Questions at Interviews

Personal Questions

Used to find out a person's particular skills, personal and interpersonal, their aspirations and ambitions and their particular strengths and weaknesses. Also used to assess personality and suitability to a particular work environment.

Examples:
'How do you see your career developing in the next five years?'
'Which particular personal skills do you feel you would bring to this position?'
'Do you like having a lot of responsibility?'

Education Questions

Used to find out details a person's level of education, qualifications and skills in relation to the candidate's CV.

Examples
'What level of mathematics did you study?'
'Do you speak fluent Spanish?'

Work Experience Questions

Used to find out details of previous work history and experience in relation to what is stated on the CV.

Examples
'What level of responsibility were you given in this position?'
'What type of work did you do?'

Leisure Questions

Used to find out more about a candidate's personality and interests. Very often questions about hobbies and interests are not asked at interviews.

Examples
'You say on your CV that you like fishing, why do you like this particular pastime?'

Do the following worksheets carefully and practise with another student. It helps if you can record your responses on voice recorder or video recorder and then review them.

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Personal Questions

Sample questions

1. Why do you want to do this course/apply for this job?
2. How do you think you will fit in in this environment?
3. Can you adapt easily to new situations?
4. Do you like working as part of a team?
5. How do you feel about working on your own?
6. Do you like having a lot of responsibility?
7. Do you like dealing with the public?
8. What do you consider are your main strengths?
9. What do you consider are your main weaknesses?
10. What advantages do you associate with this course/job?
11. What difficulties do you foresee in this course/job?
12. Are you interested in promotion?
13. Do you consider yourself to be ambitious?
14. How important is job satisfaction for you?
15. Can you talk about your achievements in life/ What are you particularly proud of?
16. How do you see yourself in five/ten year's time?

Write appropriate answers to the questions listed above.

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Practice your responses with another student acting as interviewer

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Education Questions

Sample questions

1. When did you leave school?
2. What did you most enjoy at school?
3. What school examinations did you take?
4. Did you continue your education after secondary school?
5. What course/courses did you attend?
6. What college/university did you attend?
7. What qualifications do you have?
8. Have you done any practical training/apprenticeship?
9. What languages do you speak?
10. What languages are you fluent in?
11. Are you computer literate/have you used computers?
12. What software packages are you familiar with?
13. Are you interested in continuing you education and/or training?
14. Why did you not complete your education?
15. Why did you not take examinations?

Write appropriate answers to the questions listed above

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Practice your responses with another student acting as interviewer.

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Work Experience Questions

Sample questions

1. What experience do you have in _____?
2. Where did you work?
3. What was the nature of your work?
4. How long did you work for _____?
5. Why did you leave that job?
6. Did you hold a position of responsibility?
7. What were your responsibilities?
8. Did you work in a management position/ supervisory capacity?
9. How many people were you in charge of?
10. What was the structure of the company?
11. What additional skills did you learn in your job?
12. What equipment/machinery/computer packages have you worked with?
13. How would you handle _____ (a given work situation)?
14. Were you given any further training as part of your job?
15. Did your job require dealing with the public?
16. Why did you leave _____?

Write appropriate answers to the questions listed above

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Practice your responses with another student acting as interviewer.

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Leisure Questions

Sample questions

1. What do you do in your spare time?
2. Tell me about your hobbies?
3. Do you play any sport/games?
4. Are you a member of any clubs?
5. I see you enjoy_____(e.g. music/drama /reading/walking etc.)
6. Do you like meeting people?
7. Have you many friends in Dublin?

Write appropriate answers to the above questions

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Practice your responses with another student acting as interviewer.
Your Personal Interview File

Create a file where you keep important documents for interviews and records of interviews you have already attended.

Things to keep:

- Certificates of general education. Diplomas, Degrees, etc.
- Examination results
- Details of further education: 3rd level, University, Post-graduate, College or Training(apprenticeship or other)
- Copies of CV*
- Copies of References
- Names of possible referees and phone numbers*
- Copies of job applications already sent
- Record of interviews attended: Positions applied for, names of companies etc.

*Remember to keep your CV up to date.

*Remember to inform referees of your intention of giving their names for references.

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