisor's boss. How will you handle these assignments?
2. After returning from lunch, you find five telephone slips from customers requesting that you return their telephone calls. How will you prioritize your return telephone calls?
3. Along with your other assignments, you've been given a rush assignment that has to be done. What adjustments or considerations will you make in trying to complete the rush assignment?
4. In your supervisor's absence, you have been asked to schedule the work of the group for the next two weeks. How would you schedule projects, assignments, and vacations?
5. Tomorrow, you will only have fifteen minutes at your desk. What will you do?

PROBLEM-SOLVING

1. Provide us with an example of your problem-solving ability.
 - a) What are the essential elements of effective problem solving?
 - b) Tell us about a situation in which you were required to analyze and solve a complex problem.
 - c) What are the benefits of collaborative problem solving?
 - d) Tell us about the most challenging problem you've had to solve.
 - e) Tell us about a problem you encountered at work that you were unable to solve.
 - f) What are the benefits of collaborative problem solving?

Answer Points

- ✓ *A basic approach is to determine whether you know the problem and have to find a solution to the problem or whether you have to identify the problem. If you know the problem, then you evaluate various solutions. To identify the problem, you gather and evaluate information.*
- ✓ *Cite examples from work and private life that illustrate your ability to solve problems.*

Experience

1. Tell us about the most challenging problem you've had to solve.
2. Tell us about a problem you encountered at work that you were unable to solve.
3. Tell us about a situation in which you were required to analyze and solve a complex problem.
4. Provide us with an example of your problem-solving ability.
5. Tell us about the last time you were frustrated while solving a problem.
6. What do you do when you have difficulty in solving a problem?

REFERENCES

1. What would your references say about you?
 - a) What will your references say is your greatest weakness?
 - b) What will your references say is your greatest strength?
 - c) Why did you choose the references that you have provided us?

Answer Points

- ✓ Before you use someone as a reference, make sure that they know they're being used and determine what they'll say about you.

RELIABILITY / DEPENDABILITY (see also INTEGRITY)

1. How many times have you been absent or late to work in the past 6 months?
 - a) How do I know that I can rely on you?

Answer Points

- ✓ Would you want to work with or supervise someone who isn't reliable? Most people wouldn't. A good way to show your reliability is to provide examples being given more responsibility because you can be relied upon.

Experience

1. Give us an example of how reliable you are.

RESPONSIBILITY (see also RELIABILITY and INTEGRITY)

1. How do you handle responsibility?
 - a) What does being responsible mean to you?

Experience

1. Tell me about a situation that resulted in you receiving greater responsibility.
2. How do you demonstrate responsibility in your current job?
3. Briefly, describe the most significant responsibility you have had in your career and what it taught you?

RESUME

1. Take us through your resume.
 - a) What are you most proud of on your resume?
 - b) If you were in my place, what part of your resume would you identify as a weak point?
 - c) What should I pay the most attention to in reviewing your resume?
 - d) Review your resume. How would you critique your resume if you were the employer?
 - e) On what terms have you left your previous jobs?
 - f) Why haven't you pursued your education after high school?

Answer Points

- ✓ Review your resume or application from the perspective of the employer.
- ✓ Your resume reflects your experience and qualifications for better or worse. How you can relate your experience to the job that you're interviewing in a positive light may make the difference in getting hired.

RISK

1. How do you deal with risk on the job?
 - a) How do you deal with failure?

Experience

1. Describe the greatest risk that you've taken.
2. Describe the greatest risk that you've taken which resulted in failure.
3. What is the greatest failure you've had? What would you have done differently?

SAFETY

1. What does "safety first" mean to you?
 - a) What are some common office safety hazards?
 - b) What is the proper way to lift a heavy item?

Experience

1. Tell us how you incorporate safety in your everyday work.
2. When was the last time you had to choose between performing the work in a safe manner and completing the work on time? What did you do?

