

How to Answer Situational/Scenario/Behavioral Interview Questions

1. Discuss one crucial decision you made in your last role and the impact that decision had.

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know how you handle the pressure of making crucial decisions. The goal of your response is to describe your decision-making approach and highlight your confidence level when making important choices.

Tip to Answer:

If you have held a managerial position or higher, this question may be easier to answer since your role likely requires frequent decision-making responsibilities. If you are newer to your career, think about when you were left to make a choice, and you felt a bit in over your head. Be prepared to talk about how you came to your decision and the positive result.

What not to say:

Avoid giving an example of a trivial decision or a decision that failed to impact your work. Also, avoid making it sound like you 'go with your gut' when facing a decision. Instead, be prepared to show that you are methodical in your decision-making approach.

How to Answer:

Since the interviewer is measuring your critical thinking and decision-making skills, it's best to talk about a time when you made a decision with certainty and positively impacted your employer. Using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result), share the story of one crucial decision you made. Offer details about how you came to your final decision - perhaps through research, data gathering, or asking for advice from a senior leader. Then, show that you were aware of the result or consequence that your decision might create. This detailed approach should highlight your self-awareness and alertness to the cause and effect of your actions. These components will show the interviewer that you are a strategic thinker who makes well-considered decisions.

2. Let's say you made an error at work and the impact of your mistake was significant. How would you correct the error?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know about a specific time when you made a mistake and how you reacted to the situation. The goal of your response is to tell an engaging story that highlights your willingness to be accountable and repair your mistakes.

Tip to Answer:

The interviewer wants to know how you would proceed if you made a mistake at work. Because this question is phrased as, 'How would you...' you can answer this question hypothetically. The Situation, Solution, Benefit formula is helpful in this instance.

Step 1) Situation: Express your understanding of the hypothetical situation.

Step 2) Solution: Outline the solution you would introduce in this hypothetical situation.

Step 3) Benefit: Highlight how your approach to owning up to and fixing your mistakes will benefit the hiring company.

What not to say:

The interviewer knows that everyone makes mistakes and nobody is perfect. Avoid saying that you would never make a mistake in the workplace. A response like that could give the interviewer the impression that you are not self-aware and coachable. Instead, be prepared to discuss how you would approach fixing the error.

How to Answer:

Your response should tell the interviewer a lot about your maturity and accountability levels. Express that you are willingly accountable for your actions and take responsibility if you make a mistake. You can discuss how an error might impact you, your employer, coworkers, clients, or other stakeholders. Then, detail the action steps you would take to fix the error. Include measurable statements such as how long it would take you to jump into action.

When we make mistakes and learn from them, we often gain new skills and tools to help us improve our work performance. For that reason, at the end of your response, remember to highlight that you value lesson-learning scenarios that allow you to grow.

Suppose you have encountered a similar situation in the past. In that case, you can use the STAR

method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide a story-based example to support your initial Situation, Solution, Benefit response. Rather than focusing on the fact that you made an error, be sure to highlight your professional and personal accountability. Spotlight the lesson you learned and show that you are a team player who can grow and learn.

3. Tell me about a time when you received criticism from your manager. How did you react to that criticism, and did you make improvements?

Purpose:

It can feel challenging to receive criticism in the workplace, especially from your leader, who you want to impress. The interviewer wants to know how you react in the face of criticism. The goal of your response is to show that you can hear criticism, respond professionally, learn from the feedback, and willingly take action to make improvements.

Tip to Answer:

'Tell me about a time when...' means that the interviewer is looking for a story-based example for this scenario-based interview question. You can form an effective response using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result.

- Situation: Set the stage with the background information the interviewer needs to make sense of your story.
- Task: Continuing to set the stage, give the interviewer an idea of your role and responsibilities in this story.
- Action: Next, offer a detailed description of the steps you took to resolve the situation you described.
- Result: Last, talk about the specific outcomes that resulted from your actions.

What not to say:

Avoid discussing a time when you received criticism about your character. Instead, consider providing an example where you received feedback on your skill level and were able to make noticeable improvements.

