

## APPENDIX 5 A list of interview questions

These questions are set up to be asked of candidates at the interview stage but can also be reformatted to be asked during the paper review stage or of candidate's references. These questions are intended to be a guide for supervisors in developing questions. The hiring supervisor could develop other questions to address the topic.

### **Ability to adapt in a changing workplace**

- Describe a situation when you had to work with conflicting or ambiguous information.
- Give us an example of a time when you had to deal with multiple changes in schedules and/or unexpected circumstances.
- Select a job you have had that involved a change in work process and describe the role you played in that process change.

### **Ability to display a positive outlook**

- Describe a time when you were able to provide support to others in a stressful work situation.
- Describe a time when you worked on a project that did not result in the intended outcome and how you handled the situation?
- How do you provide motivation and support for yourself when faced with a distasteful project or task?

### **Ability to display expertise in areas of responsibility**

- Describe how you have used your expertise to guide others in projects, tasks or assignments.
- Give us an example of a time when you made a critical work-related decision, based on your personal expertise, and describe the outcome of that decision.
- When have you been most proud of your ability to display your expertise? Please be specific.

### **Ability to follow instructions**

- Describe a project where you had to follow someone else's instructions and how you went about the assignment.
- How do you prefer to receive instructions and what do you do if these instructions are not given to you in the way in which you prefer to receive them?
- Give us an example of a time when you chose not to follow instructions and describe the result.

### **Ability to learn and further develop professionally**

- Describe your current plan for your professional development.
- Do you have a preferred learning style and, if yes, how did you determine this?
- Describe the process you use for establishing your career/professional development plan.

### **Ability to prioritize and adhere to deadlines**

- What kinds of tools and/or systems do you use to organize yourself and plan your tasks?
- Describe a work project that you recently organized and the results you achieved.
- Give us an example of target dates you established on your last job assignment and describe the process for their establishment.

### **Ability to teach**

- Give us an example of a time when you were able to give instruction and/or share your expertise with your colleagues.
- Give us an example of one of your greatest achievements in teaching another person a skill. What was the skill and how did you go about it?
- How do you measure the effectiveness of teaching or training someone in a new area?

### **Ability to work independently**

- Describe a work situation where you did not have directions to follow. How did you handle the situation and what was the result?

- Give us an example of a time when you had to develop a system to conduct a work process, without the benefit of the guidance from a manager
- How do you get input from others when they do not have direct involvement in your work? Give examples.

#### **Accuracy and attention to detail**

- Describe the processes you use to check your work.
- Tell us about a project or work assignment that required detailed accuracy and how you went about it.
- Identify a time when you were able to avoid a problem as a result of your attention to detail and focus on accuracy.

#### **Analytical skills**

- Highlight the use of your analytical ability by describing a work situation where you had to employ these techniques to solve a problem.
- What methodology do you like to use when faced with evaluating solutions to complex problems?
- Describe one of your greatest successes at work in using analysis to define a problem and identify a solution.

#### **Communication skills**

- Describe your experience in making presentations to groups
- Describe a time when your listening skill impacted your ability to communicate
- Give us an example of a written report or document that you created that had a high impact on the audience.

#### **Community service**

- Describe the kinds of volunteer work you have been a part of.
- What has motivated you to choose the types of community service you have been a part of?
- How would you define community service?

#### **Computer literacy**

- Describe your experience with the following computer programs . . . (list the ones required for the job).
- How did you learn these programs? (Courses, self-taught)
- Describe the ways you use computers in your daily life.

#### **Confidentiality**

- Tell us about your experience in working in a position where strict confidentiality was required.
- How difficult is it for you to have lunch with a close friend and not talk about work?
- Is the confidentiality issue sometimes fuzzy in the modern workplace?

#### **Conflict resolution skills**

- How would you define peacemaker, would you see this as a compliment or veiled insult? (Q for Diplomacy also)
- Your boss is holding you responsible for the success of a committee of contentious outspoken individuals, would you handle the assignment?
- Describe an experience you have had in the workplace where you have had to be a “mediator”. Was this a comfortable role for you?

#### **Consistency and dependability**

- Would your friends/co-workers volunteer you to make the reservations at the one and only favorite restaurant for a once in a lifetime special occasion? Why? Or Why not?
- Describe the activities of a typical day in your life.
- Would your friends say that you have a certain style to your work - a trademark? If so, what is it?

