



CANDIDATE INTERVIEWING PREPARATION

This candidate interviewing prep is designed to enhance your chances of securing a job offer from our client by significantly improving your interviewing skills. As you know, many times the job is not offered to the candidate who has the most experience, but rather to the candidate who is best prepared for the interview.

The interviewer has only a relatively short time to obtain all the information needed from the candidate to make a hiring decision. Not only are employers concerned that the interviewee has the technical skills and experience necessary to do the job, they are becoming more and more concerned with the **Character** and **Previous Track Record** of the potential employee.

Following is a list of **behavioral based** questions which would be typical for an employer to ask in an interview to best evaluate a candidate's character and past performance.

Our experience as executive recruiters shows a direct correlation between the candidates that are **prepared** to answer the following questions with insight, depth and specific examples vs. those that are not. Specifically, those who put in the time, thought and preparation on each of these questions will have a significantly higher chance of receiving a job offer over those that are unprepared to answer these behavioral based questions in an interview.

Our recommendation is to write out a behavioral based answer to each of the following questions. Once you are in an interviewing situation, keep your answer behavioral based as much as possible vs. opinion based because the inevitable conclusion that the employer will draw is that **past performance is a strong indicator of future performance**.

Finally, if the subjects of **(1) Leadership, (2) Quality Focus, (3) Interpersonal Skills, (4) Personal Characteristics** and **(5) Proven Performance** do not come up during the course of the interview, take the initiative and bring these subjects up with the employer and discuss in detail how you have excelled in each of the five areas and give behavioral based examples. **YOU WILL STAND HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE YOUR COMPETITION!**

Following is a list of behavioral based questions for each of the five subjects which you should be prepared to answer in detail:

- **Leadership**
Visionary
Change Agent
Strong Work Ethic
Team Builder
- **Quality Focus**
Strong Customer Focus
Committed to Continuous Improvement
- **Interpersonal Skills**
Good One-on-One Relationships
Works Well with Different People
Persuasive/Good Communications
Listens Well
- **Personal Characteristics**
Integrity
Builds Trust
Committed
Responsible
- **Proven Performance**
Success in Prior Positions
Results Oriented
Accomplishes Agreed to Goals

Competency: Leadership

- **Visionary**
 - **Change Agent**
 - **Strong Work Ethic**
 - **Team Builder**
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- How would you describe your current work team? What (as a group) are the strengths and weaknesses? What would the team say you have done to improve the team?
- Tell me how one of your employees would describe you as a supervisor/leader. Why? Describe the behaviors that support your description.
- Describe to me what it takes to get your job done.
- Change is rapidly increasing in the work place. What kinds of changes have taken place in your current operation and what was your part in them?
- In your opinion, what are the characteristics of an effective supervisor/manager? Give me an example of how you demonstrate these.
- Describe a situation when you persuaded or influenced people beyond the limits of your authority. What skills did you use to do this?
- How have you obtained commitment from your team to meet goals and objectives?
- What is your vision for your current organization? What are you doing to reach that vision?
- Describe a situation when you had to gain commitment from your manager.
- Describe a situation when you anticipated a need. What happened?
- Tell me about a situation when one of your peers or direct reports presented a new idea. What was your role in making it happen?
- Describe a situation that represented a significant change and what you did to adapt.
- Describe a situation where either you or your department produced work that required re-work. What did you do to resolve the situation?
- When you implemented a change, describe your desired outcome and how you planned to get there. (Look for alternative plans/options.)
- Describe a situation where the people involved were not communicating as they should. What did you do?

Competency: Quality Focus

- **Strong Customer Focus**
 - **Committed to Continuous Improvement**
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- Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to satisfy a customer/client.
- Describe a time when you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to a customer's needs.
- What have you done to assure good client relations?
- How do you ensure that you give customers all the information they need to make a decision?
- What do you consider successful performance in a job? Give me some examples how you demonstrated these skills.
- In which areas do you feel you need improvement? What experiences lead you to believe this?
- How would you judge your ability to meet productivity standards in your current position? Why?
- Describe a time when you encountered difficulties in your job. What have you done to address/solve these difficulties?
- What have you learned from some of the jobs you have held?
- Describe a specific process you have modified to improve you or your department's performance. How did it improve?
- Tell me how you have improved the way you do your job. Why did you make these changes?
- Have you ever developed a procedure to make a job or process easier? Tell me how you did it.
- How did you solve a problem when the old solutions didn't work?
- Think about a change you made. How did you identify and overcome any resistance to that change?
- Give me examples of the kinds of questions you have asked to determine a customer's needs.
- Tell me about a time when you anticipated the problems or needs of an existing customer?