SALARY AND BENEFITS

1. What salary are you seeking?
 - a) What is your current salary? What should your salary with us be?
 - b) Why do you think we should pay you the salary you are seeking?
 - c) How much should we pay you?
 - d) Is there anything about you that is non-negotiable? What is it?
 - e) Our employees are paid on the basis of performance. How should we structure your salary?
 - f) When was the last salary increase you received and how did you earn it?

Answer Points

- ✓ Do your homework before the interview. Find out what the comparable pay in your area is for the job that you're interviewing for.
- ✓ Identify experience, licenses or certification that justify a higher salary.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths

1. Why should we hire you?
 - a) What are your three greatest strengths?
 - b) What can you contribute to our organization?
 - c) Assume that you are a candidate in the coming general election. Tell me why you are the best candidate in the field.
 - d) What is your greatest strength?
 - e) What are your strengths?
 - f) What part of your current job are you the most comfortable with?
 - g) What are your strong points and how have they helped you to succeed?

Weaknesses

1. What is your greatest weakness?
 - a) Name your three greatest weaknesses.
 - b) Which is the worst of your three greatest weaknesses and why?
 - c) What are your weaknesses?

- d) What part of your current job are you the least comfortable with?
- e) What are your weak points and how have you overcome them?
- f) What about yourself would you want to improve?
- g) If you could only change one thing, what one thing would you change about yourself?
- h) In which area do you need to make the improvement in?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Focus on strengths that are skills and abilities vital to the job that you are interviewing for. Strengths may be reinforced by work and real life examples.*
- ✓ *Your weaknesses should not be the same as the vital skills and abilities. Weaknesses should be further addressed by what steps you've made to improve yourself and examples of your improvement.*

STRESS

1. What are some constructive methods of dealing with stress?
 - a) How do you deal with stress?
 - b) What types of stress do you see in the job that you're interviewing for?
 - c) How will you handle the stress in the job that you're interviewing for?
 - d) How do you deal with stress in your current job?
 - e) Do you feel more stress from working with deadlines or working with people?
 - f) What would your co-workers say about your performance under stress?
 - g) What would your current supervisor say about your performance under stress?
 - h) How do you react under stress?

Experience

1. Tell us about the stress you encounter in your current job?
2. Tell us about the last time you were stressed.

TEAMS

1. What are the characteristics of a successful team? How would you contribute to such a team?
 - a) Tell us about an unsuccessful team of which you were a member. What, if anything, could you have done differently?
 - b) Tell us about a successful team of which you were a member. What was the most outstanding characteristic of that team? What did you contribute?
 - c) What are the important qualities a person should have to become an effective team member?
 - d) What qualities do you have that make you an effective team player?
 - e) When working in teams are you a leader or follower?
 - f) Do you work better by yourself or as part of a team?
 - g) What can you contribute to establish a positive working environment for our team?
 - h) What type of people do you work best with?
 - i) What factors would you consider in assembling a project team?
 - j) Name some of the pitfalls to be avoided in building an effective team.
 - k) Through what tools can a committee become more useful or productive?
 - l) Tell us about the last time you were on a team and you disagreed with a decision or action with the rest of the team. How did you resolve this disagreement?
 - m) Tell us about the most effective team you've been a member of. What role did you play?
 - n) Describe your ideal team. How can you contribute as a member of our team?

- o) Why would you be a valuable addition to our team?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Questions about teams are ultimately aimed at evaluating your ability to work on a team. Being an effective team member requires a basic knowledge of what makes teams effective.*
- ✓ *Actions that support team building include setting team goals, defining individual roles within the team, having team meetings and celebrating team successes.*
- ✓ *Do you prefer to work in teams or do you work best by yourself? Important qualities for effective teamwork include: controlling egos and agendas, listening, respecting the opinions of others and a willingness to compromise for the good of the team.*
- ✓ *There's nothing wrong with preferring to work alone. However, be careful about applying for a job that emphasizes working as a team.*

Experience

1. Tell us about the most effective team you've been a member of. What role did you play?
2. Tell us about an unsuccessful team of which you were a member. What, if anything, could you have done differently?
3. Tell us about a successful team of which you were a member. What was the most outstanding characteristic of that team? What did you contribute?
4. Tell us about the last time you were on a team and you disagreed with a decision or action with the rest of the team. How did you resolve this disagreement?
5. Tell us about a situation in which you only would have succeeded as part of a team effort as opposed to an individual effort.

