Easy

**Why do you want to work in this occupation/field?**

1. I enjoy coming up with things to make people’s lives easier.

2. I like programming and planning out how a piece of software works.

**What are your strengths?**

1. I’ve been coding and developing software for about eight years. I’m willing to devote all of my time and effort into making a great product.

2. I have a lot of experience with programming in many different languages and environments. I work hard and am very self-motivated.

**Why did you leave your last job?**

1. I recently earned my degree. This will be my first full-time job.

2. Well, I certainly didn’t earn this degree just to work at McDonald’s for the rest of my life.

**Describe yourself in five words or less.**

1. Hard working, self-motivated, eager.

2. Dedicated, creative, problem-solver, smart.

**Describe a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty to accomplish a task.**

1. Back in middle school, I was unhappy about one of my teacher’s teaching. Too simple, too slow; we just weren’t learning enough. So I talked to one of my old teachers and used my free period to audit his class, in addition to the work for my original class.

2. One time, back in seventh grade, we were supposed to make a plan for a town and identify what energy resources we would use. We were supposed to make a trifold and a map, but instead, I chose to make a 3D model. It took longer and was much more complex, but it turned out much better in the long run.

**Explain what it means to be a team player.**

1. It means to do what you have to do, even if you don’t like it, and helping others who may be struggling, even if it’s more work for you.

2. It means doing your part, and more if necessary. You have to help out others, and not let your ego get in the way of progress. It’s important to realize that you’re not always going to be right.

Medium

**What sparked your interest in applying for this position? Meaning, how does it differ from your current job/occupation?**

1. This is my first real job. I was attracted to this position because of the freedom it provides, both creatively and in terms of hours.

2. I was attracted to this job because I want to have the freedom to do my own thing. I want to work on my own products and design my own software to make things better for other people. I don’t want to be stuck working on someone else’s dream.

**How would you describe your ideal job?**

1. I would love to have whatever working hours I want--like 10 to 6, for example. I’d like to have funny, interesting, nice coworkers. I’d like to have a cool office, and be able to come in at midnight if I have a good idea. Above all, I’d like it to be less of a job and more of a place where people come to share ideas.
2. I’d love to be one of those people who works from home—you know, being able to work whenever you want and having a flexible schedule. I’d communicate with everyone via email and occasional coffee dates. Working as a group but not having face-to-face contact sounds good to me.

**What is your biggest weakness?**

1. I’m not what you would call great at talking to people and communicating effectively.
2. I can get very frustrated if things don’t go the way I planned. It’s unfortunate because plans always have to change.

**What are your short-term and long-term goals? Meaning, where do you see yourself in the next five and ten years?**

1. Five years from now, I’d like to have a steady job that I love, a group of coworkers who are also my friends, and a nice laptop. Ten years from now, I’d like to have done something with my life. Being rich would be nice, but not a necessity.
2. Five years from now, I’d like to be moving up in the company hierarchy. Maybe instead of working on other people’s projects, I’d be the one to come up with the big ideas. Ten years from now, hopefully one of those ideas has taken off and become the next big thing.

**Describe a time when you had to overcome a major obstacle.**

1. I went to a very prestigious, and therefore expensive, college. My family wasn’t exactly rich, and my two sisters were also in college at the same time, so it was a huge challenge just to get all of my fees and books paid for. I had to work really hard on getting scholarships and a job and being very careful with my money.
2. When I was applying to colleges, I applied Early Decision to my obvious first choice. I was deferred, and it was pretty awful. I was crushed and I just couldn’t see the point in going to a college that wasn’t *that* college, you know? But my friends, parents, and teachers all but forced me to try again, and I was accepted during regular admissions.

**What was it like working for your previous supervisor/employer?**

1. My last job was working at a McDonald back on campus. It wasn’t awful—my boss and I actually got on pretty well—but it was obviously only temporary. I’m not really a fan of wiping down tables and things like that, but it got the bills paid.
2. My last boss was really nice, actually. She didn’t mind if I studied while working, and once in a while, if it was the middle of the night, she’d let me close up early.

**Do you prefer to work independently or on a team? Explain.**

1. I prefer to work independently, especially on complicated projects. Having other people do things can sometimes lead to a lot of confusion—if they did something in a way that confuses me, for example, or if they did it wrong and I have to fix it.
2. I can work as either a team or an individual, but unless I’m very trusting of my team’s abilities, I prefer to work alone.

**How do you handle stress and pressure?**

1. I’m pretty good under pressure, and I’m used to dealing with stress. If there’s a huge project that I only have ten days to complete, I break it up so that I know I need to do x amount each day. Once I do that much, I try to relax by reading or watching TV so I’m not completely overwhelmed.
2. Stress and pressure are no strangers to me. I usually deal with them by using the Pomodoro method: working for a chunk of time (like an hour or so), then taking a short break to have a snack or take a walk or something.

