

Common Interview Questions

Biographical Questions

Can you tell me about yourself?
Where were you born?
What is your date of birth?
Are you married?
Do you have children?

Personality

What do you have to offer? Please tell me about yourself.
How do others describe you?
What are your strengths and weaknesses?
What is important to you in a job?
What type of people do you get along with best?
What type of people annoy you?
Do you prefer working by yourself or with others?

Education and Training

What school/university did you attend? Why did you choose it? When did you leave?
Why did you choose to study (your course)?
What subjects did you like the most? Least? Why?
What competencies have you acquired in your training?
How did you combine work/home duties with studying?
What are your plans for continued studies?

Work experience

How long have you been seeking work? Why?
What previous jobs have you had?
Why do you want to leave your present employer?
What did you do in your last job?
Give me an example of the type of work you have performed and the outcome.
What did you like best/least about your job?
Tell me about your boss/company.
What makes you think you are the best person for this job?
What were your greatest successes/failures?

The company and the job

Why are you interested in working for this company?
What features of the job interest you most/least?
What do you know about this company?
How does this job compare with others you have applied for?

Career progress

What are your major accomplishments in your career to date?
Are you satisfied with your career progress?

What do you see yourself doing in 5 years?
Do you have long range ambitions?

Leadership qualities

As a group leader, what activities have you been involved in?
What sort of leader were you described as by your peers?
What techniques do you use to develop the potential of subordinates?
Describe the subordinates who have become successful as a result of your efforts.

Innovation and decision-making skills

What new ideas have you contributed in the past year? Describe a work decision you have made.
Were your suggestions adopted? How were they accepted?
What is the most difficult decision you have had to make?
What obstacle have you had to overcome to get where you are today? How did you overcome it?
What makes the difference between success and failure?

Professional and personal development

Are you a member of a professional organisation?
Which associations?
Do you attend meetings and functions?

Salary

What salary do you expect?
What do you expect to earn five years from now?
Are you prepared to sign a workplace enterprise agreement?

Interests outside of work

What do you do in your spare time?
How much time do you spend with your family?

SOURCE: Shmerling, Leah.(Author). Job Applications: The Winning Edge, 2nd edn.
South Yarra: Macmillan Education Australia Pty Ltd, 1998.