

Sample Interview Questions

Resume & Fit

Assess your skills, interest and fit for the position to which you are applying and provide context for experiences listed on the resume.

- Why are you interested in this position? Why should we hire you? What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
- What has been your most significant accomplishment to date?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Behavioral

Assess your past behavior in order to predict your future behavior in the workplace.

- Provide an example of a time when you worked on a team. What was the project, your role and the outcome?
- Give me an example of a time when you solved a complicated problem
- Tell me about a time you failed

Case

Assess your demonstrated skills in the areas of: problem solving, communication, teamwork and analytics. The case is often a business decision that simulates an actual scenario that you will work through in real time either individually or in a group.

- Your client is a ski resort. Global warming has reduced natural snowfall by 50% in the past two years, which is having a significant impact on the cost operations and the length of the ski season. What should they do and why?
- The Star Trek transporter has just been invented. Spell out some of the effects on the transportation industry.

Technical

Assess your technical knowledge, aptitude and problem-solving skills.

- Compare and contrast REST and SOAP web services
- What is copper trading at today?
- Coding problem – delivered on a white board in real time

Industry Interview Questions

Academia

Prepare Reflect on yourself, your research and your teaching. Prioritize understanding what a department is looking for and communicating how you can contribute to their needs.

- Please explain your research
- How do you approach teaching?
- How does your research influence your teaching?
- How would you mentor graduate students?

Additional academic interviewing questions:

<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers/pursuing-an-academic-career/applying-for-academic-jobs/commonly-asked-questions-in-academic-interviews>

Consulting and Business

Prepare When answering interview questions, explain your thought process to allow the interviewer to understand how you think. There is also an industry knowledge component, so read the Wall Street Journal daily and keep up with the stock market. The right answer is not as important as demonstrating your problem solving abilities and demonstrated interest in the industry.

- How would you define commercial awareness?
- Tell me about a project that you persevered through after wanting to initially abandon it?
- What is the optimal layout to arrange goods within the convenience store connected to a gas station?

Additional consulting interview questions:

http://www.glassdoor.com/Interview/consultant-interview-questions-SRCH_KO0,10.htm

Engineering and Technology

Prepare Restate the question to ensure you understand the goal and purpose of what is being asked. Be prepared to white board your answers and explain your thought process. Work through examples to come up with the simplest solution and detail a few ways you may refine your answer.

- Suppose that there is a database table. Four processes read the table at the same time, but only one process is allowed to read the same row of the table at any given time. How do you enforce the exclusive-read on a row?
- Given a pattern and a string, check whether the string matches the pattern. For example: pattern “aba” and the string is “redblackred,” so it matches because “a” is translated to red and “b” is translated to “black.” Note that for each character in the pattern, the translation is not empty and unique.

Additional discipline-specific technical questions:

<http://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/resources/tipsheets/finding-a-job-interview-questions-engineers>

Nonprofit and Government

Prepare Hiring managers value true commitment; candidates need to prove their individual connection to the organizational mission with specificity and demonstrated action. Describing volunteer work or student group affiliations can be a great way of illustrating your commitment to a mission.

- How do your experiences translate to the nonprofit sector?
- What are your expectations about working in the nonprofit sector?
- Tell me about a time when you have worked in an environment that makes decisions in a consensus-driven way?

Additional Nonprofit and Government Interview Resources:

<http://idealistcareers.org/category/job-search/interviews-job-search/>

Questions to Ask the Employer

- What are the immediate challenges and objectives facing the individual in this position?
- What is the typical career path for someone in this position?
- Would you please share the next steps in the hiring process?
- How is work evaluated in this organization? What does the performance evaluation process look like and how is that tied to compensation and growth in the company?
- What are the ideal qualities you are looking for from someone in this position?



Pro Tip

Take the values assessment on ImaginePhD to find great questions to ask.