

APPENDIX: Job Specific Interview Questions

Work collaboratively with Departments to edit and or construct job specific interview questions like these below. Convert direct questions into performance-based behavioral questions by asking the candidate to “Tell you about a time when...”, or “Describe a project you were involved in where....” Or “What were the specific circumstances when you were able to accomplish...”

Make sure the candidate is able to tie their self-reported skill to a specific work experience or similar instance they might face within your department.

Accounting

- ◆ What do you consider to be the biggest challenge facing the accounting profession today?
- ◆ Which accounting software programs are you familiar with?
- ◆ Describe the advantages and disadvantages of different accounting software programs you have used in your most recent accountant jobs.
- ◆ Describe any accounting process you have developed or sought to improve.
- ◆ Describe a time when you helped to reduce costs at a previous accountant job.
- ◆ Describe a time when you had to use numerical data or a graph to deliver a message.
- ◆ Describe a time when you provided great service to a customer or client. What did you do and what was the outcome?
- ◆ Describe a time when you faced a particularly demanding deadline to prepare a statement or report. How did you react? What was the result?
- ◆ Describe how you prepare monthly journal entries, record transactions, etc. and ensure the details are accurate.
- ◆ Describe a time when you had to explain a complex accounting issue to someone without an accounting background. How did you help them understand the situation?

Administrative Assistant/Office Personnel

- ◆ What computer skills do you have and what programs have you used? Describe your comfort level with each program.
- ◆ Have you used a phone with multiple lines and handled a high volume of telephone calls? Please provide an example.
- ◆ Tell me about a time when you were successful working in a diverse team environment. How was the team diverse?
- ◆ Describe your experience supervising others who may have different communication styles.
- ◆ Tell me about your skill sets and how those align with this position. Where are your opportunities for improvement?
- ◆ Tell me about a time that you considered stressful at work, how did you handle it?
- ◆ How will we know you are stressed?
- ◆ What do you expect from a supervisor?
- ◆ What did you like best/least about your previous supervisors?
- ◆ Describe a time you worked independently and on a team. Which did you prefer and why?
- ◆ Tell me about the most diverse team you’ve ever worked with. Do you feel your team achieved a level of success because of or in spite of your team’s diversity?

- ◆ Tell me about a time when you have worked with people that had different work styles (e.g. pace, communication styles, personalities, etc.)
- ◆ Provide 1 or 2 examples when you worked as part of a team to complete a project.

Business Analyst

- ◆ What types of analysis and methodologies have you found to be the most effective, and why?
- ◆ What are some of the most important points a business analyst must take care of when preparing a business plan?
- ◆ What diagrams and/or other materials do you use to capture and describe customer needs and convey technical information?
- ◆ How many business case engagements have you worked on? What was your involvement?
- ◆ Tell me about a time when you created long-range plans at a previous employer.
- ◆ How do you determine which Business Intelligence (BI) tools to use?
- ◆ Explain the steps you must take to create use cases when working with specific document requirements.
- ◆ Describe three of the different types of diagrams that business analysts most often use.
- ◆ Define and describe the difference between basic flow, exception flow, and alternate flow in use cases.

Chef

- ◆ What is an example of a springtime menu you would prepare?
- ◆ If you were asked to reduce fat and sodium in a menu, what would you do maintain flavor in the quality of the dish?
- ◆ What do you do to stay current on new trends?
- ◆ How do you test the quality of your ingredients?
- ◆ How involved have you been in the beverage component of an establishment?
- ◆ How involved have you been with menu development and overall design?
- ◆ Describe your ideal work situation.
- ◆ If you were told that your food cost was high, what five things would you look at first?
- ◆ What is the average annual revenue of the restaurants you have worked in?
- ◆ How involved have you been in the financial aspect of the business?
- ◆ Tell me about your budgeting, purchasing and inventory control experience.

Consultant

- ◆ What kind of projects do you typically work on? What has been the focus of the last four or five projects you have worked on?
- ◆ Do you tend to focus on one project, or do you handle a number of projects simultaneously?
- ◆ What has been your average number of clients at a time?
- ◆ How do you prioritize your projects?
- ◆ How do you keep your clients informed?
- ◆ How do you track progress during a project?
- ◆ Walk me through the life cycle of a recent project you worked on from start to finish. What results/deliverables did you achieve? What went well and what did not go well?