Also, avoid discussing criticism around skills that are a must-have for the role. For instance, if you are applying for a business development position but often face criticism for being too shy to make cold calls, this example could cause concern with the interviewer that you don't have the confidence required to succeed in a BD role.

How to Answer:

This question is another way for your interviewer to ask about your most significant weaknesses. For this reason, be sure to give a clear example of a time when you received critical feedback on an important skill.

Using the STAR method, clearly outline the scenario and how you worked hard to improve. Be sure to highlight what you learned from the situation and spotlight how this criticism helped you improve your quality of work. Your response should end on a positive note about a lesson learned and how this lesson has boosted your career or work performance, benefitting your future employer.

4. Discuss a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty. How did your actions exceed your standard job requirements?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants assurance that you are the type of employee to deliver exceptional results. The goal of your response is to highlight your excellent work ethic.

Tip to Answer:

'Discuss a time when...' means the interviewer is looking for a story-based example for this scenario-based interview question. You can form a memorable response using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result.

- Situation: Set the stage with the background information the interviewer needs to make sense of your story.
- Task: Continuing to set the stage, give the interviewer an idea of your role and responsibilities in this story.
- Action: Next, offer a detailed description of the steps you took to resolve the situation you described.
- Result: Last, talk about the specific outcomes that resulted from your actions.

What not to say:

Avoid giving an answer that sounds like you reluctantly went above the call of duty in your role, but you did it out of obligation. Instead, provide an example of when you were eager to help, and your helpfulness made a positive impact.

How to Answer:

When you answer this question, the interviewer should feel confident that you are the type of person who will consistently deliver more than the minimum expectations. Perhaps you exceed expectations on a project by doing additional research. Maybe you helped a co-worker reach a deadline, even though it meant working overtime.

Think back to the accountabilities in your most recent position. Then, using the STAR method, tell a memorable story about when you eagerly went above your typical expectations and shone in the workplace. Be sure to provide details on the impact of your actions, ensuring the interviewer has evidence that you will bring a strong work ethic to their organization.

5. Tell me about a time your former manager or coworker upset you. What did they do to upset you, and how did you handle the situation?

Purpose:

Being drawn into an emotional circumstance at work can make you feel out of control. The interviewer wants to know that you can handle emotionally-driven scenarios professionally. The goal of your response is to highlight your conflict-management abilities while showing a strong level of professional self-awareness.

Tip to Answer:

'Tell me about a time...' means that the interviewer is looking for a story-based example for this scenario-based interview question. You can form an effective response using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result.

- Situation: Set the stage with the background information the interviewer needs to make sense of your story.
- Task: Continuing to set the stage, give the interviewer an idea of your role and responsibilities in this story.
- Action: Next, offer a detailed description of the steps you took to resolve the situation you described.
- Result: Last, talk about the specific outcomes that resulted from your actions.

What not to say:

There are a few factors to avoid when answering this question:

- Avoid telling a long, drawn-out story surrounded by negativity. Instead, keep your answer focused on the positive factors.
- Avoid giving an example of when you initiated the conflict. Instead, consider talking about a time when the dispute arose due to a miscommunication.
- Avoid bad-mouthing anyone. Instead, talk more about how well you handled the situation and what you learned in the process.

Overall, rather than dwelling on the problem, focus your response on the solution you generated.

How to Answer:

Think back to a work-related scenario where you felt upset by a co-workers' words or actions. Then, without dwelling too much on the wrongdoing you felt, use the STAR method to describe how you moved through the situation to create a resolution. Assure the interviewer, through the actions you describe, that you are a professional who can handle instances where you might feel upset or emotional in the workplace.

Behavior patterns are a significant focus of any skilled interviewer. So, if your response is too vague, be prepared for follow-up questions about why you felt bothered by the situation. The interviewer may want to dig deeper into the reasoning behind the trigger.

6.What would you do if you had to collaborate on a project with a colleague with whom you disagreed?

