TOP 20 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Full Sample Answers

WHO AM I?

I'm an Air Force veteran and software developer. I'm passionate about personal development and sharing that knowledge with those who want to learn. I mentor students to land their dream job, and excel once they've got it.

I specialize in the IT field, however, I teach individuals from all industries the skills required to make it through their interview process, and transform their lives by landing their dream job.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND ME!

I create and publish weekly interview preparation and career success videos on my YouTube channel, as well as frequent uploads to my website and other social media. I also offer resume and interview coaching through my website.

WANT TO CONNECT?

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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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CORE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Core interview questions are the questions you're definitely going to get. These questions are the most important ones to prepare a response for and can make or break your interview if you get these wrong.

QUESTIONS:

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Why Should We Hire You?

"You should hire me because I'm the type of person who not only wants to get the job done, but get the job done right. One of my biggest strengths is that I am endlessly curious, which for me means understanding how all of the pieces of the puzzle work. As a QA tester, I wasn't satisfied with simply checking off the boxes for testing, but I wanted to make sure as a team that we were creating the most effective products for our customers. Because of that, I took steps to learn about the project plan from a to z and directly contributed to the project planning for a high-visibility project. This led to me being put in charge of my own testing team where I presented our final project status to senior leadership and was recognized for my outstanding efforts.

Since I've taken the role of lead tester and have three direct reports. I find that I'm passionate about sharing my experience and knowledge with others and that together we're able to tackle any challenge due to our constant communication and our diverse skill sets.

From this conversation, I think it's clear that you're looking for a motivated individual who isn't afraid to learn new skills and innovate processes where improvements could be made. I've always been the kind of person that's not afraid to take action when a process could be done better, and that's the type of passion that I would bring with me to this role as team lead."

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Tell Me About Yourself

"Fresh out of college I took on a job as an entry-level business analyst in a local bank. Initially, I was simply looking to get started in the business area of the bank but soon learned that I loved helping develop client-facing business ideas. After spending some time talking directly to customers I realized how much I care about giving people a great user experience, and that led me to the field of UI/UX design. I instantly fell in love and since then I have worked closely with the design team to come up with customer-focused projects and interfaces.

As I continued to work as a business analyst during the day I dedicated a few hours every week to learning the technology being used at our company to wireframe UI/UX designs. The more I learned the more I fell in love. As a business analyst, I was put in charge of working with a client and the UI/UX team to develop a new application interface which eventually led to me being recognized by leadership for my contributions to the project.

Although I've loved being a business analyst, I can honestly say that I feel I've found my passion in UI/UX design and I hope to utilize my business and development skill set at ABC Company. I'm looking to provide even more value and expertise to a company that I can be proud of, by taking on broader responsibilities and shifting to a more hands-on role in UI/UX development, which is why I'm here today applying for this job position at ABC Company"

Why Do You Want To Work Here?

"I'm very interested in this field and I had always heard that this company was a great company to work for. I actually know a few people who have worked here and they were always talking about how great the company culture was and encouraged me to join. During my research, I discovered that it is also the leading brand in the area I was looking to pursue. When I saw that I knew I had to check out the available positions, and when I did I found this job role that is a perfect fit for what I'm looking for, and where I think my next step lies in my career path.

From my understanding, the candidate you're looking for to fill this job role needs to be resourceful, motivated, and a quick learner, which are all skills that I've demonstrated within my current job position and that I would be looking forward to improving upon in this new role."

What Is Your Greatest Weakness?

"I would have to say that I struggle with keeping track of all of the things I have to do. With meetings, calls, and daily and weekly reports, I'm often overwhelmed and can easily lose track of what needs to be done and by when. It's because of this though that I religiously use my digital calendar and to-do list. I found that trying to remember everything is impossible, and by building the habit of writing down my meetings and tasks right when I get them, I've been able to meet all of my deadlines much more reliably. In fact, I've also found that by doing this, I really free up my attention so I can focus 100% on what I'm doing, rather than worrying about whether or not I should be working on another project."

What Is Your Greatest Strength?

