

FAQs @ Interviews

The following answers are provided to give you a new perspective on how to answer tough interview questions.. Answer the questions behaviorally, with specific examples that show clear evidence backs up what you are saying about yourself. Always provide information that shows you want to become the very best for the company and that you have specifically prepared yourself to become exactly that. They want to be sold. They are waiting to be sold. Don't disappoint them!

1 Why should I hire you? Because I sincerely believe that I'm a suitable person for the job. I realize that there are many other college students who have the ability to do this job. I also have that ability. But I also bring an additional quality that makes me the very best person for the job--my attitude for excellence. Not just giving lip service to excellence, but putting every part of myself into achieving it.

2. What is your long-range objective? Where do you want to be 10 or 15 years from now? Although it's certainly difficult to predict things far into the future, I know what direction I want to develop toward. Within five years, I would like to become the very best _____ your company has. In fact, my personal career mission statement is to become a world-class _____ in the _____ industry. I will work toward becoming the expert that others rely upon. And in doing so, I feel I will be fully prepared to take on any greater responsibilities that might be presented in the long term.

3. Are you a team player? Very much so. In fact, I've had opportunities in both athletics and academics to develop my skills as a team player. I was involved in _____ at the intramural level, including leading my team in assists during the past year--I always try to help others achieve their best. In academics, I've worked on several team projects, serving as both a member and team leader. I've seen the value of working together as a team to achieve a greater goal than any one of us could have achieved individually. Give an example . . .

4. Have you ever had a conflict with a boss or professor? How was it resolved? Yes, I have had conflicts in the past. Never major ones, but certainly there have been situations where there was a disagreement that needed to be resolved. I've found that when conflict occurs, it's because of a failure to see both sides of the situation. Therefore, I ask the other person to give me their perspective and at the same time ask that they allow me to fully explain my perspective. At that point, I would work with the person to find out if a compromise could be reached. If not, I would submit to their decision because they are my superior. In the end, you have to be willing to submit yourself to the directives of your superior, whether you're in full agreement or not. An example of this was when . . .

5. What is your greatest weakness? I would say my greatest weakness has been my lack of proper planning in the past. I would overcommit myself with too many variant tasks, then not be able to fully accomplish each as I would like. However, since I've come to recognize that weakness, I've taken steps to correct it. For example, I now carry a planning calendar in my pocket so that I can plan all of my appointments and "to do" items. Here, let me show you how I have this week planned out

6. If I were to ask your professors to describe you, what would they say? I believe they would say I'm a very energetic person, that I put my mind to the task at hand and see to it that it's accomplished. They would say that if they ever had something that needed to be done, I was the person who they could always depend on to see that it was accomplished. They would say that I always took a keen interest in the subjects I was studying and always sought ways to apply the knowledge in real world settings. Am I just guessing that they would say these things? No, in fact, I'm quite certain they would say those things because I have with me several letters of recommendation from my professors, and those are their very words. Let me show you . . .

7. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have? The key quality should be leadership--the ability to be the visionary for the people who are working under them. The person who can set the course and direction for subordinates. A manager should also be a positive role model for others to follow. The highest calling of a true leader is inspiring others to reach the highest of their abilities. I'd like to tell you about a person who I consider to be a true leader . . .

Twenty Standard Interview Questions

It is not enough to have solid answers only for the above questions. You need to be prepared for the full spectrum of questions that may be presented. For further practice, make sure you go through the required mock interview and for further review, look at some of the following questions:

1. Tell me about yourself./Tell me something about yourself not documented in your resume.
2. How would you describe your ideal job?
3. What goals do you have in your career?. How do you plan to achieve these goals?
4. How do you evaluate success?. Describe a situation in which you were successful.
5. What accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction in your life?
6. Are you a team player? Give an example where you demonstrated your ability as a team player.
7. What motivates you in the face of adverse circumstances?.
8. Why should I hire you?
9. Tell me about some of your recent goals and what you did to achieve them.
10. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
11. Have you ever had a conflict with a boss or professor? How did you resolve it?
12. What is your greatest strength? Give example from your life where you demonstrated this strength.
13. What is your greatest weakness?
14. If I were to ask one of your professors/friends to describe you, what would he or she say?
15. Why did you choose to attend your college?
16. What were your favorite classes? Why?
17. Do you have any plans for further education?
18. What qualities do you feel a successful leader should have?
19. What do you know about our company?. Why are you interested in our company?
20. Tell us something about your family.

