Analytical Skills

Give me an example of a time when you used your fact-finding skills to gain information needed to solve a problem. Then tell me how you analyzed the information and came to a decision, if applicable.

What course(s) did you take in your program that strengthened your analytical skills?

Give me an example of a project or exercise you completed, focusing on the analytical component.

What tools do you use on the job currently to aid you in quantitative analysis?

Talk to me about the percentage of time you currently spend on the job dealing with analytical reports, analyses, and comparisons. Tell me about a recent project that was primarily numbers-oriented. Walk me through your procedure and thought processes.

Give me an example of a project that relied heavily on quantitative analysis.

Describe a specific accomplishment that demonstrates your analytical skills.

Give me an example, which demonstrates your ability to use a variety of approaches in your work.

Let’s assume that you are given an assignment, which requires a different methodology, than you typically use. Have you ever experienced this type of situation? How did you go about completing your work?

Tell me about a difficult problem you solved for a client.

Tell me about an assignment in which you knew you had little previous experience to apply to its completion. What strategy did you adopt to complete the assignment?

Give me an example that demonstrates your ability to manage a client’s billing and budgets.

Give me an example of your ability to work within a client’s budgetary constraints.

Decision Making and Risk Taking

Sometimes you have to make a decision even when others believe that it may be premature. Can you tell me about a time when you made a decision even when others were not ready to do so?

While being planful is usually important, there are time when being spontaneous can lead to success, too. Tell me about a time on the job when you were able to be spontaneous with good results.

Describe an important decision you made that affected the course of a project or an activity.

Tell me about a time when you made a decision that at the time was risky.

Describe a situation in which you had to defend your actions or recommendations because they were challenged by others.

Please describe an experience that demonstrates your ability to evaluate a situation on the spot.

What was the most difficult decision you have made in the last six months? What made it so difficult?

What was the biggest obstacle you had to overcome in order to incorporate a new idea or process? Why was it an obstacle? How did you overcome it?
Big List of Interviewing Questions

**Decision Making and Risk Taking (Continued)**
Give me an example of a time when you had to analyze another person or a situation carefully in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision.

Tell me of a time when you were told by two different people how to handle a project two different ways. What did you do and how did you arrive at that decision?

Give me an example of when you’ve demonstrated the ability to make quick and accurate job-related decisions.

Tell me about a time when an upper-level decision or policy change held up your work.

Give me an example of a time when you stuck to procedure when it may have been easier to go around policy.

Give me an example of when you weren’t successful in dealing with a tough decision you had to make.

Tell me about an experience when you had a limited amount of time to make a difficult decision.

Tell me about a decision that you made while under a lot of pressure.

Describe a situation where you heard of some new technology and implemented it.

Describe a situation where you were not supported in a task and how you dealt with it.

Do you think of yourself as an internal entrepreneur and why?

How do you determine if a plan is worth the risk of rocking the boat?

If it were apparent that there was little support for something you felt strongly about, would you try it anyway? Why?

What do you think of the phrase, “no risk, no reward?”

Describe a time when you weighed the pros and cons of a risk and why you decided to take it?

Describe a time when you were criticized for taking a risk. What was your reaction to the criticism?

Do you believe in the concept of calculated risk and what does it mean to you?

Describe a time when you seemed to be on the wrong side of an issue and what you did or did not do.

**General Management**
Tell me about your knowledge of other functions not related to your own. Describe in detail.

Do you have expertise in any other functions or disciplines? If so, describe.

How has your chief competition hurt your business?

If you could adopt something or some concept you know your chief competition has, what would that be?

Describe how functions within your business support each other to deliver what the customer wants.

Describe how international competition is impacting your business.

Describe how domestic competition is impacting your business.
Big List of Interviewing Questions

What is the next big technological advance in your industry and how are you preparing for it?

Define the term “business partnering” for me.

Interpersonal and Communications Skills
Success on the job, in part, depends on having good work relationships. Tell me of a time that you were able to get the job done because you had such a relationship with another person.

Describe a situation in which you success depended upon communicating with people from different backgrounds and levels.

Tell me about a time on the job when you had to handle a sensitive situation.

Describe for me a situation when you were a relative newcomer and saw people doing things in way you considered ineffective or inefficient. Talk to me about how you handled that situation.

Talk to me about how you dealt with a person who was inflexible. Give me specific tactics you employed.

Describe a situation in which you had to decide the best way to summarize, organize, and present complex information.

When working with people, we often find that one style doesn’t always work for every person – we have to be flexible in our style of relating to others. Can you tell me of a time when you had to vary your style with a particular individual?

Standing up for your point of view may not always be a popular position to take. Tell me about a time when you had to do that.

Has there been a time when you thought that you had a better idea than that of one of your supervisors? How did you handle the situation?

