A library of interview questions

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Achievement Orientation
Q 1. What matters most to you in your work?
Q 2. Can you think of a situation where you consciously set a goal and achieved it?
a) Please describe the situation that led you to set the goal
b) What did you do specifically to achieve the goal?
c) How did it turn out?
Q 3. What would you most like to achieve but have been unable to? Why were you unable to achieve it?
Q 4. What goals have you presently set for yourself in different areas of your life?
Q 5. What would make you suitable for this job?
Q 6. What makes your day and what ruins your day?
Adaptability
Q1. What are the biggest changes you have been part of and how did you cope?
Q2. Describe the challenges which have really tested your adaptability?
Q3. Describe how you have initiated change? What was the outcome? What would you do differently next time?
Q4. What was the most significant thing you learned from implementing these changes?
Q5. What would you change in your current role if you had a free hand? Describe how you would go about it.
Q6. Who would you prefer to work with: someone who was persistent or someone who was flexible? Why is that?

Assertiveness
Q1. Tell me about a time when one of your staff or a co-worker was not pulling their weight in the team. What did you do? What was the result?
Q2. Describe how you have handled working as part of a committee or on a team based project?
Q3. When you have worked on a project with others, how have you handled the situation when differences have arisen about how to complete the task?

Communication Skills
Q1. How would you describe your own communication style?
Q2. How do you ensure that your message is understood?
Q3. What sort of written communications have you prepared in the past?
Q4. Where could communication in your company be improved? What have you done to address that issue?

Creativity
Q1. What are the two projects you are proudest of completing?
Q2. Describe a problem for which your first solution did not
work, so that you were forced to try other solutions.
   a) How did this happen?
   b) What did you do?
   c) What was the result?
Q3. How do you help other people solve their work problems.

Customer Service
Q1. What do you think are the key elements of good customer service?
Q2. Can you describe for me a situation where you had to provide outstanding customer service?
   a) What was the situation that led up to the incident?
   b) What did you see as being required?
   c) What action did you take?
Q3. Describe the most difficult customer you have had to handle. What did you do?

Delegating
Q1. What steps do you take to ensure that your department produces quality work?
Q2. How do you measure quality?
Q3. What method do you use to ensure that work gets done correctly and on time?
Q4. How do you make sure that your staff provide good service to other departments or customers?
Q5. Describe an employee who was very difficult to manage? How did you handle it?
Q6. What do you take into account when you have to plan and complete a project?

Initiative and Drive
Q1. Can you think of an example of a time you initiated a significant change in your company?
   a) What did you believe needed to happen?
   b) What did you do to implement the change?
   c) What was the final outcome?
Q 2. What really challenges you?
Q 3. What strategies/tactics do you use when you have a lot of work to do and only a little time to do it in?

**Interpersonal Skills and Sensitivity**

Q 1. Have you changed your language to suit a particular audience? Describe the outcomes?
Q 2. How do people around you differ in their 'needs'? Give specific examples.
Q 3. How do you let people know that you are listening and understanding them? Describe a specific incident?
Q 4. Giving people feedback is often a test of our interpersonal skills. Tell me about the last time you had to give someone some bad news or negative feedback. What was the outcome?
Q 5. Describe a situation you have been in where you were required to use some high level interpersonal skills and show sensitivity?
   a) What did you believe would be the best way to handle this situation?
   b) What exactly did you do?
   c) What was the result of that action?
Q 6. What type of people do you prefer to work with? What type of people do you not prefer to work with?

**Managing People and Building a Team**

Q 1. Describe how you have developed staff in the past?
Q 2. Describe what you have done to build high performing teams?
Q 3. How does your management style differ from that of your colleagues? Is it successful? Give examples.
Q 4. What are the biggest ‘people’ problems you have faced and how did you overcome them? Give a specific example.
Q 5. Describe the most difficult person you have had to work with or for? What did you do to continue working with them?
Q 6. No two employees are exactly alike. How do you take this into account when you manage them? Can you give me a specific example?