Purpose:

Getting along with different personalities is an expectation in any workplace. The interviewer wants to know that you are flexible and can collaborate with your colleagues even if you disagree. The goal of your response is to showcase your ability to learn from others when you may not wholeheartedly agree with their perspective or approach.

Tip to Answer:

The interviewer wants to know how you would proceed if you faced a challenging collaboration. Because this question is positioned as, 'What would you do if...,' you can respond hypothetically. The Situation, Solution, Benefit formula is helpful in this instance.

Step 1) Situation: Express your understanding of the hypothetical situation.

Step 2) Solution: Outline the solution you would introduce in this hypothetical situation.

Step 3) Benefit: Highlight how your collaborative approach will benefit the hiring company.

What not to say:

Avoid giving a response that hints to the interviewer that you have never faced a disagreement in the workplace. For instance, 'I'm not sure how I would handle that situation since I get along with everyone.' Instead, answer the question in a way that shows the interviewer you are thoughtful in your communication even when you may not agree with a colleague's opinion or approach.

How to Answer:

It's not uncommon to find ourselves in a situation where we need to collaborate with a co-worker who approaches their work quite differently from us. When we find it challenging to agree with someone in the workplace, it raises opportunities for frustration or conflict. The interviewer wants to see that you have the ability and maturity to recognize when you disagree with a co-worker and handle the situation professionally. They want evidence that you would choose to remain solution-focused rather than dwelling on the point of disagreement.

Since this scenario-based question is hypothetical, consider what you would do if you had to collaborate with a person with whom you disagreed. Perhaps you might disagree with the person's behavior, approach, or actions. Then, using the Situation, Solution, Benefit formula,

describe what you would do to move through the situation and work productively with this person. Assure the interviewer that you are a professional who can handle instances where you might not always agree with a co-worker.

Suppose you have encountered a similar situation in the past. In that case, you can use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide a story-based example to support your initial Situation, Solution, Benefit response.

7.What would you do if an angry customer confronted you?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know that you can handle customers who come to you with challenging emotions. The goal of your response is to show that you can remain level-headed and stay professional if ever confronted by an angry customer. The interviewer also wants evidence that you are solution-focused when faced with customer-related disputes or grievances.

Tip to Answer:

The interviewer wants to know your reaction if an angry customer approaches you for a solution. Because this question is positioned as, 'What would you do if...,' you can respond hypothetically. The Situation, Solution, Benefit formula is helpful in this instance.

Step 1) Situation: Express your understanding of the hypothetical situation.

Step 2) Solution: Outline the solution you would introduce in this hypothetical situation.

Step 3) Benefit: Highlight how your approach to resolving the customer conflict will benefit the hiring company.

What not to say:

Avoid giving an answer that shows you have a short fuse or weak conflict-management skills. For instance, avoid saying something like, 'If an angry customer confronted me, I would immediately call security or escalate the situation to my manager.' Instead, show that you would take the time to get to the issue's core and de-escalate the situation through intelligent communication and problem-solving.

How to Answer:

Since this scenario-based question is hypothetical, consider what you would do if you had to handle a confrontation with an angry customer. Using the Situation, Solution, Benefit formula, describe how you would de-escalate the situation. Outline how you would come to a solution that appeased the customer and the company. Be sure to highlight your excellent communication skills and ability to deliver creative customer service solutions under pressure. Assure the interviewer that you are a professional who can handle potentially uncomfortable customer-facing situations.

Suppose you have encountered an angry customer in the past. In that case, you can use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide a story-based example to support your initial Situation, Solution, Benefit response.

8. How do you convince others to see things your way?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know that you have solid persuasive skills. The goal of your response is to show that you can influence people through an inspirational approach rather than pushing others to see things from your perspective in an uncomfortable, forceful, or unprofessional manner.