Important : Don't just read these questions--practice and rehearse the answers. Don't let the company interview be the first time you have actually formulated an answer in spoken words. It is not enough to think about them in your head--practice! Sit down with a friend, a significant other, or your roommate (an especially effective critic, given the amount of preparation to date) and go through all of the questions. Make the most of every single interview opportunity by being fully prepared!

Top Ten Critical Success Factors:

With all the different questions being referenced, you may wonder what exactly the employer is looking for. Following is the list of the top ten critical success factors that nearly every employer is seeking:

1. Positive attitude toward work
2. Proficiency in the field of study
3. Communication skills (oral and written)
4. Interpersonal skills
5. Confidence
6. Critical thinking and problem solving skills
7. Flexibility
8. Self-motivation
9. Leadership
10. Teamwork

Show your competence in as many of the above critical success factors as possible and you will rise above the competition.

What are your strong points

It is important to prepare in advance for the interview question what are your strong points. If you've already listed your strengths when preparing your CV / resume, coming up with answers shouldn't be too difficult.

But be careful. The interviewer is asking you to sell yourself, but at the same time, they do not want to hear you being arrogant. And while they may want to know about your personality (if you are over confident they will certainly learn something about you), do remember that this is still an interview situation, so your answers must be relevant to the job in question. In other words, don't get too personal.

So how do you go about answering the interview question what are your strong points? The general recommendation is to prepare at least three answers and to relate them to the organisation and the vacancy. This means you need to tailor your answers. Ensure there is truth in what you say, but do not be too honest, especially it makes you sound like a less than ideal candidate.

Here are some suggested responses and the reasons why they might work in interviews for certain kinds of jobs.

"I am confident and outgoing"

This is a response that says something about your personality, but if you are applying for a role where you need to relate to a lot of people - particularly the public - it will serve your purposes. However, if the vacancy involves consultation, it might be better to say "I have good interpersonal skills", as this implies that you are able to listen to people as well.

"I enjoy a challenge"

Be careful with this. It is an excellent response if the vacancy requires problem solving, or servicing of some kind, working to tight deadlines or project completion. It will obviously not be helpful if the job is less dynamic and involves a larger amount of regular, less exciting duties - the employer might be concerned that you will become bored. You could always qualify it to offer a more balanced response: "I enjoy a challenge, but I'm also happy completing regular tasks." Then it illustrates that you're flexible and responsive to different work situations.

"I'm a strong team leader"

Clearly, this is appropriate if the job involves managing people. It's a good idea to show that you know what leading a team involves (although this will no doubt come up in other questions too). So, "I'm a strong team leader with the ability to motivate others" and "I'm a strong team leader who leads by example" represent stronger answers. Draw on your own understanding of your management skills plus the job description to decide what you'll say here.

"I am ambitious"

This is a very strong answer and you should use it with care. In the wrong situation, it can sound hard-headed and the employer may wonder whether you'll compete too fiercely with your colleagues, or even your superiors. However, in a sales role it might be perfect, especially if you focus your response a little more: "I am ambitious and aim to exceed targets".

"I am dedicated and hard working"

You're on safe ground here, as this can be true whatever your individual working style. It's not the most exciting answer, but when presented alongside two others that are more individual, it should offer reassurance to the interviewer.

"I am a good communicator"

Again, this is a win-win answer. Be prepared to expand, though: specify whether you have strong writing skills, are good at explaining difficult ideas in a simple way, or perform well at important meetings.

"I work well without supervision"

A majority of employers would be pleased to hear this, providing the vacancy is at a level where they'd normally expect you to need a degree of supervision. But be careful not to sound as if you prefer to work without supervision, as this may sound as if you risk coming into conflict with your supervisor or manager. A safer option might be to state "I work well with or without supervision".