- (I changed this one slightly)

### **Creativity and innovation**

- Some people like to tinker around on their computer, their car or their garden, and others experiment with redecorating, do you think an individual learns much from these activities that is ever useful in the workplace? Are you one of these individuals? in what way?
- Describe the steps you took in carrying out a project that was assigned to you without too many directions.
- Describe a time when “Plan A” failed at the last minute you had to find a “Plan B”. Did you feel that the outcome was successful?

### **Customer service**

- Describe the ways in which you make your “customers” feel special.
- Tell us who your customers are and why they are important to you.
- Give us an example of a time when your customer service made a difference in your company.

### **Diplomacy**

- Describe a time when you were asked to do something that you didn’t believe in.
- Describe a time when you needed to remain neutral in a situation involving two co-workers or two friends.
- Describe a time when you had to implement a policy that you knew would be unpopular.

### **Discretion and tact**

- Tell us about a time when your supervisor left you “in charge” and a critical judgment needed to be made.
- Give us an example of a time at work when you were asked to deliver bad news.
- Tell us how you would handle a situation where employees were complaining about the perfume worn by another employee.

### **Financial management skills**

- Please describe your experience in managing a budget for your office.
- Tell us how you prepared or acquired your financial management skills.
- Give us examples of positions you have held where your financial management skills have been important.

### **Integrity and credibility**

- After making a difficult decision, how can you tell when you’ve done the right thing?
- Describe ways in which you have acted that have encouraged others to believe in your integrity and credibility.
- Describe a time when you had to choose between what you believed in and what you were asked to do on your job.

### **Intellectual Curiosity**

- Describe the last book you read and whether it was fiction or non-fiction?
- Give an example of the types of college courses you have taken? Are they related to your career or for general interest?
- Please describe your hobbies or interests.

### **Interpersonal Communication Skills**

- Describe a situation where you had to deal with someone who “rubbed you the wrong way”?
- Please tell us about the worst disagreement you have had with someone you worked with and what you did to resolve it.
- As a front-line representative for Yavapai College, interpersonal skills are extremely important. Please describe your experience working with the public.

### **Leadership Skills**

- Describe a work situation where you lead a project.
- In what ways have you been able to develop a vision and create change in a position you have held?
- Give an example of a situation where you were the leader of a work team with a project deadline and how you lead your group to meet the deadline?

### **Listening Skills**

- Describe a work situation where you were able to assist someone by listening to the problem.
- Sometimes there is a need to listen for “what is not said”. Describe a situation where you asked an employee how a certain project was going and there was a long pause, what would that say to you and what would you do next?
- Please describe a situation where you were able to change an outcome by listening.

### **Motivation Skills**

- Please give an example of a time when you had to motivate others and show a high level of enthusiasm to complete a project.
- If you were supervising an “average” employee, give an example of how you would empower and encourage that person to give more to their job.
- Describe a situation where you were the leader of a team that had to accomplish a very difficult task in record time and how you accomplished it.

### **Needs Assessment Skills**

- Please describe a situation where a process was not working very efficiently and you had been given the assignment of determining why. What steps did you take?
- There are a number of people throughout the company who feel frustrated with their computer skills. The company has not provided much formal training, believing that everyone can just pick it up on their own. When you are given the assignment of dealing with the frustrated employees, what steps would you take?
- Describe a situation where you had an employee whom you sense could be exceptional, but they were performing at a mediocre level. How did you determine if your intuition was correct?

### **Negotiation Skills**

- Describe a situation where you worked with two coworkers who were always “at odds” with each other and what steps you take to ensure a more agreeable environment?
- Describe how you handle arguments between your children or relatives.
- You have been appointed to work on a project involving other public entities. Each entity has their own agenda as to what they want to accomplish for their own best interests. How would you support your group’s best interests and yet maintain cooperation among all entities?

### **Office Management Skills**

- Give an example of a time when you managed an office.
- Describe a situation where you looked for ways to improve office procedures.
- Given a situation where you are the new office manager, with over three employees, you see that the work has not been completed in the most efficient way. Messages are not always being communicated, and assignments are not always getting finished on time. Also, the employees seem to be in each other’s way. Describe how you would begin to bring order to this situation?