Tip to Answer:

There are a variety of persuasion techniques that are helpful to use in the workplace. Some approaches include:

- The 'Framing' method
- The 'WIIFT' technique (What's In It For Them)
- The 'BYAF' technique (But You Are Free)
- Describing how your approach is working for others
- Using words like 'we' rather than 'me'
- Gaining agreement on a more minor point and then working toward an agreement on the more significant point
- Leveraging data and evidence to make your case

What not to say:

Avoid an answer that makes you sound pushy and forceful. Instead, give a response that shows you are persuasive without being a workplace bully.

How to Answer:

Perhaps you are a confident and opinionated person, and maybe you are not. This question can be challenging to approach either way since you don't want to come across as a push-over, and you don't want to come across as too pushy in the workplace. It's essential to show that you have professional balance when convincing others to see your point of view. Describe your favorite method of persuasion.

If you have a real-life example of a time when you persuaded someone to see things your way, be sure to provide a brief story-based example for the interviewer. In that case, you can use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) when forming your story.

9. Let's say you lost track of a deadline. How would you recover to ensure that you completed your project on time?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know how you course correct once you realize you are in danger of missing a deadline. The goal of your response is to prove to the interviewer that you work diligently to ensure you complete your projects on time.

Tip to Answer:

We've all lost track of a deadline in our work or school. The interviewer isn't looking for evidence that you've messed up - they are looking for evidence of how you would proceed when facing this kind of challenge. Because this question asks, 'How would you....,' you can respond hypothetically. The Situation, Solution, Benefit formula is helpful in this instance.

Step 1) Situation: Express your understanding of the hypothetical situation.

Step 2) Solution: Outline the solution you would introduce in this hypothetical situation.

Step 3) Benefit: Highlight how your approach to recovering railroaded deadlines will benefit the hiring company.

What not to say:

Avoid answering in a way that makes it seem you've never lost track of a deadline. Time has escaped us all at one point, so the interviewer will view a response like, 'I've never missed a deadline,' as an easy way out of giving a thoughtful response. Instead, walk the interviewer through your approach when you need to make up for the lost time.

How to Answer:

So you dropped the ball. It happens to the best of us. Think about how you made the situation right. Whether you asked for extra assistance, or put more hours in, explain how you did your best and took responsibility for your actions.

Suppose you have encountered a similar situation in the past. In that case, you can use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide a story-based example to support your initial Situation, Solution, Benefit response.

10. Tell me when you naturally took on a leadership role. Did you enjoy being a leader, and were you happy with the outcome?

Purpose:

The interviewer would like to know that you have the desire and skills to be a leader. The interviewer also wants to know that you perform like a leader at work, even if you aren't in an official leadership position. The goal of your response is to show that you enjoy helping others develop and grow while still learning things yourself. Show that you are the type of person who strives to inspire others.

Tip to Answer:

'Tell me when...' means the interviewer is looking for a story-based example for this scenario-based interview question. Talk to the interviewer about when you proactively led a team or initiative. You can form an effective response using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result.

- Situation: Set the stage with the background information the interviewer needs to make sense of your story.
- Task: Continuing to set the stage, give the interviewer an idea of your role and responsibilities in this story.
- Action: Next, offer a detailed description of the steps you took to act like a leader.
- Result: Last, talk about what you enjoyed the most while demonstrating leadership. Be sure to include the positive outcome that resulted from your leadership actions.

What not to say:

Regardless of your current job title or career seniority, you should continually develop leadership abilities. For that reason, avoid giving a response that shows disinterest in being a leader. Instead, provide an example of when you acted as a leader and generated a positive outcome.

How to Answer:

Being a leader is not the same as being a manager. Acting as a leader in the workplace can give you a different perspective on business, often helping you grow your career. The interviewer wants to be sure that you value the skill of leadership. So, be sure to include details on why demonstrating leadership is important to you.

Consider expanding your response to include details on how you continually improve your

leadership abilities. For instance, perhaps you take leadership courses, look for opportunities to lead in everyday scenarios, or maybe have a mentor helping you develop your leadership skills.

11. Describe a time that you did not fit in. How did you ensure that you found a way to fit in and make yourself comfortable?

