

Competency-based interview questions

Teamwork

- Tell me about a time when you worked successfully as part of a team.
- Describe a situation where you were successful in getting people to work together effectively.
- Describe a time when a team member has annoyed you.
- What do you think characterises a successful teamworker?
- Tell me about a time when you have had to modify yourself (or a way you do something) to take into account someone else's views.
- Tell me about a situation when you needed to offer constructive criticism to a friend or team member?
- Describe a time when you were a member of a team and witnessed a conflict within the team. What did you do? What were the results? What could you have done better?
- What difficulties have you had in teams – how were these resolved?

Communication

- Give an example of how you dealt with a difficult or sensitive situation that required extensive communication.
- Give me an example of how you dealt with a difficult customer at work.
- Tell me about a time when you had to explain an issue or process to a colleague (or colleagues) at work.
- Tell me about a time when you taught someone else something.
- How do you explain things to other people?
- How would you define good communication skills?
- Describe a time when you have had to persuade someone to do something
- Can you describe a time when you have NOT managed to persuade someone – what did you learn from this?

Responsibility

- Tell me about a time when you were responsible for something.
- How do you perform your responsibilities?
- Are you a responsible person? Explain why.
- Do you enjoy having responsibilities?
- What responsibilities have you been given in the past?

Commitment to career

You should be able to:

- Give a well informed description of what the line of service you have joined does for its clients.
- Be able to describe what you will be doing in your first year at the firm.

- Be able to describe makeup of any qualification to which you have applied, and to understand what work you will have to do to achieve it.
- Be able to give a rough account of where you imagine you might be in 5 years time. (e.g. a certain position in the firm)

Career motivation

- Why do you want to work for our firm?
- Why do you want to work in the service line to which you have applied?
- What can you tell me about us and the service line to which you have applied?
- What are the key things you are looking for in a job and why?
- Where would you like to be in five or ten years time?
- What are your career goals in the medium and long term? And How do you intend to meet them?
- What rewards do you expect from a job?

Commercial awareness

- Describe a company you think is doing well/badly and explain why you think this is so.
- What do you think are key qualities for a company to have to be successful?
- What significant factors have affected this industry in recent years? (The [Sarbanes-Oxley Act](#) is a key factor for [accounting](#) and especially [audit](#).)
- What do you understand of the role this firm plays in this industry?
- Tell me of a time when you were given the task of improving a service or product?
- Tell me about a time you provided excellent customer service.
- Tell me about a time when you have taken action to ensure that you are providing the best possible service to customers (most popular interview Q!)
- Tell me of a time when you have been responsible for a budget.

Decision-making

- What is the toughest decision you have ever made? Why was this so difficult?
- How do you come to conclusions?
- Tell me about a decision you have made that has affected other people.
- Do you find decisions difficult?
- Give me an example of a bad decision you have made. Why was this a bad decision?

Leadership

- What makes a good leader?
- Describe a time when you had to lead a group to achieve an objective.
- Describe a work based situation where you had to lead by example to achieve an objective.
- Describe a situation where you inspired / motivated others to meet a common goal.

- How do you motivate team members to do something they decide they do not want to do?
- What is your approach to resolving conflict?

Results orientation

- Are you successful?
- Give me an example of a time you have been very successful.
- Why do you think people aren't successful?
- Give me an example of a time you were not successful. Why do you think this happened?
- What have been your main achievements and why?

Problem solving

- How do you solve problems?
- Give me an example of a problem you have faced in the past, either as part of a team or as an individual. How did you solve the problem?
- What do you do when you can't solve a problem?

Trustworthiness and ethics

- Give me an example of a time a member of a team you were in had a problem. What did you do to help?
- Give me an example of a time you told a lie.
- Would you lie if your job depended on it?
- Do you think it can sometimes be ok to deceive people if this leads to a positive final outcome?
- It's late on a Friday afternoon. The rest of your team, including managers, have left the office for the day but you have stayed to finish some work. A client company calls and you are the most relevant person to talk to. They are angry and demand that you shred some key documents immediately, otherwise they will terminate their relationship with your firm. You are almost certain destroying these documents is illegal. What do you do?

Aspirations / drive / motivations

- Would you describe yourself as competitive?
- What motivates you?
- What gets you out of bed in the morning?
- What has been your greatest achievement?
- What skills are you looking forward to developing?

Strengths / weaknesses

- What are your strengths?
- How would your friends describe you?
- What is your biggest weakness?
- What are your weaknesses

- How would your worst enemy describe you?
- How would your friends describe you?
- What has been the biggest obstacle you've overcome?
- What is the most creative thing you've ever done?
- Describe a time when you have worked under pressure?

University

- Why did you choose your university and what factors influenced your choice?
- Did you enjoy university?
- Why did you choose your degree subject?
- Why do you think graduates in .. [your degree subject] .. would be good .. [job role you have applied for] .. ?

Extra-curricular / hobbies

- What are your hobbies?
- Were you involved in any teams or societies at university?
- Tell me about yourself

Conscientiousness / trustworthiness / time

- Give me an example of a time when you hit a deadline
- Give me an example of a time when you failed to hit a deadline
- What was your biggest setback?
- How do you deal with adversity?
- What do you do when you are late for work?

Travel / relocation

- Do you enjoy travelling?
- How would you feel about frequent travel?
- How would you feel about re-locating?

Salary

- What sort of salary are you looking for?

Need further help? Careers & Employability is here:

- Guidance appointments (45 mins)
- Mock interviews (these can be videoed to facilitate feedback)
- CV and application help and feedback
- Career workshops and courses
- Networking events with employers
- Support to identify your skills and sell them to employers

For more information, visit our website: www.uea.ac.uk

To book call: 01603 593452.