- ◆ Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult client. What did you learn from the experience? What would you do differently?
- ◆ How would you explain a complex technical issue to a client?

Counselor

- ◆ How does your administrative style differ from your approach as a counselor?
- ◆ Describe how you transition from counseling mode to task mode for administrative duties.
- ◆ What are some counseling approaches you identify with most?
- ◆ How do you accommodate a client who doesn't respond well to your preferred approach?
- ◆ Describe a time when a counselee has responded well to a favorite counseling technique.
- ◆ How would you handle a client or parent who was dissatisfied with your services?
- ◆ Have you had experience supervising a large staff? If so, share an example of a successful management intervention?
- ◆ Describe a challenge which you handled as an administrator.
- ◆ Describe a situation when you have mentored a junior colleague.
- ◆ What do you think is the most important personality trait of a counselor? And why?
- ◆ How do you keep the interest of those you are counseling?
- ◆ Give me an example of an area of criticism which you have received on the job and your response?
- ◆ Describe a high stress situation which you have encountered on the job and how you coped.
- ◆ What is your experience with accommodation plans?
- ◆ Share a programming initiative which involved parents.
- ◆ Can you share an example of how you have intervened to diffuse a conflict?
- ◆ Describe three successful programs which you have created?
- ◆ How have you tapped technology to carry out your role more effectively?
- ◆ What has been your most rewarding professional experience?
- ◆ How do you handle serious personal problems discussed during a counseling session?
- ◆ How do you create good client relationships?
- ◆ What is an example of a difficult decision you had to make this year?
- ◆ Give me an example of when you motivated others.
- ◆ How do you establish empathy but avoid burnout by internalizing client problems?
- ◆ What about counseling appeals to you most? The least?
- ◆ Describe your ideal supervisor.
- ◆ What has been your plan for professional development during the past 3 years?

Custodian

- ◆ Are you comfortable working night shifts?
- ◆ Are you able to lift heavy things and remain on your feet for a large portion of your shift?
- ◆ How often do you clean your cleaning implements?
- ◆ Do you prefer working alone or on a team? Why?
- ◆ Describe a time you had to solve a problem without a supervisor's assistance.
- ◆ What kind of supervisor do you prefer to work with?

- ◆ What would you do if you encountered a customer who believed you had done something incorrectly?
- ◆ Describe a time when you had to deal with a difficult member of the public. What happened? How did you handle the situation?
- ◆ What were your duties at your last custodial job?
- ◆ How did you fill downtime at your previous job?

Customer Service

- ◆ Why do you want to work in customer service?
- ◆ Tell me about your previous work experience in customer service.
- ◆ What have you done to be a better customer service representative?
- ◆ What qualifications do you bring to this position?
- ◆ What are the top qualities people in customer service need to succeed?
- ◆ Why would you be a good fit for our university as a customer service representative?
- ◆ What have you done in your current position to improve either a process, or a customer's experience?
- ◆ Do you prefer to work alone or with others?
- ◆ Can you work a flexible schedule?
- ◆ Are you available weekends and holidays?
- ◆ Can you work the assigned hours?
- ◆ Explain a time when you assisted in resolving a dispute between others.
- ◆ What do you do when you don't know the answer to a question?
- ◆ What are the top qualities everyone who works in customer service must have to succeed?
- ◆ Tell me about a time you went out of your way to help a customer.
- ◆ Can you share an example of how you handled a difficult customer?
- ◆ What if the customer is wrong?
- ◆ What makes you a unique fit for the position?
- ◆ What is customer service?

Editor

- ◆ What professional books/magazines/newspapers do you read to keep current?
- ◆ Do you read any blogs on writing and editing? Which ones? How do they assist you in your position?
- ◆ How would you handle sensitive writers who question every edit you make?
- ◆ Give an example of a time when you had to edit or write a piece under a strict deadline.
- ◆ How did you ensure that you met the deadline?
- ◆ How would you handle a freelance writer who handed in subpar work?
- ◆ If you have a 300-page document that's a rush job and you must edit it by the end of the day, how would you approach the task?
- ◆ There are two projects with the same deadline. One client is easygoing while the other constantly calls to ask when we will be done. Which project do you make your top priority?

- ◆ What is your familiarity with (insert current software name)? Are you familiar with any other page layout software?
- ◆ What experience do you have with web publishing? With which content management systems are you familiar?