Purpose:

Each of us has a time in our life when we felt as though we did not fit in. The interviewer wants to know how you act in such a scenario. The goal of your response is to show the interviewer that you have the confidence and initiative required to make yourself feel more comfortable in uncomfortable situations.

Tip to Answer:

'Describe a time that...' means the interviewer is looking for a story-based example for this scenario-based interview question. You can form an effective response using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result.

- Situation: Set the stage with the background information the interviewer needs to make sense of your story.
- Task: Continuing to set the stage, give the interviewer an idea of your role and responsibilities in this story.
- Action: Next, offer a detailed description of the steps you took to resolve the situation you described.
- Result: Last, talk about the specific outcomes that resulted from your actions.

What not to say:

We have all felt uncomfortable at one time or another. For that reason, avoid using cliché statements like, 'I am a chameleon who can fit in anywhere.' Instead, give a thoughtful response that describes your people and social skills in detail.

How to Answer:

When taking the interviewer through your story, explain if you sat back and waited to fit into the group or if you took the initiative to fit in and make yourself feel comfortable. Take the time to describe your personality and express how you react in situations like this. Be sure to display your confidence when encountering new and potentially uncomfortable situations.

12. Tell me about a time when you had to resolve a conflict between two employees. How did you generate a resolution?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to understand how you handle conflict in the workplace. The goal of your response is to show that you are thoughtful in challenging conditions and can be the voice of reason when needed.

Tip to Answer:

'Tell me about a time when...' means that the interviewer is looking for a story-based example for this scenario-based interview question. You can form an effective response using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result.

- Situation: Set the stage with the background information the interviewer needs to make sense of your story.
- Task: Continuing to set the stage, give the interviewer an idea of your role and responsibilities in this story.
- Action: Next, offer a detailed description of the steps you took to resolve the situation you described.
- Result: Last, talk about the specific outcomes that resulted from your actions.

What not to say:

Avoid answering in a way that makes it seem you avoid conflict. For instance, saying, 'I would let my co-workers battle it out themselves,' could be interpreted as avoidance. Instead, show the interviewer that you understand the importance of helping to resolve a dispute that might hurt the workplace environment or impact team performance.

How to Answer:

Use this question as an opportunity to showcase your conflict-resolution system through storytelling. Describe the steps you took to help resolve this conflict and explain why you believe your approach was so impactful. If you have a specific conflict-resolution framework that you lean on, be sure to outline the process for the interviewer.

13.How would you react if a co-worker called in sick and asked you to put in overtime to cover for them? Where do you draw the line when being a team player?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know that you are willing to jump in and take additional responsibilities when you identify an opportunity to help others. The goal of your response is to show your willingness to be part of the team while also explaining your boundaries when filling in for unreliable co-workers.

Tip to Answer:

The interviewer wants to know how you would react if asked to make a last-minute change to your availability to cover for a sick co-worker. They also want to know where you draw professional boundaries. Because this question asks, 'How would you,' you can respond hypothetically. The Situation, Solution, Benefit formula is helpful in this instance.

Step 1) Situation: Express your understanding of the hypothetical situation.

Step 2) Solution: Outline the solution you would introduce in this hypothetical situation.

Step 3) Benefit: Highlight how your approach to teamwork will benefit the hiring company.

What not to say:

If you've encountered a similar situation, avoid speaking poorly of the co-worker who took advantage of your availability and kindness. Instead, take your time to highlight that you are a team player willing to help out your co-workers within reason.

How to Answer:

It's absolutely okay to show the interviewer that you have personal and professional boundaries. Express to the interviewer that you are a reliable team player. At the same time, it's essential to explain that you have reasonable limitations when you encounter a situation where a co-worker might be taking advantage of your willingness to assist.

14. What would you do if a customer asked you about a product or service and you were unsure of the answer?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants evidence that you are an independent thinker who can find answers for yourself. They also want to know that you wouldn't just make up an answer to appease your customer. The goal of your response is to show the interviewer that you are ready to put in the effort to find solutions for your customers.

