

50+ Behavior Based Interview Questions

For additional information about interviewing, visit the “Interviewing” section of Julie L Bartimus Career Consulting’s website, under “Resources”, BartimusCareerConsulting.com/interviewing.html.

Interpersonal Skills/Conflict Management

1. Describe a time when you had to deal with a particularly difficult customer/client.
2. Describe a time when you dealt with someone who disagreed with you.
3. Tell me about a time when you were on a team and a member wasn't pulling his or her weight.
4. Describe a time you communicated effectively with another person even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
5. Tell me about a situation when you were not able to overcome an interpersonal conflict.
6. Describe an experience in which you were too persistent.
7. Tell me about the most difficult person with whom you’ve worked.
8. Tell me about the last time that someone criticized your work. How did you react?
9. Give an example of when you pushed too hard. Why? How did you determine when you should back off?
10. Describe a recent time that you were unexpectedly asked to defend your beliefs. How convincing were you? What arguments did you spontaneously think of during the discussion?
11. Tell me about the time that you met resistance when proposing a plan or action.
12. What are some of the best ideas you ever sold or failed to sell to a peer?

Work Standards/Work Ethic

13. Describe a time when you were motivated to go beyond the call of duty.
14. Tell me about a time when you had to break the rules. Why did you? What was the outcome?
15. Tell me about a time when you made a major sacrifice to achieve a work-related or personal goal.
16. Tell me about the last time you went “the extra mile” to do something because it needed to be done, even though it wasn’t your responsibility.
17. Tell me about a time when you weren’t very pleased with your performance.

Stress/Time Management

18. Describe a time you worked under heavy stress and the sacrifices you made to achieve an important goal.
19. Give me an example of a time when you met a strict deadline. How did you cope?
20. Tell me about a time when you were unable to complete a project on time.
21. Tell me about the time when your workload was most hectic. What were the competing demands? What did you do to handle the situation? How did it turn out?
22. What has been your biggest challenge in making effective use of your time? Give me an example of a time when that was a problem for you. What have you done addressing that problem?

Problem Solving/Decision Making

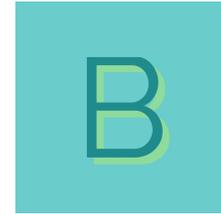
23. Describe a major problem you faced and how you dealt with it.
24. Give an example of a time you used your fact-finding skills to gain information for solving a problem.
25. Give me an example of a time you carefully analyzed a person or situation to be effective.
26. Describe the time you felt you were most resourceful.
27. Describe a recent group incident that required quick reaction and good judgment on your part.
28. Describe a time you missed an obvious solution to a problem.

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Leadership/Delegation

29. Tell me about a time when you didn't want to delegate a specific assignment?
30. Describe a situation you initially thought you could handle alone, but realized you were in over your head.
31. Describe the situation that best demonstrated your ability to get things done through others.
32. Describe the last time you were unsuccessful in getting someone to follow your lead.
33. Describe a time you convinced others to believe in a goal and energized them to achieve it.

Skills/Knowledge/Accomplishments

34. Give me an example of when you had to work with your hands to accomplish a task or project.
35. Give an example of instances where you have demonstrated creativity.
36. Tell me about some of the writing you've done: topics, length, format, etc. Related challenges?
37. What were some of the most difficult writing projects? Explain.
38. In what areas do you have special expertise? How did you develop it? How have you used it?
39. What do you do to keep up to date in your field?
40. Give me some examples of the most complex (assignment, projects, etc.). What was your role?
41. Tell me about a time you hired (fired) the wrong person.
42. What two or three accomplishments have given you the greatest sense of satisfaction?

Personality/Cultural Fit

43. Give an example that demonstrates that you are a self-starter.
44. Describe some examples of specific job conditions, tasks, or assignments that were dissatisfying to you.
45. Which bosses/peers have you worked most effectively for/with, and why?
46. Which bosses/peers have been the hardest to work for/with? Why was that?

Flexibility/Coping with Change

47. How have you handled an ambiguous assignment?
48. Describe a time when you had to cope with change.
49. Describe the last situation in which you were required to "think on your feet". What did you decide to do? How satisfied were you with the results? What would you change if you could?
50. Tell me about some situations in your job where you had to abruptly change.
51. To be successful in the world, people sometimes have to be flexible. What is the farthest you've had to bend your standards to be successful?

Examples of Interview Probes

Interviewers may ask follow-up questions to probe for additional information. Here are a few examples:

1. What did you do?
2. What was going through your mind when you did that?
3. Can you give me an example?
4. How did you feel when . . . ?
5. What was the outcome?
6. Tell me more about the situation.
7. Give me more details.
8. Lead me through your decision process.
9. Have you brought any examples of your work?