**What motivates you to succeed?**

1. I am very self-driven. I want to do the absolute best that I can. I’m not happy with ‘pretty”: “Oh yeah, it works *pretty* well,” or “Well, that’s *pretty* good.” Even when I was in school, I was never happy with anything less than perfection.
2. I want to change the world. Somehow someway, that’s what I want to do. And I’m willing to do anything to accomplish that.

**How do you evaluate success?**

1. Success, for me, is reaching everything you expected to do, and going one step farther. Adding in that little extra feature, or getting it done in half the time.
2. Success, to me, is pleasing whoever set you the task. If a customer wants you to make software that does x and y, you can make it do that in a really cool, innovative way. Or you could surprise them by having it do x, y, and z.

**What challenges are you looking for in this position?**

1. I never want to stop learning. I don’t want to become that person who spends all their time working on huge projects that are actually very simple, if long. I’d rather work on a simple project that gives me trouble—it’s in an unfamiliar language, or has unusual specifications, or whatever.
2. I’ve always worked on getting out of my comfort zone. Because quite frankly, that’s boring. Even if I’m uncomfortable working here at first, I can adapt and become a better version of myself.

Difficult

**Why should I hire you?**

1. Without meaning to sound conceited, I am, in many ways, the perfect candidate. I’m willing to learn. I have a fancy degree from a prestigious university. I have the creativity to problem solve effectively. I’m willing to dedicate my time and effort to making an amazing product. But most of all, I genuinely want to be here. It’s not ‘just another job’ to me.
2. To be completely honest, you should hire me because I want it. I want it more than these other candidates. My whole life, I’ve been looking for the perfect job, and I’ve found it here. I’m just as, if not more, qualified as these other candidates, and in ten or twenty years, I’m not going to be looking to quit because I’m tired of it. I’m eager, and that makes all the difference.

**What can you contribute to this company?**

1. I have a lot of experience designing and programming software. I can take orders just as well as I can give them. I’m not looking to be rich, so you don’t have to pay me a gazillion dollars. I really want to be here, so most of all, I can contribute a lot of energy and eagerness.
2. I’m not just a programmer. This is my chosen field, but I just as easily could have become a chemist or a historian or a teacher. When you’re designing software it’s not enough just to know how to code. You have to know about the content of the code. For example, your company were to be making some sort of educational software, I could contribute my vast wealth of knowledge of Latin, or history, or anything, to make it a more effective software.

**How would you deal with conflict between you and a coworker?**

1. I would try to resolve it as peacefully as I can. We’re going to be stuck working together for the foreseeable future, so there’s no point in making work any harder.
2. I would try to explain whatever the issue is as calmly as I can. If they were still mad at me, I would try to fix whatever it was.

**Imagine you have just been hired. What is the most important thing on your to-do list on the first day of work?**

1. The first thing I would try to do is assimilate myself into the workplace. I’d try to find my way around, observe, and get to know the team.
2. The first thing I would do is dive right in to whatever project we’re working on. During lunch, I would find out where things are. I would try to experience the average day.

**What are some questions you have for me (as your boss or about this company or position)?**

1. How many other programmers and developers do you have? Would I be working for them, or are we all the same level?
2. Do you have any steady clients? What sort of projects are you anticipating in the future?

**How would you define “success” for your career? Meaning, by the time you retire, what is it that you will have had to accomplish in order to feel as if you have had a successful career?**

1. Ideally, my goal in life is to invent something totally new and innovative—to be the next Steve Jobs or Larry Page. If I can’t do that, then I’d like to help someone else to.
2. My career goal is to make something amazing. The kind of thing that I could point at and say, “Yeah, I helped make that.”

**Describe what you might do to motivate a coworker who was not keeping up his/her end of your paired workload.**

1. At first, I’d try subtly hinting, like “Hey, how’s that project coming along?”. If that didn’t work, I’d most likely try to see what it is they’re doing—if they’re Instagramming instead of working, or if they’re just legitimately stuck. Then, I would point blank ask them: “Hey, when are you going to finish that work? It really should be done by now.”
2. I’d try to find out why they haven’t been doing their work, while at the same time I’d start. It still needs to be done even if they’re not doing it, right?

**If a coworker was acting unethically (stealing supplies or money, invading another coworker’s private office, making long distance calls at work and not paying for them, etc.), what might you do?**

1. The first time, I would probably assume it was fine. They borrowed the supplies, or the other coworker let them into their office. But the second time, I’d start to get suspicious. I might say something to the person involved—the person in charge of supplies, or the coworker whose office it was—and see if it really was okay. If it wasn’t, I’d help them in talking to the coworker who was misbehaving.
2. At first, I’d probably make a note of it, but it wouldn’t be that suspicious in my mind. But if it happened repeatedly, I would try to talk to them and see why they were doing it.