### **Organizational Skills**

- Describe your experience in organizing an event or managing a project?
- Describe the steps you take to prepare an agenda?
- Describe how you maintain organization to your workload.

### **Patience**

- This position can be demanding and often you will be required to perform multiple tasks at the same time. Describe how you handle such situations?
- When you encounter someone whom you just cannot please, describe how you handle the situation?
- Give an example of a time when you had an important assignment to complete and your phone would just not stop ringing. What did you do?

#### **Physical Ability**

- Are there any accommodations as the result of a disability that we need to discuss?
- The lifting requirements for this position are    pounds. Describe any limitations you may have and why?
- Describe a position that you had that required you to lift the most weight.

#### **Planning Skills**

- Describe your experience in planning an event or managing a project.
- Describe how you get ready for a major holiday or a trip.
- Describe the long-term (strategic) and short term (operational) projections you would make for an organizational change. Relate this to a previous position you have held, if possible.

#### **Presentation Skills**

- Tell us about an experience that illustrates your ability to convey information and influence others through verbal communication.
- Describe your experience with planning, preparing and delivering a presentation using computer technology
- Tell us about a time when you had to communicate with customers (internal or external) under difficult circumstances

#### **Problem Solving Skills**

- Give a specific example of a time when you were a resource to someone who had a problem?
- Give us an example of a time when you used analytical tools to solve a work-related problem and describe the outcome of that analysis.
- Please describe a time when you were given a project and were required to follow someone else's instructions that you did not agree with, and how did you resolve the problem?

#### **Project Management Skills**

- Give us an example from your work history that illustrates your ability to apply planning tools when organizing projects.
- Describe the planning of a recent work project that you managed and the implementation procedures used to achieve the goals .
- Have you ever planned a project that was not completed by the deadline and what was the outcome and what did you learn?

#### **Public Relations Skills**

- Tell us about a time when you were able to be flexible in dealing with needs other than    your own.
- Please tell us about a situation when you where you had to "sell an idea" to an un receptive audience
- Please describe a situation with a disgruntled customer and how you handled it.

#### **Risk Taking**

- Tell us about a time when you took an action that involved a potential for failure and describe the nature of the possible risk.
- Describe the tools or processes you have used to assess risk and the outcome.

- Describe a situation where you took a risk and it worked to your advantage.

#### **Safety Awareness**

- Give us an example of a situation in which you were skillful in making a decision involving health and safety on the job.
- Please describe your specific work experience in relation to OSHA compliance/safety awareness?
- Tell us about an experience you have had involving work performance in an environment with potentially hazardous conditions.

#### **Stress Management**

- We all know that our jobs can be stressful at times. Please describe a specific time when you were able to avoid becoming overwhelmed in a work situation that was stressful.
- Can you tell the committee about the most stressful job you have had and how you handled it and what you learned from it.
- Can you describe a time when you were a support to a co-worker in a stressful situation?

#### **Supervisory Skills**

- Describe a time when you were able to coach or motivate an employee to achieve a higher level of performance.
- Give us an example of how you determined priorities, scheduled and distributed work in your last supervisory position.
- Tell us about a time when you were able to deliver performance-based feedback to an employee who was not performing up to standard.

#### **Team Participation**

- Give us an example of a time when you created a team project at work.
- Can you describe a project where you were a member of a team that was not working well and how you handled the situation.
- Describe the greatest achievement you ever experienced as part of a work-related team effort?

#### **Time Management Skills**

- Describe the tools and processes you used in your last position to organize your time.
- Describe a time when you had to commit to what seemed like an unreasonable deadline and the steps you went through to manage the situation.
- Tell us about a time when you had to manage schedule changes in a work-related project.

#### **Willingness to appreciate the differences in individuals.**

- Tell us about a time when you were able to build a successful relationship with a person who did not share your values.
- Describe a time when you were able to be flexible and make adjustments in your communication style at work in order to accommodate the needs of a colleague or subordinate.
- Describe an experience where you provided motivation to a person whom you consider different than you?

#### **Written Communication Skills**

- Tell us about the most difficult project you have experienced involving the use of research and report writing.
- Describe a time when you were required to use creative writing in your work and tell us about your level of responsibility in producing the document.
- Give us an example of the kinds of documentation you have used in your work experience and describe what you found to be the most challenging aspect. Be specific.