As an additional duty, I took on the responsibility of structuring and editing our monthly newsletter in my previous position. That gave me the opportunity to interview several individuals throughout the store and highlight the amazing things that people do every single day that often go unnoticed. It also showed me that people are the most valuable resource and that by encouraging and promoting both individual success and teamwork, we can boost productivity greatly. This ability to support a team by recognizing individual accomplishments is something that makes me a valuable leader and is one of the most valued strengths that I plan to bring with me to this assistant manager position.

Do You Have Any Questions For Me?

Sample Questions:

- What makes this position available?
- Could you describe this role in your own words?
- What are your expectations in the first 90 days?
- Can you explain in your own words what the day to day looks like?
- How do you feel this company outperforms it's closest competitors?
- What are some of the biggest challenges in this role?
- Are there other sections that this position works closely with?
- What are some of the projects your team is working on currently?
- What do you see as the direction of the team?
- How would you describe the company culture?
- How have previous employees succeeded in this role?
- What's your favorite part about working here?
- What is the size of the team I'll be working on?
- How has this role changed over time?
- How do you feel your role has evolved over time?
- How do you feel this position fits into the vision of the company?
- What are the metrics that this position will be measured by?
- Can you tell me what the next steps are in the interview process?

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BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Behavioral interview questions are vital to your interview because they give you an opportunity to show the interviewer a time when you've accomplished something or learned a skill that you'll bring with you to this new job position.

The best format for behavioral questions is to use the S.T.A.R format (Situation Task Action Result) to most effectively share your story.

QUESTIONS:

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Tell Me About A Time You Disagreed With Your Manager

Situation: *I was on the phone with a customer who had been passed around between different departments and was very frustrated by the time she got on the line with me. After listening to her I understood that I couldn't directly solve her problem, but instead of transferring her call to a different department again, I reached out to a colleague whom I knew could help solve her problem, and together we were able to fix the issue. I was later confronted by my manager who scolded me for taking so long on the call. He said that I had been taking too long on most of my calls and that I needed to spend less time on each call in order to get through to more customers.*

Task: *I disagreed with that point of view, and felt that I needed to explain why it was important that I spent the extra time on the call.*

Action: *I let him know the situation and that by spending a little bit of extra time on my end, I was able to save the customer much more time and frustration than she would have experienced if I had just transferred her call. Frustration that she would have directly associated with our department. Even after my explanation, my manager still disagreed with my actions and stressed the importance of getting through callers more quickly so that we didn't have such a high wait time.*

Result: *While I still didn't agree that we should sacrifice good customer service just to get through calls quicker, I did understand his point that we often had people waiting on hold, and that made for a negative experience for those customers.*
As a result of that conversation, I made a conscious effort to improve the efficiency of my calls where possible in order to ensure other customers didn't have to wait as long to talk to somebody.

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Tell Me About A Challange You Faced And How You Overcame It

Situation: *While working a job at a service desk, there was a period of time when we started to receive more negative feedback than normal from customers who were submitting incidents.*

Task: *I was tasked with investigating the customer complaints and our incident lifecycle to determine the underlying cause and see if we could make changes to improve the customer experience.*

Action: *I reviewed some of the feedback and noticed that most of the negative comments were focused on the time it takes to resolve an incident. I added a few more checkpoints to our incident process where the technician would reach out to the customer and provide a daily update on the incident status.*

Result: *I found that customers were much more understanding when they knew we were working on their incident, and noticed a considerable improvement in customer feedback over the next few months of implementing my new policy.*

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Tell Me About A Time You Had A Conflict With A Coworker

Situation: I had just started a new job and during the first week I felt like one of my new coworkers was going out of his way to be aggressive and hostile toward me.

Task: I knew that I needed to de-escalate the situation and start a dialogue with the team member because good communication is the most important thing on a team, and I really didn't want to start off on the wrong foot.

Action: I set up a one-on-one meeting with the coworker to figure out what was going on. After bringing up my concerns, the coworker apologized and hadn't realized how their language was coming across, and that the hostility wasn't intentional.

Result: After the meeting, I noticed a change in how the co-worker would speak to me, and I felt like this really improved our communication and collaboration when we worked together on projects.

