

30 great interview questions to identify candidates' soft skills



One of the best ways to tell if applicants have the skills to perform specific tasks is to directly ask how they've used those skills in the past. These [sample questions](#) can help hiring managers spot 10 important "soft" skills:

Initiative

1. Tell me about a time you did more than was required in your job.
2. Describe a situation where you found you had a serious problem. What did you do to solve it?
3. How did your last big idea work out?

Decision-making

4. What was the toughest decision you made recently?
5. Describe a work-related problem you had to face recently. What procedures did you use to deal with it?

Communication

6. Describe when you had to pitch a proposal. How did you do? Why do you think it went that way?
7. Have you ever given instructions that someone didn't follow? Why did that happen?

Integrity

8. Should some rules be obeyed more than others?
9. Did you ever have to deal with a co-worker who wasn't pulling his or her weight? What did you do about it?

Leadership

- 10.** Have you ever had to introduce a new idea or process at work? What approach did you take to gain cooperation?
- 11.** Did you ever need cooperation from a group over which you had little authority? How effective were you?
- 12.** Describe how you solved someone else's problem.

Persuasiveness

- 13.** What was the best idea you've ever sold to a superior? How did you do it?
- 14.** What was the best idea you ever failed to sell?
- 15.** What strategies have you found work best when trying to sway someone to your point of view?

Planning

- 16.** How do you plan your workweek?
- 17.** How do you determine your top priorities?
- 18.** How do you develop short- and long-range plans?

Sales

- 19.** Describe the primary types of people to whom you sell. What approach do you use for each group?
- 20.** What's the best way to find new prospects?
- 21.** Describe the toughest sale you ever made.

Supervision

- 22.** How have you made your group more efficient?
- 23.** What is the No. 1 thing that distinguishes a superior employee from a typical one?
- 24.** How do you monitor your staff's performance?
- 25.** How do you confront underperforming workers?
- 26.** Give me an example of your ability to facilitate progressive change within your organization.

Technical skills

- 27.** Give me an example of an especially difficult assignment. What was your role?
- 28.** What is the most important development in your field today? What impact do you think it will have?
- 29.** How do you keep informed about what's happening in your field?
- 30.** What job-related publications do you normally read?

For 170 more sample questions ...

Download *The HR Specialist's* [Library of Skill-Based Interview Questions](#).