

5 Common Interview Questions

Client-facing Skills:

Q: Tell me about a time you made sure a customer was pleased with your service?

A: While working at Enterprise, I would often close the branch alone on Friday's to let my boss and coworkers get a headstart to the weekend. One Friday, we hadn't seen a customer in sight for most of the afternoon, so around 4:30pm I told my acting-branch-manager that he could leave and I would close the branch at 6pm as usual.

I received my first phone call in hours at approximately 10 mins to close. The customer calling, frantically expressed to me that he had just gotten into a car accident and desperately needed us to pick him up so he could rent a vehicle. I explained to him my circumstance, that I was the only person in the branch but if he could wait until close, I would pick him up in a rental and rent him the vehicle once we got back to the branch. He accepted my offer but once we got back to the branch his credit card declined. It's about 6:30pm at this time and after explaining our policy that I would need payment before getting him into a vehicle, I offered a solution. I could add him on as an additional driver if he had someone physically come to the branch with their driver's license and credit card to pay for the rental. He ended up calling his mother, who agreed to come in and pay but notified me that she lived about 30 minutes away.

We finally got him into the rental car at about 7-7:15pm. He was so thankful for my patience, saying it was the best customer service he's ever experienced. I felt great about the situation as it helped a customer in need and helped the branch get another rental on the road.

Ability to Adapt

Q: Tell me about the first job you've ever had. How did you learn the ropes?

A: When I was 16 I got my first job at the local Blockbuster as a Customer Service Rep. I was the first new-hire in over a year, replacing someone who had been there for 4 years, so I felt I had big shoes to fill. I started the job ready to learn. I set a goal for myself that I would be confident in doing whatever was asked of me within 3 weeks. I wanted to be the best employee I could be and I wanted my coworkers to know that they could depend on me as a hard worker.

To become familiar with tasks and the role, I did a lot of observing. I learned a lot by watching my coworkers do daily tasks and their interactions with customers. I would use the examples I observed to help increase my pace of work. I would also try to find what I liked about each customer interaction I had, or the interactions I observed, and try to use them to create more value in my conversations with customers.

Within a 3 week time-period I accomplished my goal of feeling 100% confident in my first job. After a month into my employment, my boss said she trusted me enough to close the store alone too, so I began learning a whole new portion of the job within a month. It was a great team to work with.

Time Management

Q: Give me an example of a time you managed numerous responsibilities. How did you handle that?

A: When I worked at Enterprise, we would often have one person work on Saturdays with one other employee designated to clean the cars. On one Saturday, I was the manager on duty from 9am-1pm. I would always get to work about 30 minutes early to plan my day and on this particular Saturday my coworker texted to tell me he couldn't make it because he was sick. I attempted to call other employees to fill the position for help but no one answered, so I wore many hats that day.

I needed to be quick in planning my day so my first plan of action was to call all of my reservations to confirm their rental & the time they intended to pick up their vehicle. I checked-in all the overnight returns and cleaned the cars I needed for that day before my first customer arrived at around 10am. I was able to take all calls as well, answering questions, creating new reservations, taking walk-up reservations and updating current rentals to extend their rental dates. When a customer didn't have a reservation I

timeboxed to make sure they had a rental within the hour. That day I managed to get every car on the lot on rent with a “yes mentality” and swift/efficient planning.

Motivation and Values

Q: Give me an example of a time you were able to be creative with your work. What was exciting or difficult about it?

A: Our first project at Boise Codeworks was the first time in a long time that I was able to be creative with my work in an artistic way. The goal of the project was to create a webpage by applying our knowledge of HTML and CSS to meet specific requirements. Before we received our first project, I thought we were going to be given a strict template to identically recreate. I was beyond excited when I found out the project would allow us to put our own creative spin on it. Although the project was just front-end HTML/CSS, I found some aspects to be difficult because it was my first experience coding a full webpage from scratch. I just remember thinking it was so exciting creating something out of nothing. I was so excited I felt like a little kid, I showed everyone who would look because I was so proud of what I made.

Motivation and Values

Q: Tell me about your proudest professional accomplishment.

