

# Sample Interview Questions

## Managing a quality service

- How do you and your team identify and deliver the standards required by your customers?
- Give me an example of how you've demonstrated an understanding of customer needs?
- How do you respond to customer feedback?
- Can you describe a time when you've been proactive in finding a solution to a problem encountered by your customers?
- What is the biggest risk that you've taken? How did you handle the process?
- Describe one of your current or recently completed projects, setting out the risks involved. How did you make decisions? How do you know that you made the correct ones?

## Communication

- Tell us about a time when you used written communication to successfully influence someone? How did you go about structuring your writing?
- Demonstrate how you vary your communication approach according to the audience you're addressing.
- Tell us about a situation where your communication skills made a difference to a situation.
- Tell us about a situation when you failed to communicate appropriately.
- Describe a situation where you had to explain something complex to a colleague or a client. Which problems did you encounter and how did you deal with them?

## **Making effective decisions**

- Tell us about a decision you made too quickly and got wrong. What made you take that decision?
- What big decision did you make recently? How did you go about it?

## **Collaborating and Partnering**

- How have you created a good team spirit within your team?
- Describe a time when you faced resistance or negativity and how you responded to this.
- Give me an example where you collaborated with individuals or teams outside your business area to deliver a positive outcome.

## **Leading and Communication**

- When did you get a team to improve its performance? What were the problems and how did you address them?
- Talk us through a situation where you had to make a decision without the input of key players who would later judge you on that decision.
- Describe a time when you were less successful as a leader than you wanted to be.
- Give us an example where you were unable to deal with a difficult member of your team.
- How do you ensure that every member of the team is allowed to participate? Describe an example where you got people to work together.
- When did you have to influence a senior manager, stakeholder or partner and how did you go about it?
- Can you give an example of how you engaged your team in discussions about changes taking place in your unit, business area or department?

## **Building capability for all**

- Can you describe a time when you had to address underperformance and how you went about this?
- Can you give us an example of how you nurtured a talented member of your team?
- How do you increase your own knowledge and expertise and that of your team?
- What are your own development areas and what are you doing to address these?

## **Good customer service**

- Please provide an example of when you delivered excellent customer service.
- Tell us about a time when you had to calm an angry customer.
- Tell us about a time when you had helped your customers deal with a problem with your employer's product or service.
- Give us an example of time where you weren't able to solve the customer's problem. How did you handle the situation?

## **Strategic thinking**

- How have you ensured your team understands how its work interconnects with the other activities in the department?
- How does your current role fit into the department's overall objectives?
- Describe a time when you developed and updated good practice in your area of work.
- Give me an example of when you had to make a change in your work area. How did you ensure it fitted with the strategic direction of the department or your business function?
- Think about a project where you needed to secure input from other departments. How did you identify that need, and how did you ensure buy-in from the appropriate leaders and managers?
- Concentrate on a time when you failed to engage at the right level in your organisation. Why did you do that, and how did you handle the situation?

## **Team working**

- When was the last time you worked as part of a successful team? What did you do to contribute to it?
- How do you ensure that you maintain good working relationships with your colleagues?
- Give us an example of working in a dysfunctional team or where there was conflict in the team. What was the cause? What did you do to help resolve the situation?
- Describe a situation where you played an important role in a project as a member of the team (not as a leader).
- How do you ensure that every member of the team is allowed to participate?
- How do you build relationships with other members of your team?
- How do you bring difficult colleagues on board? Give us an example where you had to do this.

## **Changing and improving**

- How would you assess your ability to bring about change?
- What was the biggest change you had to deal with in your previous employment? How did you handle it?

## **Planning and organisation**

- How do you plan to ensure you complete a number of tasks effectively?
- Describe a large piece of work you've planned yourself
- What techniques do you use to get things done?
- How do you manage your time and prioritise tasks?
- During your most recent team project, how did you participate in its planning? What was your role in accomplishing the action steps needed to complete the project. How did you measure its success?