Situation

1. You've been assigned to a work team. The team has laid out a plan of action that you disagree with based on your previous experience. You are the only member of the team who disagrees with this plan of action. What will you do?
2. You are one of five people on a team. Each one of you has strong opinions regarding the assignment that you've been given. The kick-off meeting did not produce a consensus on a strategy. Your supervisor asks how your team is progressing. What will you say?
3. One of the members of your team only does what is absolutely necessary at work. His performance is impacting the team. How might this person's performance affect your work?

TRUST

1. How important is trust to you?
2. What do you do to earn the trust of others?
3. What must others do to earn your trust?

Experience

1. Tell us about a situation in your career where you lost someone's trust.
2. Tell us about a situation in your career where you lost your coworker's trust.
3. Tell us about a situation in your career where you lost your supervisor's trust.
4. Tell us about a situation in your career where you regained someone's trust in you.
5. Tell us about a situation in your career where you regained your coworker's trust in you.
6. Tell us about a situation in your career where you regained your supervisor's trust in you.

WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH OTHERS

1. Tell us about your inter-personal skills.

- a) What are the most important qualities that your co-workers should have?
- b) What experience have you had working with external organizations?
- c) To what extent have your assignments required interface with other departments?
- d) In what kinds of situations do you find it most difficult to deal with people?
- e) Describe to us the extent to which you have worked with executive or top management.
- f) How do you handle difficult people?
- g) Describe your personality.
- h) Describe your relationship with your coworkers.
- i) Describe your relationship with your supervisor.
- j) How do you go about establishing positive working relationships?
- k) Describe your ideal co-worker.
- l) What are the most important qualities that your co-workers should have?
- m) How do you go about creating a rapport with others?

Answer Points

- ✓ *All jobs require you to deal with people. If you don't communicate the fact that you can work effectively with others, then you are providing the interviewers with a significant reason not to hire you.*
- ✓ *Use work examples and personal examples to illustrate your ability to work effectively with others.*
- ✓ *Emphasize situations where you've had to work with a wide variety of people such as facility maintenance staff to executive management.*

Experience

1. Tell us about a situation in which you were required to work with people at various levels within your organization? What was the most important step that you took to work effectively with these people?
2. Tell us about an incident in which you dealt with an irate person, which would demonstrate your ability to work effectively with others?
3. Tell us about your experience in working with volunteers.
4. Tell us about an instance where you persuaded another person to do something other than what they originally wanted to do.
5. What has been your experience in working with community organizations?
6. To what extent have you worked in an ethnically, socio-economically, and/or culturally diverse community?
7. Tell us about your experience in dealing with a variety of different people.
8. Tell us about the most competitive environment that you've worked in.
9. Tell us about a situation in which you had to work with someone that you didn't like.
10. Tell us about a situation in which you had to work for a supervisor that you didn't like.
11. Tell us about a time when you told your supervisor he or she was wrong.
12. Tell us about a time when you told a coworker he or she was wrong.
13. What happened the last time you apologized to another employee on the job?
14. What happened the last time you apologized to your supervisor on the job?

Situation

1. An executive manager has given you an assignment that will require you to work late tonight. However, you have dinner and expensive tickets to a show with your spouse tonight. What will you do?
2. You've prepared a report for the executive committee. All facts have been documented, checked, and double-checked. However, one of the executives states that the report is wrong and demands that the report be corrected. What is your response to the executive?
3. What would you do if your supervisor told you to do one thing and then contradicted himself one hour later?