Electrician

- ◆ How many years have you been working in the industry? How and where did you receive your training?
- ◆ Describe some recent projects you have worked on.
- ◆ Describe the electrical systems you have worked on and are familiar with.
- ◆ Do you specialize in any specific areas of electrical work?
- ◆ What do you do to protect yourself from electrical accidents or injuries?
- ◆ Describe a time when you had a problem you could not figure out and you had to find a solution on your own.
- ◆ What does "PPE" stand for? How important is safety on the job?
- ◆ What is CSA approval?
- ◆ What does a fuse or breaker do? What are the differences between the two?
- ◆ What does "14-2" mean?

Engineering

- ◆ Tell me about the most challenging engineering project you have been involved with during past year.
- ◆ Describe the most challenging written technical report or presentation you have had to complete.
- ◆ Describe an experience with a difficult client. How did you handle the situation? What would you have done differently?
- ◆ Tell me about your greatest success in using logic to solve an engineering problem at a previous job.
- ◆ Give me an example of a time when you applied your ability to use analytical techniques to define problems or design solutions.
- ◆ What checks and balances do you use to make sure that you don't make mistakes?
- ◆ Do you have any patents? If so, tell me about them. If not, is it something you see yourself pursuing in the future? Why or why not?
- ◆ What engineering skills have you developed or improved upon during the past year?
- ◆ Which software packages are you familiar with? What is the most interesting thing you know how to do with one of these packages?
- ◆ What are you doing to stay up-to-date with the latest technology?

Event Planning

- ◆ How has your education prepared you for a career as an event planner?
- ◆ Why do you want to work for our event planning organization?
- ◆ How do you assess the success of each of your events?
- ◆ What type of event planning are you most interested in? Corporate events? Social events?

- ◆ What experience do you have with promoting events (through ads, social networking, etc.)?
- ◆ What are some of your favorite ways to enhance an event on a budget?
- ◆ What is the largest event (based on budget or number of attendees) you have ever planned or assisted with planning?
- ◆ Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult client. What was the result?
- ◆ Describe a time when you had difficulty staying within the budget for an event.
- ◆ Tell me about a time when you had to manage multiple events at once. How did you multitask to complete both events successfully?
- ◆ Imagine I am a client asking you to host an event for me; what kinds of questions would you ask me?
- ◆ How will you develop relationships with vendors?
- ◆ Do you think being an independent worker or a team player is more important as an event planner?

Firefighter

- ◆ Do you have experience as a volunteer firefighter? If so, how did this experience prepare you for this position?
- ◆ What do you believe are essential qualities in a firefighter?

Information Technology

- ◆ What interests you about this position?
- ◆ What are your technical certifications?
- ◆ What do you do to maintain your technical certifications?
- ◆ What automated-build tools or processes have you used?
- ◆ What development tools have you used?
- ◆ What languages have you programmed in?
- ◆ What source control tools have you used?
- ◆ What technical websites do you follow?
- ◆ Describe a time when you were able to improve upon the design.
- ◆ Describe the most innovative change you have initiated and what you did to implement this change.
- ◆ Given this problem (problem is based upon job requirements), what solution would you provide. Explain your thought process.
- ◆ How do you handle multiple deadlines?
- ◆ How do you keep current on this industry?
- ◆ How do you troubleshoot (insert specific) IT issue?
- ◆ Tell me about the most recent project you worked on. What were your responsibilities?
- ◆ Tell me about the project you are most proud of, and what your contribution was.
- ◆ Give an example of where you have applied your technical knowledge in a practical way.
- ◆ What is the biggest IT challenge you have faced and how did you handle it?
- ◆ You are working at a client site and the CTO of the client university has asked if she can see you. The CTO wants to know how much it would cost to bring in five more people on your team. She gives you very vague requirements of the job she is looking for you to do. What would you do?