## **Working under pressure**

- It's a busy day with conflicting priorities and deadlines: what do you do?
- Which recent project or situation has caused you the most stress? How did you deal with it?
- Give us an example of a situation where you worked under pressure.

## **Attention to detail**

- Describe a time where you made a mistake in your work. How did you find the mistake? What actions did you take?
- What tools do you use to check your work? Why do you use these tools? Provide an example of where you have applied these.
- How do you go about ensuring quality when there are time pressures? Describe a time where you have managed to produce quality work when you were under pressure.
- Describe a time where you found an error that was not immediately obvious.
- Have you ever discovered a mistake that was overlooked by everyone else? How did you find this? What was the result?
- Tell us when you had to persuade someone above you that they had made a mistake. What did you do in this situation? How did it turn out?
- Tell us about a piece of work you produced where accuracy was essential.

## **Handling a difficult decision**

- Describe a difficult situation and how you handled it.
- Talk about a situation where you had to be sensitive to the needs of co-workers.
- How did you come to that decision?
- Have you ever had to make an unpopular decision?
- Give us an example where you were unable to deal with a difficult member of your team.

## **Adaptability**

- Describe a situation where you started off thinking that your approach was the best, but needed to alter your course during the implementation.
- Talk about a situation where you were asked to do something that you had never attempted previously.
- Tell us how one of your projects suffered a setback due to an unexpected change in circumstances.
- Which change of job did you find the most difficult to make?
- What was the biggest change that you have had to deal with? How did you cope with it?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to adjust to changes that were outside your influence or control?
- Tell us about a time when you had to adjust to someone's way of working to achieve a goal or complete a project?

## **Adapting your style**

- Describe a time when you had to adapt your style within a group to get the best outcome for all.
- Can you give an example of a time you influenced a colleague or manager to adopt your way of thinking?
- Explain how you had to change your approach halfway through a project or task following new input into the project.
- Describe a situation where you started off thinking that your approach was the best, but needed to alter your course during the implementation.
- Talk about one of your projects that suffered a setback due to an unexpected change in circumstances.

- Describe a situation where you were asked to do something that you had never attempted previously.
- Describe your strongest and your weakest colleagues. How do you cope with so many different personalities?
- If we gave you a new project to manage, how would you decide how to approach it?

## **Delivering value for money**

- Explain how you delivered value for money on a project or task following new input into it.
- Describe a situation where you changed your approach, which led to higher profitability for the company.
- Describe a situation where you produced better results with fewer resources.
- Discuss an example where you increased productivity in your team.
- Tell us about a situation where you helped increase company profits.

## **Resilience**

- Describe a situation where things deteriorated quickly. How did you react to recover from that situation?
- Tell us about a project where you achieved success despite the odds being stacked against you.
- Give us an example of a situation where you worked under pressure.
- Under what conditions do you work best and worst?
- Which recent project or situation has caused you the most stress? How did you deal with it?
- When is the last time that you were upset with yourself?
- What makes you frustrated or impatient at work?

## Integrity

- Tell us about a time when someone asked you to do something you objected to. How did you handle the situation?
- Describe a situation when you showed integrity and professionalism.
- When have you had to lie to achieve your aims? Why did you do so? How do you feel you could have achieved the same aim in a different way?
- Tell us about a time when someone asked you something that you objected to. How did you handle the situation?
- Have you ever been asked to do something illegal, immoral or against your principles? What did you do?
- Tell us about a situation where you had to remind a colleague of the meaning of integrity.
- Have you ever gone against company policy? Why did you do it and how did you handle it?
- How do you ensure compliance with policies in your area of responsibility?

## Conflict between others

- Describe the personal skills needed to deal with conflict between other people.
- What are your strongest and your weakest colleagues like? How do you cope with so many different personalities?
- Talk about a time when you felt that conflict or differences were a positive driving force in your organisation. How did you handle the conflict to optimise its benefit?
- Tell us about a time when you had to deal with a conflict within your team. What did you do to help resolve the situation?
- Describe a situation where conflict led to a negative outcome. How did you handle the situation and what did you learn from it?



