



Brighter Strategies

Better process Brighter results

50+ Interview Questions to Find Your Best Employees

Critical Thinking

BEHAVIORAL

- Tell me about a time you used your knowledge of the organization to get an idea approved.
- Tell me about a time when you used industry data to support a successful project.
- Tell me about a time when you used economic environment data to support a successful project.
- What have you done in your previous positions at other companies that made a significant difference to the business and for which you believe you will be remembered?
- Recall an occasion when you had to explain your department's losses.

SITUATIONAL

- You're new to an organization. How do you go about learning how the organization works?

- You're new to an organization. What is one of the first things you do to learn how the organization works?
- You're new to an organization. What is one of the first things you do to learn how you can contribute to the organization's mission?
- You've been approached with a new idea for your department. Describe how you go about determining the feasibility and possible success of that idea.
- If you were given the responsibility to start a new department from scratch, what are the basics that you would need to consider?

GENERAL

- What difference does it make to organize departments in a centralized versus decentralized way? What is your preference? Why?
- What role does "corporate culture" play in the success of a company?
- How have you participated in planning processes?

Financial Management

BEHAVIORAL

- Have you ever been over budget? Why? How did you handle this?
- Recount a time when you had to prioritize bill or invoice payment.
- If you could pick a stock to add to this company's portfolio, which one would it be? Why?
- Describe a tough financial analysis problem you were able to solve and how you solved it.
- Walk me through a financial statement (pick one).

SITUATIONAL

- What would you do if your proposed budget was rejected by management?
- Discuss a situation when an expense was greater or less than originally planned. What did you do with the surplus or shortage?
- Tell me about a time you used financial data to support a successful project.

Financial Acumen

GENERAL

- Describe your budget creation and management experience.
- Tell me about your fiscal management experience: budgeting, reporting, cutting costs, and building and maintaining reserves.
- Describe your PL (profit/loss) experience.
- What type of inventory audits have you been involved in? Describe challenges you've faced.
- Have you ever performed a cost-benefit analysis? Tell me about it.
- What experience do you have with financial planning and analysis?

- Is it usually better to pay bills early or on time or a little late?
- What is an income statement?
- What is a balance sheet?
- What is the job of the conventional finance department?
- Is it possible to have a positive cash flow but to be in financial trouble?

Time Management

BEHAVIORAL

- Have you worked under time constraints before? Give us an example.
- Describe a time there a time when you struggled to meet a deadline? Tell us about it.
- Describe a time you identified a barrier to your (or to others') productivity and what you did about it.
- When you have a lot of work to do or multiple priorities, how do you get it all done? Give me an example.
- Tell me about your productivity and time management skills.
- What do you do when someone else is late and preventing you from accomplishing your tasks?
- How do you determine what amount of time is reasonable for a task?
- How do you keep your team from feeling overwhelmed when various projects in process are equally important?
- What percentage of time did you spend on each functional area of your job?
- Describe the workload at your current position. How do you feel about it? What would you change about it, if you could?
- Define time management.

SITUATIONAL

- It's 4:30 on a Friday afternoon. Your supervisor gives you an assignment that needs to be finished by 8:00 Monday morning. You have already made plans to be away the entire weekend. What would you do?
- You work an eight-hour day. You have eight tasks of equal measure that are due that day. You have a company party for two hours that day. What do you do?

Communication

BEHAVIORAL

- Give some examples of how and when you were the spokesperson for your current (or most recent) company.
- Give an example of how you carefully considered your audience prior to communicating with them. What factors influenced your communication?
- Describe a time you used your communications skills to negotiate with an angry person.
- Have you ever given a presentation to a group? How did you prepare for it? What would you do differently?
- Describe a time when you were able to overcome a communications barrier(s).
- Tell me about a time when effective listening skills helped you in a problematic situation.
- Tell me about a time when you thought someone wasn't listening to you. What did you do?
- Recount an occasion when you were greeted with a greeting that was not normal for you. How'd you respond?

SITUATIONAL

- Suppose two managers have difficulty communicating with each other, but you understand both.
 - Would you try to help the two understand each other better? If so, how?
- Two members of a team do great work, but they do not work well together.
 - What are some of the key ways to get them to work together better?

GENERAL

- Management requires both good writing and verbal skills for effective communication. When it comes to giving information to employees that can be done either way, do you prefer to write an e-mail or memo or talk to the employee? Why?
- How well do you communicate with others? What communication techniques do you use?
- When do you think it is best to communicate in writing? When do you communicate face-to-face?
- In terms of communication (face-to-face, phone, e-mail, instant messaging, texting), when might you use each?