Tip to Answer:

It's challenging to admit that we don't know something; however, nobody has all the answers. The interviewer wants to see how you would proceed if you didn't have a solution for a customer. Because the interviewer asks, 'What would you do if...', you can respond hypothetically. The Situation, Solution, Benefit formula is helpful in this instance.

Step 1) Situation: Express your understanding of the hypothetical situation.

Step 2) Solution: Outline the solution you would introduce in this hypothetical situation.

Step 3) Benefit: Highlight how your approach will benefit the hiring company.

What not to say:

Avoid statements that show a lack of proactiveness, such as, 'I would tell the customer that I didn't know the answer.' Instead, show the interviewer that you bring an 'I will find out' mentality.

How to Answer:

Since this scenario-based question is hypothetical, consider what you would do if a customer asked you about a product or service and you were unsure of the answer. Using the (Situation, Solution, Benefit) formula, describe how you would handle the situation. Outline how you would come to a response that appeased the customer. Be sure to highlight your excellent communication skills and ability to deliver creative solutions under pressure.

Suppose you have encountered this situation in the past. In that case, you can use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide a story-based example to support your initial Situation, Solution, Benefit response.

15.How would you proceed if your boss asked you to complete a task that you had never done before?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know that you have the confidence to jump into a new task. The goal of your response is to showcase your positive spirit when approaching new responsibilities and highlight your desire to learn new skills.

Tip to Answer:

The interviewer wants to know how you would proceed if asked to complete a task that was entirely new to you. Because this question is positioned as, 'How would you proceed if...,' you can respond hypothetically. The Situation, Solution, Benefit formula is helpful in this instance.

Step 1) Situation: Express your understanding of the hypothetical situation.

Step 2) Solution: Outline the solution you would introduce in this hypothetical situation.

Step 3) Benefit: Highlight how your approach to learning new tasks will benefit the hiring company.

What not to say:

Avoid giving a response that sounds unsure and lacks confidence. Instead, express your interest in being involved with various tasks and learning new skills.

How to Answer:

Show the interviewer that you would proceed with the task thoughtfully while showing an eagerness to learn and gain new skills. Suppose you have encountered a situation like this in the past. In that case, you can use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide a story-based example to support your initial Situation, Solution, Benefit response.

16. What would you do if an angry customer approached you and demanded an immediate resolution to their problem?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know how you react in the face of a customer-related pressure situation. The goal of your response is to show that you are a level-headed professional who can think under pressure and create a solution rather than allow the conflict to intimidate you.

Tip to Answer:

The interviewer wants to know how you would proceed in this customer-service scenario where the pressure is high. Because this question asks, 'What would you do if...', you can respond hypothetically. The Situation, Solution, Benefit formula is helpful in this instance.

Step 1) Situation: Express your understanding of the hypothetical situation.

Step 2) Solution: Outline the solution you would introduce in this hypothetical situation.

Step 3) Benefit: Highlight how your approach to de-escalation will benefit the hiring company.

What not to say:

Avoid responding in a way that shows you would do anything to avoid the conflict. For example, saying, 'I would give the customer what they wanted,' shows a lack of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. Instead, point to the fact that you would lean on your training and the company's policies to reach a well-thought-out resolution that served all parties equitably.

How to Answer:

When you talk about handling upset customers, it's essential to show that you would act quickly and professionally while abiding by company policy. Employers want to see that your dispute-resolution skills are strong and that you can think fast when a pressing matter arises. Show the interviewer that you would jump into action to generate a fair resolution for the customer.

17. Describe a time when you motivated yourself to complete an assignment or task that you did not feel like doing.

Purpose:

The interviewer wants to know that you will still get the job done even when you aren't excited about the task at hand. The goal of your response is to show that you are a reliable person who delivers high-quality work, regardless of how motivated you feel at the moment. By the end of your reply, the interviewer should feel confident that you are a self-motivated individual who takes accountability for your work.

Tip to Answer:

'Describe a time when...' means that the interviewer is looking for a story-based example for this behavioral-based interview question. This style means forming a response using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result. Organizing your response using this framework will ensure that you provide the interviewer with the right amount of information and detail to form a compelling answer.

