Top 10 Interview Questions and Answers for Project Managers

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Here are some interview questions and answers for Project Managers.

**Tell us about yourself:**

This is the most common way the interview starts.

Obviously you have to introduce your self, but here are few others things pay attention to:

* Be brief regarding your profile and avoid things like hobbies unless specifically asked.
* It is advisable to tell about the projects you worked on chronologically, starting from first project to the recent one.
* provide emphasis on projects/skills sets matching the current project you are interviewing for.

**Explain your roles & responsibilities at the current or last job**

You have to explain the roles and responsibilities specific to you for this.. here are some common responsibilies for project managers.

* The project manager is responsible for managing the SDLC of the project. He/She coordinates among his team and other teams for this.
* He/She keeps the stakeholders updated regarding the status & issues in the project.
* He/She defines the timelines for different lifecycle stages in the project like requirement analysis, design, coding by discussing the same with the appropriate team members.
* He/She tracks the deliverables against the timelines established to ensure the individuals/teams working on it are meeting the timelines.  
  Identifies risks in the project and coordinates with other teams to provide solution to handle it.

**What are the technical skills/tools used to handle the project ?**

Some projects require the PM to be technically knowledgeable although this is very rare.

Still you should know the tools/technologies that you are using in the project.

For example,

Do you use java/.net ?  
Are you handling big data ?

Also, explain as a project manager the tools that you use on a regular basis. Here are some tools frequently used by managers.

Microsoft Project Planner(MPP)  
Microsoft Excel, Word and PowerPoint  
Zira

**Which delivery model did you use for the current/last project ?**

Most of the projects use Waterfall model where you have well defined phases in the project lifecycle like Design, Development, Coding, Testing, Deployment  etc.  
However, recently a lot of projects are being handled in Agile model.

In Agile method, the whole year of goal is divided into multiple Sprints. Sprints are nothing but a project plan for a shorter time frame. In Sprint Planning, the project goal for that period(ideally 3weeks) is decided and divided into technical tasks for each individual of the team. Once the sprint plan is prepared then there would be  a scrum meeting everyday or alternative days to track the status. The scrum leader will run the meeting and track the status of planned task for previous day and risks encountered by the teammates. All business stakeholders, project manager, architect, scrum leader and teammates are audience of these scrum meetings. The tem would seat in a team room and work together to achieve the planned sprint.

**What were the challenges in your last project ?**

Explain challenges you faced and how you overcame them. Some examples of challenges could be :

* timelines
* difficult team member
* last minute requirements

**Questions involving offshore/onsite teams and coordination:**

If part of the team is at offshore, they you may expect questions around it like how do you manage when part of the team is at a different location or how to handle when there are differences between the offshore and onsite team.

For example,

How do you manage issues at offshore team ?

These issues need understanding of how the onsite/offshore model (some companies refer to it as Global model) works. You might be having another manager at offshore who you can directly talk to regarding issues or you may even setup regular meetings over phone or video conference to address issues.

**What is one skill needed to succeed as a PM ?**

A project manager needs a variety of skills to be successful at managing the project. I believe below skill are mandatory for a PM to succeed:

* Communication
* Flexibility
* Strategic

You should identify which skill you can relate to as the mandatory skills for the job.

**How do you ensure that you team meets the timelines assigned ?**

Communication plays a key role. You as a project manager should be able to each of the members regarding their roles, timelines and address any issues they may face for meeting them.

Proper communication, estimation and accountability help in meeting the timelines.

**What if the team members disagree to the approach ?**

Its possible at times that your approach may be wrong.. also at times both the approaches may be right.. So, its always better to meet with the team and discuss on the alternative approach. You should evaluate the alternative suggested and evaluate if its a better approach than yours. If it is indeed a better approach, then there is no harm implementing it if it meets the required standards. But make sure to evaluate if its really better than an established process or methodology.

**Give example of how to handled issues faced in the project**

You can provide examples of real problems from your project about resource issues, requirement problems or even issues based on multiple teams being involved or onsite/offshore based issues.

For example, you can say you faced issue regarding some requirement that involved resources from your team and another team. You may use group problem solving in this case as each team knows their functionality/code better and can provide immediate feedback about whether the method would work and can help clear confusions regarding requirements or functionalities.