- ◆ You have been asked to research a new business tool. You have come across two solutions. One is an on-premises solution, the other is cloud-based. Assuming they are functionally equivalent, why would you recommend one over the other?
- ◆ You have submitted a piece of code that has broken the client's website in production. You have found this bug while you were testing, and nobody else knows about it. What is your next move?
- ◆ You have learned that a business unit is managing a major component of the business using Excel spreadsheets and Access databases. What risks does this present, and what would you recommend be done to mitigate those risks?
- ◆ *Questions About the Job and the University*
 - Describe the skills you have that qualify you for this job.
 - Do you prefer to manage people or ideas?
 - Describe your production deployment process.
 - From the description of this position what do you think you will be doing on a day-to-day basis?
 - Have you worked with software vendors? How do you handle vendor relations?
 - How important is it to work directly with your business users?
 - How would you rate your key competencies for this job?
 - What challenges do you think you might expect in this job if you were hired?
- ◆ *Technical Questions*
 - Tell me about your Ruby on Rails experience.
 - What do you believe will be the next big program after Ruby on Rails? Why?
 - What are you doing to stay up to date on next practices and prepare yourself and your organization to be ready to transition to it?
 - Compare and contrast REST and SOAP web services.
 - Define authentication and authorization and the tools that are used to support them in enterprise deployments.
 - Describe the difference between optimistic and pessimistic locking.
 - Describe the elements of an in tier architecture and their appropriate use.
 - Have you used Eclipse?
 - Have you used Visual Studio?
 - How did you manage source control?
 - How much (what percentage) of your time do you spend unit testing?
 - How much reuse do you get out of the code that you develop, and how?
 - How would you describe the ideal working environment?
 - If you know you aren't going to make a project deadline what will you tell your manager and/or the client?
 - In databases, what is the difference between a delete statement and a truncate statement?
 - In network security, what is a honey pot, and why is it used?
 - What are the most important database performance metrics, and how do you monitor them?
 - What are transaction logs, and how are they used?
 - What did you do to ensure quality in your deliverables?

- What do you consider documentation and why is it important?
- What do you do to ensure you provide accurate project estimates?
- What do you expect in the solution documents you are provided?
- What elements are necessary for a successful team and why?
- What have you done to ensure consistency across unit, quality, and production environments?
- What is a cross site scripting attack, and how do you defend against it?
- What is a SAN, and how is it used?
- What is clustering, and describe its use.
- What is ETL and when should it be used?
- What is the difference between OLAP and OLTP? When is each used?
- What is the role of continuous integration systems in the automated-build process?
- What is the role of SMNP?
- What is the role of the DMZ in network architecture? How do you enforce relational integrity in database design?
- When is it appropriate to de-normalize database design?
- When is the last time you downloaded a utility from the internet to make your work more productive, and what was it?
- Which do you prefer; service oriented or batch oriented solutions?

Landscaper/Landscape Architect

- ◆ What types of landscaping projects have you worked on in the past?
- ◆ What experience do you have creating a promotional piece or concept design?
- ◆ Do you have any experience using AutoCAD to create a design concept? If so, how have you applied AutoCAD to your landscaping work?
- ◆ How much guidance do you like to receive on a project?
- ◆ Do you prefer to work independently or in a group? Why?
- ◆ What is your favorite planned or built landscape? Why?
- ◆ What was your most successful project? Why do you believe it was successful?
- ◆ Tell me about a project you worked on that involved collaboration with other landscapers.
- ◆ What are your views on the organic growth of plants?
- ◆ Name three popular dust solutions.
- ◆ What are two or three insect killers you prefer to use?
- ◆ Tell us about a time when you dealt with a difficult plant disease successfully.
- ◆ What would you do if a client asked you to make a revision which you did not agree with?
- ◆ What soil traits must be considered before selecting plants to cultivate?
- ◆ Tell me about a time when your design did not turn out as you had planned. What steps did you take to resolve the problem?

Marketing

- ◆ Tell me about a marketing project in which you had to coordinate and manage a diverse team of people to achieve deliverables.

- ◆ Give me an example of a marketing campaign (either your own or someone else's) that you consider to have been very successful.
- ◆ Tell me about a campaign with which you were involved that did not go as well as expected.
- ◆ What do you think went wrong?
- ◆ What do you consider the 5 most important aspects of successful marketing?
- ◆ Tell me about a time when you successfully changed a customer's mind.
- ◆ Give an example of a time when you accomplished a marketing activity on a tight budget.
- ◆ How have you successfully incorporated online marketing tools into your previous marketing campaigns?
- ◆ How familiar are you with our target market?
- ◆ What marketing strategies would you consider using for the university?