A: At Enterprise we tracked our personal sales of additional items and were ranked against 300+ employees in the group according to total sales. Some examples of additional items were satellite radio, protection packages, upgrading vehicle sizes for customers, etc. When I first started the job, I found it extremely hard to sell. I was great with customer interaction but seemed to always fall short of making the sale. After learning the ropes of the job, I still found myself falling short, so I decided enough was enough. I made it a personal goal to be among the top ranked employees in sales.

I began shadowing my boss to observe his customer interactions and how he presented the products we provide. I also had my coworkers explain how they approached selling without coming off as a sleazy salesman. After learning from my coworkers and conducting some trial and error, I discovered that sales come when you genuinely care about the customer, not when you're focused on just the sale itself. I found that getting to know the customer and their needs was the most important, and by making that my first priority was when my sales began to improve.

I became one of the best salesmen in the group which included employees from locations in Utah, Wyoming, Oregon, and all of Idaho. It's my proudest professional accomplishment because I was recognized as one of the company's best salesmen, and consecutively in the last 14 months of my employment finished top 10 in sales among 300+ employees. I also created a lot of great relationships with customers which I didn't originally set out to achieve but am grateful that was an outcome.

5 Questions to Ask Interviewer

1. How would you describe the culture at *insert company* ?
2. What are some of your expectations for team members in this position?
3. What does a typical day look like at *insert company* ?
4. Where do you see your company in five years?
5. What are some challenges you have seen team members encounter?

Summary of Preparation

In preparing for an interview, I can first look over questions that an interviewer might ask me and answer those questions. This will make me feel more comfortable when presented with a question. Also, having already answered questions previously I can use some of those responses on the questions during the actual interview.

I should also research the company and find out what they are all about. It's extremely important to know this before an interview because you don't want to blindly go in and not know what the company does. In my research, I can find their mission statement and other information that may be important to the company as well.

I need to study whiteboard challenges too. In studying this, I should work on problems outloud to become more comfortable speaking my writing to an audience. It's also important to have sound logic while writing out solutions and speaking this aloud will help demonstrate my understanding of doing so.

2 WhiteBoard Challenges

I worked with Justin with my first whiteboard challenge. The challenge was to find the difference between the area of a country and the area of the entire world. Before solving the problem I wrote down snippets of all the information he gave me to help when creating my function. I think I did really well on this challenge because I solved it as I would with basic math. I talked to him when writing out the problem too, which actually made me more comfortable. I ended up getting the right answer as well.

In my second challenge I also worked with Justin. The problem he gave me was to increment an array of numbers by its multiple, given only 2 parameters, a number and a length. I had a really hard time solving this in my head so I told him I was going to work through the problem by working out one layer at a time. I ended up not getting the right answer but he did say I was close. He also said although I didn't get the right answer, that I did make it sound good as my understanding of the problem was noticeable. I still felt good about the whiteboard challenge, although I didn't finish with the expected solution.

Elevator Pitch

First I want to say, thank you for having me. I'm originally from Indiana where I attended and graduated from Purdue University with a Bachelor's degree in Communications as well as a minor in Organizational Leadership.

Since entering the professional world, I've had a lot of experience working in teams, mainly in management roles. My first job was as an Assistant Manager at a clothing retail store. While there, I was quickly promoted to the Store Manager role after about 6 months of employment. I then decided to move to Idaho where my most recent job was as a Management Assistant at Enterprise Rent-a-Car. There, I gained a lot of great experience in sales, business and time management, as well as building relationships.

Although I loved the team I was a part of, the management roles I had been used to were missing the technology aspect that I wished to have. I then decided I needed a change to incorporate both, collaborating with others and technology, into my professional career. This brought me to Boise CodeWorks.

Before becoming a student at CodeWorks I had zero experience with code. I was always interested in understanding how programmers did the jobs they do. I'm a tinkerer myself and have always loved learning new things so my decision to finally start on this path has been a great one. I've developed skills creating full-stack applications utilizing Javascript, Vue, Node.js and C#. I've worked in teams to create applications which has been a great experience learning from peers and seeing the different ways of solving the same problem. From the first project to the last, every problem I solve has given me an incredible feeling of accomplishment. It's been an extremely rewarding experience and I can't wait to continue writing code!