What not to say:

Avoid giving a general answer regarding your level of self-motivation. Stay away from vague statements like, 'I cannot think of a time when I struggled to complete an assignment or task. I am a very self-motivated person who rarely has trouble staying on task.'

How to Answer:

Tell the interviewer about a specific situation in which you completed something you didn't feel motivated to do. Outline the situation, describe your responsibility, and explain why you were not excited about it. Be sure to tell the interviewer that even though you were not enthusiastic about the task, you did it promptly and with care, knowing that it would help the organization as a whole. Give as much detail as you can about the actions you took to reach the finish line. If your hard work made a measurable impact, be sure to offer details about this accomplishment.

18. Tell me about a time when you were in danger of missing a deadline. What did you do?

Purpose:

The interviewer wants assurance that you can perform under pressure and still deliver on your deadlines. The goal of your response is to show the interviewer that you are a diligent person and will complete your work on time.

Tip to Answer:

Behavioral-based interview questions that begin with 'Tell me about a time...' are best answered using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result. Organizing your response using this framework will ensure that you provide the interviewer with the right amount of information and detail to form a compelling answer.

What not to say:

Avoid giving a general answer regarding your dedication and time-management skills. Stay away from vague statements like, 'I am sure never to miss a deadline. I am a very hard worker with excellent time management skills.'

How to Answer:

Answer this question by telling the interviewer about a specific time you had to perform at an accelerated level to meet an important deadline. Outline the situation and describe why it was vital to complete the deadline on time. Focus the bulk of your response on the actions you took to meet a deadline successfully. If your diligence yielded an impressive accomplishment, be sure to include this in your story-based response.

19. Tell me about a time when you worked with a person who did things very differently than you. How did you collaborate?

Purpose:

Since everyone's work style is unique, it can be challenging to collaborate with everyone 100% of the time. The interviewer wants assurance that you are a team player, regardless of personality or work style differences. The goal of your response is to describe your approach to collaborating with others while highlighting how your collaboration style will be a good match for the new team you'll be joining.

Tip to Answer:

Behavioral-based interview questions that begin with 'Tell me about a time...' are best answered using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result. Organizing your response using this framework will ensure that you provide the interviewer with the right amount of information and detail to form a compelling answer.

What not to say:

Avoid sounding closed-minded when discussing other people's work styles. You'll want to avoid sounding inflexible or like a know-it-all type of individual. You can prevent creating this impression by giving merit to different working styles, even if they do not match your own.

How to Answer:

Answer this question by telling the interviewer about a specific time you worked with someone who approached their tasks or communication style differently than you. Outline the situation and describe why it was a challenge to collaborate with this person. Focus on describing the specific actions you took to ensure a successful collaboration.

20. Tell me about a time when you had to learn something new within a short deadline.

Purpose:

The interviewer wants assurance that you can learn new skills under pressure. The goal of your response is to show the hiring authority that you are willing to put in the effort required to learn new skills, even when it may seem difficult. This question also presents an excellent opportunity to express that you accept workplace changes with poise.

Tip to Answer:

Behavioral-based interview questions that begin with 'Tell me about a time...' are best answered using the STAR method. STAR is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, Result. Organizing your response using this framework will ensure that you provide the interviewer with the right amount of information and detail to form a compelling answer.

What not to say:

Avoid giving a general answer regarding your ability to learn new skills quickly. Stay away from vague statements like, 'This happens to me every day! I am often learning new tasks on the job, and I am always up for a new challenge.'

How to Answer:

Think about a time you learned a new task or responsibility with little advanced notice. Perhaps your company implemented new software on which you had to give yourself a crash course. Maybe you needed to learn and implement a new procedure without notice. Perhaps your employer asked you to attend a workshop at the last minute, or you had to study for a policy exam. These make great real-life examples of times you had to learn something new within a short deadline. Discuss your diligence and actions to learn the content, task, or responsibility within a short timeline.

