SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

OPENERS:

- Tell me about your favorite position, and what role your boss played in making it so unique.
- Tell me about your least favorite position.
- Why should I consider you for this position?
- What can you do for us that someone else can’t?
- How would you describe your ideal job?
- What five adjectives best describe you?

ACHIEVEMENT-FOCUSED QUESTIONS

- What makes you stand out amongst your peers?
- What has been your proudest accomplishment? Tell me about it.
- What would your current boss say makes you most valuable to him/her?
- Tell me what “success” means to you.
- What do you consider your greatest strength?
- How do you set goals for yourself?
- Where do you see yourself five years from now?
- What motivates you?

"PRESSURE-COOKER" QUESTIONS

- Tell me about your last performance appraisal. In which area(s) were you most disappointed?
- Where do you disagree with your boss most often? How did you handle the last time he/she was wrong and you were right?
- Were you ever in a situation where you had too many things to do in the time available? What happened and how did you handle it?
- What was your worst mistake last year, and how did you deal with it?
- How do you work with new and weak members of your group?
- What kind of people do you feel represent a challenge to work with and how do you best deal with them?
- You’ve changed jobs frequently. How do we know you’ll stick around?
- You’ve stayed with the same company for years. Why did you decide to leave?
- I see you were unemployed for a period of time. Tell me about it.
- What do supervisors tend to criticize most about your performance?
- How does your boss get the best out of you?

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

- Tell me about the most difficult assignment you ever had. How did you go about completing it?
- Tell me about a situation in which your boss was upset with the way you did something. How did you handle your boss?
- For management-level applicants: Tell me about a particularly difficult employee you were able to turn around and help to become a good, solid worker.
Tell me about a decision you made on the job that did not work out well. How did you make that decision? What would you have done differently in retrospect?

Tell me about an occasion when, in difficult circumstances, you pulled a team together.

This position will be working with individuals who have been with us for a long time. How will you mesh with them?

SUPERVISORY QUESTIONS

What type of supervisory training have you had in the past?
Tell me about the type of people you have supervised.
How have you handled a difficult employee?
If you’ve had to fire someone, how was it handled?
What characteristics do you look for in a possible new hire?
How do you motivate employees if pay raises aren’t an option?
How would you supervise someone like yourself?

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Do you prefer working alone or with others?
How would your co-workers describe you?
What kind of people do you have trouble getting along with?
What kind of people do you get along with the best?
How do you handle a personality conflict with someone you must work closely with?
How do you feel about socializing with co-workers outside of the office?
What level of management are you most comfortable working with?

WORKING FOR OTHERS

Tell me about your favorite boss.
What attributes were lacking in your worse boss?
How well do you feel your boss rated your work performance?
Tell me about a time when you and your boss had a disagreement.
What would your boss tell me about you?
How do you handle having trouble with a boss?
Is the customer always right?

ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS

Tell me about a typical workday.
How do you handle several important projects simultaneously?
What do you do when things are slow on the job?
Tell me about a task that you just couldn’t seem to complete and why.
Describe the top of your desk.
• What aspects of your job do you consider most critical?
• How important was communication and interaction with others on your job?
• Tell me about a big change at one of your last jobs and how you handled it.
• What is your opinion about the “chain of command”?
• How do you handle the stress in a fast-paced environment?

PAST JOB PERFORMANCE

• Tell me about your last job.
• What unique aspects did you bring to your last positions?
• How much flexibility did you have in performing and making decisions in your last jobs?
• If you stay in your current position, what will happen there? How far can you advance?
• Give me an example of when you’ve demonstrated customer service skills.
• What were the three most important responsibilities in your last job?

CHALLENGING APPLICANTS IN THE FINAL ROUNDS OF INTERVIEWS

• Why do you want to work here?
• What do you know about our organization/department?
• Tell me about your understanding of the job you're applying for.
• What would you say are the major qualities this job demands?
• If you retired from this organization, what would be your legacy?

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