You’ve heard of the expression, “being able to roll with the punches.” Tell me of a time when you had to do that when dealing with a difficult person.

Tell me of a time when you had a miscommunication with a client or fellow employee and how you resolved it.

Describe a time when you had to communicate something unpleasant to a supervisor.

At one time or another, we all have had problems getting our point across. Give me an example of when this happened to you.

Tell me of a time when you didn’t communicate something unpleasant, but should have. What were the consequences?

Gaining the cooperation of others can be difficult. Give a specific example of when you had to do that.

Leadership
Give me a specific example of when you had to motivate a group of people to get an important job done.

Tell me about a time when you had to rally the troops to complete a difficult assignment. What did you do and what were the results?

How do you balance the need to supervise without “doing the work yourself” for your team?

Give me an example of how you’ve motivated others.
Big List of Interviewing Questions

**Leadership (continued)**
Describe a situation when you had to mobilize others to take action on a specific goal.

If you had to describe your leadership style, what would it be? (Follow-up) Talk to me about how you’ve implemented (or would implement) that style on the job.

Give me an example when you simply had to use your authority to get something accomplished. (Follow-up) What were the consequences?

Assume that you are managing a project and as the leader, you are expected to give feedback to team members. Describe how you would give feedback to someone who is not contributing quality work.

Describe a situation in which you were responsible for a project and at least one of your team members had more experience or expertise than you did in one area.

Understanding how other people think is often a part of being a leader on a project. Describe an incident that you’ve experienced in which that understanding was key in the project’s success.

Give me an example of a time when you’ve been instrumental in empowering a person or a group to accomplish something.

At times, a situation arises when we can really “make our mark” on the business we’re working on. Tell me about a time when you were involved in that kind of situation and how you took advantage of it.

How frequently do you meet with your immediate subordinates as a group? What do you do in preparation? At the meeting? After the meeting?

What recent problem have you had in which you included your subordinates in arriving at a solution? What approach did you take to get them to accomplish the task?

Tell me about a specific time when you had to handle a tough morale problem.

Tell me about a time when you had to tell a staff member that you were dissatisfied with his or her work.

Describe a time when you came up with a creative solution to a problem between two employees.

Describe how you communicate priority projects to your staff without making them feel overwhelmed.

**Managing Change**
Tell me the part you played in implementing a new system and/or technology in your organization.

Tell me how you dealt with those who expressed the sentiment of, “Why change when we have always done it this way?”

What new technologies are out there that you would like to implement? Why?

How do you win people over to the adoption of new techniques or technologies?

How do you instill ownership in people when new ways of doing things are introduced?

How do you change the culture of a business? Department? Function?
Big List of Interviewing Questions

**Planning and Organization**

Describe a project that you worked on. Talk to me about how you managed the project to assure that all deadlines were met.

Talk me through a project you’ve done, either on the job or as part of a course requirement.

Describe a time when you had to juggle several projects at the same time.

Tell me about how you typically schedule your day. To what extent do you use some kind of time management system and to what extent do you simply wait to see what turns up?

Describe a time when you had to adjust your plans due to changing circumstances. Tell me about a situation in which you were responsible for formulating plans for a large project.

There are times on the job when you have to develop a plan and stick to it, despite the obstacles. Can you tell me about a time when that was true to you?

Seeing a new way of doing the job can many times lead to greater productivity. Give me an example of when you were able to see and implement a new way of getting the job done.

Tell me of a time when you had an aspect of a job that was particularly uninteresting. How did you deal with it?

Tell me about your procedure for keeping track of matters requiring your attention.

Have you worked in a situation in which there were constant surprises or unanticipated events? How did you manage responsibilities?

Describe a time when your supervisor placed excessive demands on you and how you handled it.

Tell me about a suggestion you made on the job to improve the way things worked. What was the result?

Describe a project that you were responsible for that required a high amount of energy over a long period of time.

**Problem Solving and Strategic Thinking**

Describe a time when you developed an innovative approach or solution, which resulted in the implementation of a new idea.

Describe a time when you developed a creative solution to a problem or designed an enhancement to a plan.

Give me an example of a time when you identified a key strategy for a brand that had positive business results.

Tell me specifically what experience you have had in defining strategies in positioning and new product launches.

Give me an example of a time when you believe that you demonstrated “out-of-the-box” thinking.

Talk to me about the current strategy on one of the brands that you’re working on.

Tell me about one of the recent challenges you’ve faced strategically in your current job.

Give me an example of how you were able to take marketing [or other field] principles you studied and transfer them to your job.

Give me an example of a time when you were able to look at a challenge with a new perspective, resulting in an innovative solution, strategy, or approach.
Big List of Interviewing Questions

**Problem Solving and Strategic Thinking (continued)**
Tell me of a time when you designed an innovative approach that had a dramatic and positive impact.

