

SITUATIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Situational interview questions present you with a “What if” situation that corresponds to a scenario you might face on the job. The purpose of these questions is to probe for your problem-solving skills, and to see how you handle problems with minimal time to prepare.

These questions differ from behavioral interview questions in that they focus on hypothetical situations, not past experiences. So instead of the familiar “*Tell me about a time...*” of a behavioral interview, a situational interview will ask “*How would you handle...*”.

Your response should be limited to 2-3 minutes, meaning 150-200 words.

Sample Situational Interview Questions¹

1. What would you do if the work of a subordinate or team member was not up to expectations?
2. A co-worker tells you in confidence that she plans to call in sick while actually taking a week’s vacation. What would you do and why?
3. Describe how you would handle the situation if you met resistance when introducing a new idea or policy to a team or work group.
4. What would you do if the priorities on a project you were working on changed suddenly?
5. How would you handle it if you believed strongly in a recommendation you made in a meeting, but most of your co-workers shot it down?
6. In a training session, you find that the trainer has a thick accent, and you can't understand what's being said. What would you do?
7. List the steps that you would take to make an important decision on the job.
8. What would you do if you realized at deadline time that a report you wrote for your boss or professor was not up to acceptable standards?
9. How would you deal with a colleague at work with whom you seem to be unable to build a successful working relationship?
10. You disagree with the way your supervisor says to handle a problem. What would you do?
11. Who would you talk to if you discovered that a co-worker was disclosing confidential information that should not be divulged?

¹ see http://www.quintcareers.com/interview_question_database/situational_interview_questions.html for examples of good sample responses.

12. When would it be appropriate to bring in your supervisor while dealing with an angry customer?
13. How would you attempt to make changes in a work process if you felt a policy of your organization was hurting its members/workers?
14. What would a good manager do to build team spirit?
15. How would you organize the steps or methods you would take to define/identify a vision for your team or your personal job function?
16. How would you react if two teammates were embroiled in a conflict that kept the team from completing its task?
17. You don't have the information you need to prioritize your projects. Your co-workers and supervisor are unavailable for you to ask for assistance. How do you handle the situation?
18. As a supervisor, you've made an unpopular decision. What action would you take so that morale in the department is not negatively affected?
19. In a team-leadership role, you discover that a team member has gone over your head to propose an idea or complain about an issue without talking to you first. How do you handle the situation?
20. You have been placed in charge of a project team for a new project. What are your first steps to get the team going and complete the project?