

Interviews: example questions

Tell me a little about yourself.

- Give me a thumbnail sketch of things that you have done in the past and how they relate well to the needs of this post.
- What subject did you study in your degree? What influenced your decision to read these subjects?
- Tell me about your gap year.

Academic Interests:

- Assess your academic courses – what aspects have you found most interesting and why are they relevant to this post?

Communication:

- Give me an example of when you had to communicate something technical to a nontechnical group. How did you approach the presentation, and check that they understood?

Computing and IT:

- Can you tell me a little about how you have used computers and IT on your courses? How will you apply these skills in this work?

Customer Service:

- What do you understand by the term “professional client service” within this business context?
- Can you give me an example of when you have walked an extra mile for a customer or client? What outcome did this have?
- Can you give me an example of when you have had to deal with a difficult client or customer, what the situation was and how you dealt with it?

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Commercial awareness:

- I would like you to tell me about a time when you have worked in an organisation outside the University. What was the organisation? What was the role of the organisation? Describe the setup?
- What was your role? What were the main commercial pressures faced by the organisation? Who were the main competitors? How did your organisation rate against its competitors? What did you feel were the strengths/weaknesses of your part of the organisation? What did you learn about your own strengths and weaknesses from this experience?
- How have you used this learning in a more recent situation?

Degree subject:

- What subject did you study in your degree? What influenced your decision to read these subjects?

Initiative:

- Can you give me a specific example of a time when you took the initiative to make something happen that otherwise would not have been done?

Emotional resilience:

- Describe a set back you have had to face. What was it and how did you approach it?

Motivation:

- What are you looking for in a career?

Professional goals:

- What are your short term goals – say one to three years, and what do you hope to be doing longer term?

Professional interests:

- What in particular attracts you to this post in our business more than other posts and other businesses that you have considered?

Project management:

- What's your experience of project management?
- Let's talk about a project you worked on. How did you approach the project? Did you encounter any difficulties? How did you get around them? How did you plan the work and sort out the deadlines? How would you evaluate it? Did you have to present the results?

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Quality:

- We work to high work standards – how do you “quality assure” your own work?

Relevant experience:

- Give me a thumbnail sketch of things that you have done that you feel relate well to the needs of this post, indicating why they are relevant to the post.

Strengths and weaknesses:

- If this was your first staff appraisal with us how would you summarise your main strengths overall and what do you consider to be your training needs at this stage?

Team work:

- Can you give me an example of where you made a contribution to a team that helped to motivate it towards its objectives?
- What do you do in a situation where you had a deadline to meet but were relying on others to submit work to you and they hadn't?

Think on your feet:

- How would you solve the problem of national debt in Sub-Saharan Africa?
- How would you keep the country from going into recession?
- You are the manager of a busy supermarket. It is three days before Christmas. The supermarket is packed with shoppers. All of the refrigerators stop working. What do you do?
- You manage a hotel with one function suite, booked by a wedding party. It arrives. Five minutes later a second wedding party arrives. Both have confirmed bookings. What do you do?

Time management:

- Talk me through how you plan your week and establish your priorities.

Sell yourself further:

- Is there anything else you would like to add to your application?