Project Manager

- ◆ What are the most important qualities of a project manager?
- ◆ What specific training have you had that would be relevant to this project manager job?
- ◆ Do you have any certifications?
- ◆ Tell me about the projects you have managed.
- ◆ Tell me about a full project life cycle? What is included?
- ◆ Which project management software and tools do you prefer using? Why?
- ◆ What project management methodologies are you most familiar with?
- ◆ How do you plan a schedule for a project?
- ◆ How do you allocate resources?
- ◆ What is the best way to set up and manage an interdepartmental team?
- ◆ How do you motivate a team?
- ◆ How do you handle an unproductive team member?
- ◆ What was most challenging about your last project?
- ◆ What was least challenging about your last project?
- ◆ What type of contingency plan have you used?
- ◆ How do you monitor and manage risks to the project?
- ◆ How do you start a project?
- ◆ Tell me how you schedule projects and establish timelines.
- ◆ How do you close a project?
- ◆ What is the most complicated project you have managed? How did you handle it?
- ◆ Have you worked on a project that failed? What happened?
- ◆ What was your most successful project?
- ◆ What is the largest number of projects you have handled at any given time?
- ◆ Do you prefer working on a single project or multiple projects at the same time?

Public Relations

- ◆ Why do you want to work in public relations?
- ◆ What previous experience and education lead to your interest in a public relations position?
- ◆ Why do universities need public relations?
- ◆ Why did you apply to our university?

- ◆ What does "public relations" mean to you?
- ◆ What kind of opportunity are you looking for?
- ◆ What qualities make a good public relations employee?
- ◆ What's the difference between public relations and advertising?
- ◆ Give me an example when you were required to multi-task.
- ◆ What elements make up interactive public relations?
- ◆ What are the advantages of an in-house public relations department?
- ◆ What are the disadvantages of hiring a public relations department?
- ◆ Do you prefer working for an in-house PR department or a PR agency?
- ◆ What is a press release?
- ◆ Provide an example of when you have created a by-lined article or case study.
- ◆ When responding to media and public inquiries, what do you find most difficult to answer?
- ◆ Tell me about a social media campaign you have worked on?
- ◆ Tell me about a print campaign you have worked on?
- ◆ Have you ever had to handle a social media crisis? What did you do?
- ◆ Give me an example of how you creatively solved a problem at work.
- ◆ How do you measure the results of a PR campaign?
- ◆ What is the role of content in public relations?
- ◆ In what direction do you see the public relations industry heading?
- ◆ What personality characteristics are most important to be successful in public relations?

Security Guard

- ◆ Describe a time when you had to work with a team to solve a problem at a former security job (or, if you have no security experience, describe a time from any previous position).
- ◆ Describe a time when you had to deal with an assault. How did you handle the situation? Is there anything you would have done differently?
- ◆ Tell me about a time when you successfully dealt with an angry member of the public not with physical force, but with only your words.
- ◆ Describe a time on the job when you felt as if you were in physical danger. How did you handle the situation?
- ◆ How comfortable are you using computers?
- ◆ Are you currently CPR/First Aid/AED certified?
- ◆ If you found out a co-worker was accessing information they should not be, what would you do?
- ◆ Imagine you have been called to handle an emergency on the 10th floor of a building, but six guests are waiting to be checked in at the front desk. It's late at night and you are momentarily alone at the front desk. What would you do?
- ◆ If you are working at an event where there is a large, rowdy crowd, what steps could you take to make sure the event does not become too chaotic or dangerous?
- ◆ Look at these two photos of two different people for five seconds. Then, put the photographs down, and describe those two people to me.

Waiter

- ◆ What jobs have you worked that required you to be in a fast-paced and crowded environment? How did you maintain quality standards in this environment?
- ◆ What do you consider to be good customer service?
- ◆ Describe a time when you had to deal with a particularly difficult customer/table. How did you handle the situation? Is there anything you would have done differently?
- ◆ Have you ever taken charge in a restaurant in an emergency?
- ◆ How do you handle fast-paced work environments?
- ◆ How do you entertain customers as a waiter?
- ◆ What is the most difficult part of being a waiter?
- ◆ Imagine a customer asks for an item on the menu that is not available at the time. How do you convince him to select something else?
- ◆ What would you do if a customer sent his meal back?
- ◆ If a customer asks for a suggestion, what would you say?
- ◆ What is your favorite item on our menu?