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Situation: As a developer sometimes I'll meet with a client to discuss the product that we've made for them or workshop some ideas for a request they have. I can remember one meeting where the client had already gone through several rounds of development and was extremely frustrated with the final product we had produced and the process overall.

Task: I find that empathy is really the first step when dealing with an angry customer. Understanding where the anger is really coming from and trying to address that concern is where we can make the most progress. In this situation, we had delivered on the requirements at hand, so I knew I needed to dive a little deeper.

Action: After talking to the client a bit more, I understood that they were mostly frustrated that nobody had taken them through the process step by step and that they felt every time something was accomplished, there was something new that hadn't been discussed. With this knowledge, I decided to walk the client through the final product from the very beginning to the very end, and through multiple use cases. I explained to him how we usually collect our requirements and how we deal with new enhancements when we're not able to make changes to existing products.

Result: As a result, the client became much more clear on what he was getting, and also the steps moving forward to improve the product over the next few months. Just understanding the whole process and being transparent as to what we could and couldn't do really helped calm him down. The client was really feeling left out of the loop and by explaining the whole process they felt more in control of the situation, which resulted in a much better relationship moving forward.

Tell Me About A Time You Failed

Situation: *A few years ago I had just gotten my first position as the manager of a technical consulting team. I received my first project and had a meeting with the client to get an idea of what they were looking for. After those initial meetings, we worked hard throughout the entire next month to complete the project based on our client's initial ask, however, when we presented our progress to them, they didn't like it at all.*

Task: *After this meeting, we had to throw away most of our work, and I knew we had made a mistake in our process. moving forward I was determined to have more frequent check-ins with the client and present progress to them as it was completed.*

Action: *I broke the project up into five deliverable phases and had weekly touchpoints with the client to ensure we were creating exactly what they wanted, and could adapt based on their feedback.*

Result: *by following this plan, we were able to receive constant feedback from the client and deliver smaller incremental products in each phase. eventually resulting in a final product that the client was extremely pleased with.*

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What Is Your Greatest Accomplishment?

Situation: *A few years ago I was in a position at work where I was in charge of performing exit surveys for individuals who were leaving our company, voluntary or otherwise. As you can imagine I got a wide range of feedback when I was conducting these interviews.*

Task: *At the heart of these interviews though I was really trying to understand the pain points employees faced and see if there was anything we could do to keep our employees happy and productive before getting to the point where they were leaving the company.*

Action: *After months of these interviews I realized that most of those leaving lacked guidance when they first arrived at the company, and that lack of guidance simply compounded over time. I took that realization and worked with our training partner to create a much more elaborate and engaging onboarding meeting that was able to give new employees much more clarity and guidance as to what was expected of them.*

Result: *Creating this new onboarding meeting was so rewarding in itself because I received great feedback from new employees and their managers about how helpful it was. In addition to that feedback, I also received an award and was recognized personally by the CEO for my contribution to the company.*

Tell Me About A Time You Balanced Several Responsibilities

Situation: *A few years ago I was in a position at work where I was in charge of performing exit surveys for individuals who were leaving our company, voluntary or otherwise. As you can imagine I got a wide range of feedback when I was conducting these interviews.*

Task: *At the heart of these interviews though I was really trying to understand the pain points employees faced and see if there was anything we could do to keep our employees happy and productive before getting to the point where they were leaving the company.*

Action: *After months of these interviews I realized that most of those leaving lacked guidance when they first arrived at the company, and that lack of guidance simply compounded over time. I took that realization and worked with our training partner to create a much more elaborate and engaging onboarding meeting that was able to give new employees much more clarity and guidance as to what was expected of them.*

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When Have You Demonstrated Leadership?