Q 7. How do you set direction for your team?

**Motivation**

Q 1. What things do you like best about your current job?
Q 2. Describe a time when you have worked particularly hard and felt a strong sense of achievement?
   a) What was the situation that led up to the incident?
   b) What exactly did you do?
   c) Why did you feel you had achieved?
Q 3. Describe some recent responsibilities you have taken on. Why did you assume these responsibilities?
Q 4. Can you give me an example of experiences you felt were dissatisfying?
Q 5. What motivates you to put in your greatest effort?
Q 6. Under what conditions do you find yourself holding back your efforts?
Q 7. Describe your ideal job. What would you be doing more of and less of?
Q 8. How do you know when you have done a great job?

**People Orientation**

Q 1. Can you think of a situation where the output of your job required you to work closely with other people?
   a) Please describe the situation and why working closely with others was critical?
   b) What did you do?
   c) What was the result?
Q 2. When you first approach someone you must talk with, what do you tend to do?
Q 3. How do you weigh the relative importance of handling feelings versus handling facts in your relationships at work?
Q 4. What factors have contributed most to your success in dealing with different types of people in jobs?
Q 5. What would you like to get out of this job if it was offered to you?

**Persuading and Influencing**

Q 1. Describe a time when you failed to sell a proposal or viewpoint to other people? What happened?
Q 2. Describe your most disappointing experience in trying to get management to agree to a proposal of yours. What would you do differently next time?
Q 3. How do you get your ideas accepted if you aren’t in a position of authority with others?
Q 5. Think of a time when you needed your boss to change the way they handled something. What happened and how did you handle it?
Q 6. Tell me about a time when two people disagreed with you about an important situation. What did you do?

**Problem Solving and Planning**

Q 1. How do you approach solving problems? Give us some examples of some real life scenarios you’ve had to fix.
Q 2. What are the most complex plans you have developed?
Q 3. How do you keep yourself on track?
Q 4. How have you built flexibility into your plans?
Q 5. How do you approach project management?
Q 6. What targets must your department accomplish and how do you make sure these targets are reached?
Q 7. What was the most difficult decision you have had to make? Why did you make the decision you did? What were the results of your decision?

**Resilience and Tenacity**

Q 1. Describe how you felt after you lost that important customer.
Q 2. Describe some of your biggest disappointments. What
Q1. What have you done the next day?
Q3. Describe one of the main obstacles you had to overcome to get where you are today.
Q4. Can you describe some experiences where you felt that you gained something because you persisted for a long time?
Q5. Can you describe a situation where you tried your best but did not succeed?
Q6. What hurdles did you overcome to get as far as you have in your career?
Q7. How do you deal with other people when they don’t meet agreed deadlines?

**Strengths, Limitations and Training Needs**

Q1. What do you see as your strengths?
Q2. What new skills would you like to develop?
Q3. What do you see as the greatest challenge for you in this role?
Q4. What was the most useful criticism you ever received?
Q5. If your last boss was able to waive a magic wand over your head, what aspect of your performance would change?
Q6. If you had the opportunity to do the last 10 years of your career all over again what would you do differently?

**Teamwork**

Q1. Tell me how you prefer to carry out projects? Give an example.
Q2. What’s most important to you when you work with other people?
Q3. Tell me about your best experience when working as part of a team.
Q4. How do you work best with people?
Q5. Describe some projects you had to do but later wished you had not been involved with?
Q6. How would we know if you were stressed?
Work Ethic

Q 1. What do you think distinguishes a good employee from an average employee?
Q 2. What are the standards of success in your current job?
Q 3. Have you missed deadlines, targets, budgets? What were the causes?
Q 4. If we had to choose between a person who was highly intelligent and puts in an average effort and a person who was of average intelligence and yet had a high work ethic, who would you recommend we choose and why?