"I enjoy learning through my work"

Again, this is a safe answer. The interviewer might then ask how you have done this in the past, so be ready to give details of some hands-on learning or special training you've experienced, and to say why you enjoyed it.

And finally

These examples show that when preparing an answer to the interview question what are your strong points, it is important to consider whether your responses could be taken the wrong way. Put yourself in the interviewer's shoes - you can then ensure that the potential for a negative interpretation is removed.

a. Are you competitive? Is that good or bad?

Sample Answer(s)

I'm quite a competitive person, but not overly so. I'd say the person I compete with most is myself. I work hard to achieve the goals and targets I set myself.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

This is a difficult question to answer as competitiveness is a trait that can be both positive and negative. Almost all people that achieve success - in any field - will extol the virtues of a healthy amount of competitiveness. Do the same in your answer without getting carried away. Over-competitive employees sometimes have difficulty getting along with their colleagues.

b. What do you know about this organization?

Sample Answer(s)

I know that XYZ Corp. has been in existence for four years. It was founded by John Rush in his garage and he has built it into the third largest office supplies firm in the state with aspirations to make it number one within two years. It's renowned as an ambitious and highly progressive company and I believe it has a very bright future. I also like the fact that XYZ Corp isn't a company that rests on its laurels.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

The interviewer wants to know how hungry you are for this job. If you haven't even prepared for the interview, by doing the most basic research, then the chances of you getting the job are close to zero. You can be sure that other candidates will have done their research.

c. Can you work in a team?

Sample Answer(s)

Absolutely. I feel very comfortable working in a team. I feel I have the necessary skills to communicate my own ideas and also to illicit contributions from my fellow team members. It's hard to imagine a project I've worked on where teamwork has not been key.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

There is only one answer to this question - Yes. If you're not a team player, it will be difficult to land the job. If you tell the interviewer that you're not a team player, it will be impossible to land the job. Take this opportunity to explain what makes you a great team player.

d. What challenges do you think you'll face in this job?

What problems do you think you'll face in this job?"

Sample Answer(s)

Having worked in a similar role at ABC & Co, I expect that this job will present regular deadlines to meet, strains on resource availability, conflicting priorities, and budgetary concerns to name but a few issues. These are challenges that I've successfully tackled in the past and I'm sure that record would continue here. I relish a challenge and there's nothing that I've seen in this job that intimidates me in any way.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

The interviewer is trying to extract your real fears and apprehensions about the problems you would

face in this role. Demonstrate confidence in your own abilities and anticipation rather than apprehension for the job in question.

e. How do you define "success"?

Sample Answer(s)

That's very easy. For me, success is achieved if you attain the goals you have set for yourself or the goals that have been set for you. I believe that's true whether you're talking about a student, a managing director or even a large corporation. I know that ABC Corp has set itself the target of being the number one telecoms firm in the country within five years. If the firm achieves that goal, it will most certainly be judged 'a success'.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

There is a subtle difference between this question and How do you measure 'success'? The former asks what it means to you for something to be successful. The latter asks what you use to measure your own personal success.

Success means different things to different people. If you've done your homework, you can impress the interviewer by referring to the company mission statement (or corporate goals etc) in your response.

f. What is the most difficult challenge you've faced? How did you resolve it?

Sample Answer(s)

When I assumed the role of Regional Development Manager at ABC Corp, team morale was low, users were dissatisfied, and deadlines were repeatedly being missed. The first step I took was to set a realistic timeline for improving the situation. I knew that creating unrealistic expectations would only increase the chances of failure and exacerbate the situation. Next, I re-organized the team structure to improve customer and product focus. I also worked with the business users to prioritize the work schedule. This allowed us to reduce the number of products we were developing, which in turn enabled us to better focus on our core deliverables. Six months later the business users were happy and the team was happy.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

This is a terrific opportunity to shine. You should certainly prepare an answer to this question prior to the interview. If your mind goes blank during the interview you will give an impression of inadequate interview preparation and hint at a lack of challenging experience in your past.

g. What has been your favourite job?