Situation: *I find that leadership is something that anybody can display whether or not they are in a "leadership" position. Although I've been a shift manager now for two years, I like to share the story of when I was simply a crew member at my store and I volunteered to take over the in-store marketing campaign for an upcoming flash sale.*

Task: *My manager gave me the authority to rework the schedule and put people on different tasks as long as he signed off. This was the first time I had been given this type of power, but instead of simply reassigning people to different tasks and shifts, I wanted to include feedback from the other crew members to make this the best flash sale yet.*

Action: *I facilitated a meeting with a group of my other colleagues and we brainstormed new ideas to bring to the in-store marketing campaign that we hadn't done before. After the meeting, I worked out who needed to do what by when and personally explained to each person their role and how it related to our overall goal that we had agreed upon at the team meeting.*

Result: *The day of our flash sale arrived and everybody executed to perfection. I think having a clear goal as to what we were all trying to accomplish really helped each of us do our job better, and as a result, we showed a 45% increase in sales from the previous flash sale. Since then I've moved on to manage several other similar sales but I will always remember that first one as I think it was a great example of my leadership ability even outside of a managerial role.*

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COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

There are countless interview questions that could be asked in an interview. It's going to depend on your industry, your experience, and the interviewers themselves. Once you've got the Core Interview Questions and Behavioral Interview Questions down, there are plenty of other questions that are worth preparing for to stand out in your next interview.

QUESTIONS:

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What Is Your Ideal Work Environment?

I think where I'm at now is pretty close to an ideal work environment for me. Being in a supportive environment where I can easily interact with others and work together has really helped me grow from when I first started. The thing I like most about it is that I have plenty of flexibility in how I am able to schedule and prioritize my daily tasks. I know meetings are unavoidable and I like collaborating with my coworkers, especially when working on a larger project, but it's important for me to be able to chunk out portions of my calendar where I can put my head down and get work done. Both are important but I think I thrive when there is a balance between individual work time and collaborating as a team. How would you describe that balance at this company?

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Why Are You Leaving Your Current Company?

Honestly? I enjoy my current job. The people I work with are great and the job has really given me the opportunity to expand on my development skills. At this point in my journey though I feel that I could be adding even more value if I were given the right responsibilities and opportunities.

At ABC Company, I think you're looking for somebody who will not only excel in scripting but will be able to modernize your code base and improve the overall software development lifecycle, and I know that those are things that I would be able to accomplish. so in order for me to grow professionally, and to be able to add more value to a company, I felt that applying to this senior developer role at Myspace would be the best next step for me.

How Did You Hear About This Job?

I had always heard that this company was one of the best companies to work for, and I actually know a few people who have worked here and they were always talking about how great the company culture was. During my research, I discovered that it is also the leading brand in the area I was looking to pursue. When I saw that I knew I had to check out the available positions, and when I did I found this job role that is a perfect fit for what I'm looking for, and where I think my next step lies in my career path.

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Where Do You See Yourself In Five Years?

My current goal is to earn my PMP certification so that I can provide more value and grow in my professional skills. This company seems like a fantastic place to continue to learn and grow my knowledge and eventually be a place to utilize my PMP certification. In the next five years, I plan to consistently work towards that goal by becoming an expert in this industry and learning from all of the other great individuals working here at ABC Company. Although I've just graduated, In five years I hope to have a better understanding of what I'm passionate about and be able to discuss project work competently and confidently with others, and ideally take on additional leadership tasks once I become more skilled in this area.

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What Are Your Career Goals?

I'm always looking to broaden my skills and learn across several areas. I have learned that I can always find something interesting in anything I'm doing, and I'm always driven to know everything about what it is I'm doing right here and now. My short term would be to become an expert in this job position. Eventually, I hope to become a leader in the space while working with a skilled group of professionals and become a valuable part of the team.

I'm a person who's passionate about processes, so my long-term goal is to be in an environment where I can provide value by fully understanding the processes at this company, and hopefully be able to make them even better by integrating my own skills and experiences.

I am the most fulfilled when I'm contributing to something greater than myself and providing value to a team is the best way to do that, which is why I'm so excited to be applying for this job role at this company.

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What Is Your Ideal Work Life Balance?

For me personally, I know that I need to have time to keep myself healthy physically, and I need to have time to enjoy spending time with my friends. I take my professional career very seriously but not at the expense of my emotional or physical health. Every day after work I try and get some sort of physical activity in, whether that's going to the gym or simply walking my dog. I also host a game night every Thursday and try to get out and explore the city on the weekends. As long as I can do those things and I don't need to be stressed about phone calls at night or on the weekends I am able to feel pretty balanced in my life.

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