Competency: Interpersonal Skills

- **Good One-on-One Relationships**
 - **Works Well With Different People**
 - **Persuasive/Good Communications**
 - **Listens Well**
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- Give me an example of a time when you had a major disagreement with a co-worker. What was the situation? How did you handle it?
- What do you do to encourage others to openly discuss matters with you?
- What techniques have you used in your job to make people more comfortable with you?
- Tell me about some difficult or “touchy” situations you had to work out with people from other departments. How were they resolved?
- Give me an example of a situation when someone disagreed with your point of view. What did you do?
- How well do you listen when someone else speaks? Explain.
- How do you establish working relationships with new people? Give me an example.
- Tell me about a time when there was significant stress in dealing with an individual at work. What did you do?
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to communicate successfully with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
- Tell me about a time when you had to be persuasive in order to get a point across that was important to you.
- Tell me about a job experience in which you had to speak up and tell other people what you thought or felt.
- Describe a situation in which you were able to **read** another person effectively. How did this impact the way you handled the situation?
- Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.
- Tell me about a situation in the past year in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or coworker.

Competency: Interpersonal Skills (con't)

- **Good One-on-One Relationships**
 - **Works Well With Different People**
 - **Persuasive/Good Communications**
 - **Listens Well**
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- Describe the worst customer or coworker you have ever worked with and tell me how you dealt with him or her?
- In your opinion, what are the characteristics of an effective listener? How have you demonstrated these characteristics?
- Give me an example of an instance when you were particularly effective at expressing yourself.
- How do you show your customers you are listening? Give me a specific example of when you applied effective listening skills.
- Tell me about a situation when you had to compromise to achieve something.
- Tell me how you have handled your anger in tough situations.
- Give me an example of a time when you felt you did a good job of communicating your point. How did you make that communication effective?
- Tell me about a time when you had to use your oral communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.

Competency: Personal Characteristics

- **Integrity**
 - **Builds Trust**
 - **Committed**
 - **Responsible**
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Integrity

- Tell me what is important to you. What have you done to support this?
- Occasionally, we all run into customers who are difficult to get along with. Describe some situation where you have had to deal with a particularly troublesome customer. Be specific on how you handled them.
- In your experience with _____, tell me about a decision your boss made that you did not agree with and how you dealt with it.
- How would you expect others to describe your quality of work?
- Have you encountered any ethical issues as a _____ ?

Builds Trust

- Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to satisfy a customer/employee.
- Describe a time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to a customer's need.
- As a _____, what kinds of information do you think are important to pass along to your boss?
- How well informed do you feel you are in what is going on in your department? How do you keep informed?
- What techniques do you use to build trust in your relationships at work?

Competency: Personal Characteristics (con't)

- **Integrity**
 - **Builds Trust**
 - **Committed**
 - **Responsible**
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Committed

- Describe to me a typical work week you encounter at your current/previous position.
- What goals have you set for yourself in terms of personal achievement?
- What path have you taken to reach your goals? Describe.
- Describe a project that you took on that was not part of your job description.
- Give me an example of a project or idea you have accomplished in spite of considerable opposition or organizational constraints.

Responsible

- In your position as a _____ , how has your ability to meet deadlines been evaluated?
- How do you identify potential problems?
- What do you do when confronted with a complex problem?
- Give me examples of some of the most difficult situations that you have had to deal with at work. How have you handled them?
- Describe a project that you have undertaken within the last six months. What was your role?
- Describe a situation when others in your organization depended on you.
- Describe an experience you had when you needed to be persistent to accomplish a task. What happened?
- Give me an example of a time when you had to adjust your schedule to accommodate priority projects. What was the result?

Competency: Proven Performance

- **Success In Prior Positions**
 - **Results Oriented**
 - **Accomplishes Agreed To Goals**
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- Tell me about some goals you have set for yourself (and your department) and how you went about meeting them.
- What kinds of things are most important to you? (Look for emphasis on accomplishments and results when talking about events.)
- Please describe a project you have done that you consider successful. What made it a success?
- What obstacles did you overcome to get to where you are today?
- What do you consider the key elements of your current success?
- Please describe a situation in which you failed. What did you do about it?
- Describe the biggest challenge that you have faced in your present job in the last six months.
- Describe how you determine what constitutes top priorities in the performance of your job. (Look for accomplishment of goals.)
- What were your goals last year? Were they achieved? Please explain.
- What was the most significant achievement of your group last year? Please explain.
- Tell me about a time when you had to organize a group to accomplish a goal. What was the outcome?
- Explain a project deadline you could not meet. What did you do about the situation?
- Have you ever had to go against obstacles to accomplish a goal? Tell me about it.