## Motivation

- Describe a time when you had to win over a reluctant or unresponsive person.
- Give us an example of a situation where you knew that a project or task would place you under great pressure. How did you plan your approach and remain motivated?
- Tell us how you have motivated others to do their job better?

## Taking control of a situation

- Describe an occasion when you intervened to take control of a situation.
- Tell us about a project or situation where you felt that the conventional approach would not be suitable.
- How did you figure out and manage a new approach? Which challenges did you face and how did you address them?
- Talk about an unpopular decision that you made recently. What thought process did you follow before making it? How did your colleagues or clients react and how did you deal with their reaction?

## Problem solving

- Describe how you needed to research a problem and came up with different alternatives to resolve it. How did you determine the most appropriate solution?
- What's the best idea you've ever had and successfully implemented?
- Talk about a project that didn't go to plan. What did you do to rectify it?
- Tell us about a time where you needed to consult several different groups to come up with an answer to an issue. What was the outcome?
- What's the most challenging workplace problem you've encountered? What did you do to come up with a solution?
- If you inherited a team that you sensed was not performing optimally, what would you do to begin to solve the problem?

- Describe the steps you normally take to make a decision. Tell us about a time where this did not result in the answer you anticipated and how you handled that.
- How do you assess the quality of decisions or recommendations that other people present to you? Provide an example.
- Describe a time where you needed to choose between a number of ideas. What criteria did you use?

## **Creativity**

- Tell us about a time that called for your creative and original input.
- Talk about a situation where you trusted your team to create a new approach to an old problem. How did you manage the process?
- Tell us about a time when you had to convince a senior colleague that change was necessary. What made you think that your new approach would be better suited?
- Describe an idea that you have conceived, implemented and evaluated.
- How do you determine whether ideas are worth pursuing? Provide an example.
- Give an example of where you needed to 'think outside the box' to come up with a solution to a challenging problem.
- What's the best way to inspire creativity in your team? Tell us about a time when you've done this.
- When have you brought an innovative idea into your organisation? What did you do to ensure it was successful? How was it received?

## **Sales**

- Exceeding sales targets: can you explain what the target was, how you managed the process and to what extent you delivered?
- Handling difficult clients: describe the challenge, clearly explain what you did to overcome the problem and how this benefited the business.

- Hunger and ambition: give examples of times you've gone the extra mile and the sacrifices you made along the way to get a result.
- Influencing people: provide examples of how you convinced a client or one of your reports to try a new approach.

## **Team leadership**

- Describe a situation where you needed to inspire/lead a team. What challenges did you meet and how did you achieve your objectives?
- Two team members are having dispute. How do you come up with a solution that's fair to all? Provide an example.
- Any team includes people who don't perform. Describe the toughest person you have had to manage, where it ultimately led to that person leaving. How did you handle this situation?
- What problems has one of your staff or colleagues brought to you recently? How did you assist them?
- Tell us about an unpopular decision that you made recently. What thought process did you follow before making it? How did your colleagues or clients react and how did you deal with their reaction?
- When is that last time that you had an argument with a colleague?
- What steps do you take to understand your colleagues' personalities? Give an example where you found it hard to adjust to one particular colleague.

## **Management**

- Describe a situation where you were able to influence others on an important issue. What approaches or strategies did you use?
- Describe how you needed to influence different stakeholders who had different agendas. What approaches or strategies did you use?

- Tell us about an idea that you managed to sell to your superior.
- Talk about the project or idea that you were most satisfied to sell to your management.
- The employer may also give you a scenario and ask you to describe the steps you'd take to manage that situation.

## **Stakeholder management**

- Using examples drawn from your experience, describe how you measure and take account of the impact of your decisions on external parties.
- Give an example where you underestimated the impact of your decisions on stakeholders external to your organisation.

## **Dealing with a difficult customer**

- Describe different questioning techniques that can be used when communicating with customers.
- Tell us about a situation where you had to deal with an angry customer.