Describe a time when you successfully implemented an idea that led to better results.

Give me an example of an accomplishment, idea, or strategy that illustrates that you are not governed by traditional rules or ways of thinking.

Describe a situation that demonstrates your ability to apply creativity and innovation to solving a problem.

**Teamwork**
Describe for me the kinds of things you’ve done in previous jobs to build teamwork with your peers.

It can be difficult in a new situation to build relationships with people you haven’t worked with before. Give me an example of how you’ve dealt with this situation in the past.

Tell me about a time when you used your enthusiasm to motivate a team to finish a project or assignment.

What’s the key to making a team work? (Follow-up) Tell me of a time that you helped to orchestrate that “key” as a member of a team.

What role on a team do you find yourself most often playing? Talk to me about a specific instance when you found yourself in that role.

Describe your most recent group effort.

Give me an example of when you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers or subordinates.

How often do you attend meetings with your peers (or group)? What role did you play in the last meeting?

What did you do in your last job (current job) to contribute toward a teamwork environment? Be specific.

Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.

Describe a situation in which others within your organization depended on you.

Tell me about a time when you had to work as part of a team even when the team wasn’t getting along all that well, and how you dealt with it.

**Technical Skills**
Tell me about your expertise in (insert field).

I see you have worked with (insert technology). Tell me about its features and benefits.

What experience have you had working with (insert technology)?

Give me examples of (insert technology) and how you adopted it for your last organization.

This position requires a variety of skills, describe your absolute strengths areas applicable to the position.

Tell me how you stay current in your field on new or evolving (technologies or programs).
Big List of Interviewing Questions

Other, Non-Behavioral Questions
The Behavioral Interviewing Approach is used by many companies. However, many organizations don’t use this format and can ask a range of different questions from “mini-case” to scenario questions. While these aren’t behavioral questions per se, the STAR stories you develop are still very effective in answering them. Outlined below is a variety of questions in different formats that could be asked in an MBA level interview. Please note that it is not effective to develop and memorize answers for each specific question. Rather, think through the issues posed and continue working on your stories. Despite this very comprehensive list, you will likely be asked a question that is not included!

What have you learned about yourself since you started graduate school?
Do your grades reflect your abilities?
Name three traits you would want to have in a friend and show how you have those too.
What other B-schools did you apply to and get in?
Describe what you learned in class yesterday.
(Sits in silence in the beginning, then…) “Well, it’s your dime!”
Tell me about a situation where you disappointed your boss and why.
Are you a smart person?
Convince me to buy this can of Pepsi
Can you have three conversations at one time?
What kind of financial modeling have you done in the past?

You are working on a team for a class project and have three months to complete it. One of the team members is unable to come to a meeting at the last minute. Because of this, the other team members want to reschedule the meeting as they “have many other things to do.” What do you do?

Tell me about a time when you weren’t prepared and there was a negative outcome.
Tell me when you applied something you learned in class outside of class.
Role play: You are the Human Resources Director and a line manager is mad at you. How do you handle it?

What is an activity you are involved in? Why is it important to you?

Why the MBA? Why now?

You have just started working on a new brand. What type of information would you pull from a P&L to get a better understanding of the business?

What are the most underutilized traits of a leader?

Who is (insert your name) in one minute? OR We’ve already seen your resume – keep that in mind and give us your 1-minute spiel.

I see from your resume that you have done much more process work than financial work. Are you doing something to learn more about that aspect of the business?
Big List of Interviewing Questions

How do you help ensure that your team meets project deadline?
Which of your creative accomplishments has given you the most satisfaction?

In your work experience, what have you done that you consider truly creative?

Tell me three positive and three negative things your team members would say about your interactions with them.

How would you describe your approach to solving problems?

Would your friends/colleagues describe you as a creative person?

Describe a situation that demonstrates your ability to see multiple options or look at things from a different point of view.

What types of people do you have trouble getting along with?

What was the most challenging group you successfully worked with?

Give me some examples of how you have adapted your own style to deal with different people and situations.

You boss (or client) tells you to do something you believe is wrong. What do you do?

Describe a situation demonstrating your ability to transition quickly and effectively between different tasks.

If hired, you will be working with experienced individuals who have been with the company for many years. What makes you think that your performance will be on a par with theirs?

You have had little experience with marketing (finance, technology, etc.) How do you intend to learn what is required from the position you are applying for?

Describe a situation that demanded sustained, unusually hard work, where others might have thought you couldn’t succeed. Was the experience stressful? If so, how did you handle the stress?

What are the 10 most important questions that you would ask to learn about a brand on your first day of work as a brand manager?

Identify a company that has made a huge strategic. Why was it an error?

Other than money, what makes you happy at work?

Describe one of your most defining experiences.

Why would you choose our firm over our competitors?

How would you improve the performance of our company?