

QUESTIONS ASKED BY EMPLOYERS

Tufts Career Services

<http://careers.tufts.edu>

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why/how are you qualified for this position?
- What do you know about our organization? Our products? Services? Competition?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- What can you offer us?
- Why should we hire you rather than another candidate?
- Define success. Failure.
- Have you experienced failure? What did you learn?
- Of which three achievements are you most proud?
- Who are your role models? Why?
- What motivates you?
- Have you had difficulty getting along with a professor (supervisor, co-worker)? Explain.
- Do you prefer to work independently or with supervision?
- How do you prioritize your tasks?

YOUR EDUCATION

- How did you choose your college?
- Why did you choose your major?
- Which classes do you like best? Least? Why?
- Would you change anything about your education?
- In which campus activities did you participate?
- Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
- Did you pay for any portion of your education?

YOUR EXPERIENCE

- What did you most/least enjoy about your last job or internship?
- Which skills do you enjoy using?
- Have you ever spoken before a group of people?
- Did you work while going to school?
- Have you ever quit a job? Withdrawn from a course?
- Have you ever done any volunteer work?
- How would a former supervisor describe you and your work?

YOUR CAREER GOALS

- Describe your ideal job.

- What other types of positions are you considering?
- Describe your ideal work environment.
- Where do you want to be in five years?
- Do you plan to go to graduate school?
- Would you be willing to relocate?

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING QUESTIONS

- Describe a project or experience where you worked as part of a team.
- Discuss a situation where you resolved a conflict.
- Demonstrate your leadership skills.
- Tell about a time when you persuaded someone or successfully pitched an idea.
- Describe a time when you worked under stress and demonstrated your coping skills.
- Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution or improved something for an employer.
- Give me an example of a time when you set and then achieved a specific goal.
- Describe a time when you had to conform to a policy with which you did not agree.
- Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and how you prioritized your tasks.
- Share an experience that demonstrates your willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done?
- Describe the most significant written report that you've completed.
- Have you ever had to make an unpopular decision? Give an example.
- What's the best example of how you think logically and use sound judgment?
- Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the past year.
- Describe a situation where you failed.
- Give an example that shows how you take initiative.
- How have you dealt with a co-worker or subordinate who was incompetent?
- How have you handled an emotional reaction or personality conflict with someone?
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet.
- Give an example of an occasion when you used fact-finding skills and analysis.
- Describe the most creative presentation or project you've done.

YOUR TURN: QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK EMPLOYERS

- What is the most significant challenge facing this organization? This department?
- What kinds of assignments might I expect initially?
- How is training provided for new employees?
- How much opportunity is there for _____? Fill in the blank with a skill that you want to use (e.g., writing, research)
- Which skills and qualities are you looking for in a candidate?
- Does this position require more teamwork or more independent work?
- What are the department's goals for this year?
- What do you like best about working for this company?
- How often are performance reviews given?
- How would you describe this organization compared to its competitors?
- Which characteristics do achievers in this company share?

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

- *Who's our CEO?*
- *Tell me a joke.*
- *What's the last book you read?*
- *Describe your most creative Halloween costume.*
- *Tell me about your most awkward moment.*

Some recruiters have favorite questions. These inquiries are designed to observe your processing: the way you think, behave, and respond. Besides doing the research we've recommended (which would give you the CEO's name), you cannot predict all these questions. Stop and think. Respond carefully. Use humor, if it comes naturally.

TECHNICAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



In many career fields, especially Engineering and other technical fields, be prepared to answer questions about coursework, projects, and labs. You may be asked to describe a significant project in detail including the objective and results. Note that hiring managers will assume you have a general grasp of technical terminology in your field. Your depth of knowledge may be explored with questions such as the following:

- What assumptions did you make?
- Why do you think that was a valid assumption?
- Did your results make sense? Did the experiments match your analysis?
- If you were to start the project over, what would you do differently?

CONSULTING CASE INTERVIEWS

Adapted with permission from *Case In Point: Complete Case Interview Preparation* by Marc Cosentino.

A case interview is a role playing exercise in which an employer can assess how logically and persuasively you – a potential consultant - can present a case. The objective is not to see if you get the correct answer but rather to evaluate the process by which you think and arrive at a solution.

The purpose of a case interview is to test you in the following areas:

- Analytical and logical ability
- Structure and thought process
- Tolerance for ambiguity and data overload
- Poise and communication skills under pressure and in front of a client

COMMON CASE SCENARIOS

Strategy Scenario: Assisting a client who is entering a new market, developing a new product, investigating pricing strategies, developing growth strategies, starting a new business.

Operations Scenario: Helping clients to increase sales, reduce costs, improve bottom lines.

Sample Case Question: How do you price a light bulb that never burns out?

FOUR-STEPS TO TAKE WITH EVERY QUESTION:

1. Summarize and re-state the question
2. Verify the objectives
3. Ask clarifying questions
4. Identify and label the case

KEY GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO CASE QUESTIONS

- Listen to the problem and take notes
- Verify objective and ask clarifying questions
- Think big picture first; think top down
- Structure the problem
- Organize your answer and manage your time
- Be creative and brainstorm
- Listen to the interviewer's feedback
- Think out loud (but think first)
- Bring closure and summarize
- Demonstrate enthusiasm and a positive attitude
- Have fun

WEB SITES FOR CASE INTERVIEW PREPARATION

www.vault.com ■ www.casequestions.com ■ www.wetfeet.com