WORKING INDEPENDENTLY

1. This position requires that you work independently, give us an example from your current job that demonstrates your ability to work independently.
 - a) How do you feel about working by yourself with minimal structure?
 - b) What do you do when you don't know the answer to a question and there's nobody around to help you?
 - c) How do you feel about working with minimal supervision?
 - d) How much supervision do you require?

YOU

1. What are your most outstanding qualities?
 - a) What are your worst qualities?

Answer Points

- ✓ For outstanding qualities choose those that are vital and essential to the job that you're interviewing for. The worst qualities should not be those that are vital and essential to the job.
- ✓ Listen to the question carefully. If the interviewers ask for a quality provide only one. If the interviewers ask for qualities, provide the two or three most important qualities. Don't try to give as many qualities as possible.

2. Have you ever been suspended or terminated from a job?
 - a) What is the most severe discipline that you've received?

Answer Points

- ✓ Be honest when asked about being disciplined on the job. Provide the background behind the discipline and most importantly, address what you learned from the discipline. If you've gone on to receive recognition (Employee of the Month) or have received high employee evaluations include these in your answer.

3. Tell us about the passion in your life as it relates to your work.
 - a) If you had a choice, all considerations aside, what would you do for a livelihood?
 - b) Describe your ideal job.
 - c) Describe your worst nightmare job.
 - d) What aspects of your work do you get the most excited about?
 - e) If you were to start your own company, what would that company do?
 - f) Tell me about the last book that you read.
 - g) In what areas can you set an example for your co-workers?
 - h) What is your favorite color and what does it reflect in your personality?
 - i) Rate yourself from one to ten on your work ethic with ten being best.
 - j) Tell about a time when you felt that you were working too hard.
 - k) Tell us about a time when you felt that you weren't working hard enough.
 - l) In what professional area have you improved yourself the most in the past two years?
 - m) Describe yourself.
 - n) Do you prefer to work on tasks or concepts? Why?
 - o) Which organizations are you a member of?
 - p) What are your feelings about relocating if you are hired?
 - q) What is your most significant accomplishment on the job?
 - r) If you played on a football team, would you prefer to play on offense or defense? Why?
 - s) How would your supervisor describe you?
 - t) How would your coworkers describe you?

- u) How would your harshest critic describe you?
- v) How would your most ardent supporter describe you?
- w) Tell us about the most significant compliment or commendation that you've received on the job.
- x) What's the most common misperception about you in the workplace?
- y) What is the most challenging assignment that you've had? How did you meet the challenge?
- z) What is the most fulfilling assignment that you've had? How so?
- aa) How successful do you think you have been in your career up to now?
- y) In what ways have you changed in your current position?
- z) Are you tough enough to get the job done?
- aa) Do you have what it takes to succeed in this position?
- bb) You have five minutes to convince us that we should hire you. Start.
- cc) Why are you someone I would want to work with?
- dd) What are your professional goals?
- ee) What do your coworkers respect about you?

Answer Points

- ✓ *If you aren't tough enough to do the job, then you should reconsider your application for this position. The interview isn't the time to reconsider your strengths and weaknesses. The answer should be "yes" and the reasons why you're confident that you're tough enough.*

- 4. What additional training will you need to successfully carry out your duties?
 - a) What additional experience will you need to meet the responsibilities of the job?
 - b) In what areas will you need to improve in to meet the responsibilities of the job?

Answer Points

- ✓ *Review the job that you're interviewing for and evaluate your qualities and interests. Identify those qualities and interests that most closely correspond to the essential duties of the job. If your area of additional experience or improvement is an essential duty then your qualifications may be in question.*

Experience

- 1. Tell about a time when you felt that you were working too hard.
- 2. Tell us about the last time you were criticized for your performance on the job.
- 3. Tell us about a time when you felt that you weren't working hard enough.