Sample Answer(s)

It's hard to pick a single favorite job because there's been aspects of every job that I've enjoyed, each for different reasons. My ideal job would involve working in a challenging environment for an ambitious, forward-moving company. I get most satisfaction from a job well done, and from contributing to the success of a progressive organization.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

Your answer can lead to trickier questions such as 'If it was so good, why did you leave the job?' and 'What was your worst job?'. Your answer will also cause the interviewer to use your favorite job as an indication of your demands and expectations of any new job. A better answer could involve selecting your favorite aspects of a number of jobs. Alternatively you could highlight the features of your ideal job.

Remember even though the question seems to refer to your job history, the interviewer is in fact trying to find out more about you. However you answer the question make sure to promote yourself as best you can.

h. If offered to you, how long do you plan to stay in this role?"

Sample Answer(s)

I approach every new job with a long-term view. I would like to think that I can make a positive contribution to XYZ Corp for the foreseeable future.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

Recruiting, hiring and training a new employee is an expensive process and represents a major investment by an employer. The interviewer wants to ensure that your goals are compatible with the firm's investment.

i. What are your hobbies?

Sample Answer(s)

I have run a successful film club for the last 3 years. I started it as a way to meet new people who share my love of movies. We now have more than a hundred members and a waiting list to join. It's been a terrific excuse to socialize with people I would not otherwise have met. I also enjoy working with other organizations such as distributors, film clubs and local film festivals to show interesting and foreign films that would otherwise have been missed by the local multiplexes.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

This may seem an identical question to What do you do in your spare time? However there is a slight distinction. Specifically: a hobby is a specific activity or pastime in which you participate regularly. Listening to music or watching TV are not hobbies, merely things you do.

Individuals with hobbies, particular an unusual one, are regarded as diverse and well-rounded with a healthy outlook on life. These are attractive personal traits valued by many modern employers. Hobbies that can also demonstrate a business or personal development benefit are of most value.

j. How do you handle pressure?

Sample Answer(s)

I'm the type of person who genuinely revels when under pressure. I enjoy the challenge and the adrenalin rush when the chips are down and a big effort is required. Through good management and work practices I try to avoid a situation becoming pressurized, however when I am under pressure I'm always confident that I can complete the job successfully.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

This may seem similar to the question: How do you handle stress?. There is a subtle difference: Stress is a difficulty or strain felt from within. Pressure is a strong external influence. We may not all feel stressful, but pressure is an expectation in many modern jobs. Pressure could come from your customers, your boss, or even your colleagues.

Answering this question in the negative, e.g. I'm never under pressure may suggest that you avoid pressure and the responsibility that it often entails. It also tells the interviewer that your reactions, if pressure is applied, are unknown even by yourself.

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k. Tell me about yourself.

Sample Answer(s)

I'm an ambitious, self-motivated account executive and I'm very happy in my life right now. I'm looking to change jobs because I feel I've achieved all of the goals I set out for myself when I embarked in my previous role, six years ago. I've still got a strong appetite for success and I'm looking for a job that will provide fresh challenges and rewards.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

This is a deceptively difficult question to answer. The key to answer this question is staying focused on your primary objective here - selling yourself as an employee. With this in mind, answer this question in light of your overall interview strategy. Don't describe your record collection, your favorite movies or your pets' names. Do, for example, describe what motivates your career and drives your passions.

l. Name three adjectives that can be best used to describe you.

Sample Answer(s)

Respond with any three of the following or any similar adjectives you care to mention: Reliable, hard-working, conscientious, innovative, smart, intelligent, communicative, organized, diligent, energetic, likable.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

This is a tough question made easier through preparation. The interviewer will learn most about you by considering why you chose the three adjectives you did - and not any others - rather than what those adjectives actually are. Avoid adjectives with a possible double-edged sword such as ambitious.

m. What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?

Sample Answer(s)

Being a valuable part of a successful organization is a reward in itself. Within the organization I feel that advancement and responsibility are suitable rewards. While salary is important, I hope it would reflect my role and responsibilities within the firm.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

Expressing the rewards you hope to achieve will give the interviewer an insight into the strength of your ambition and your desire to succeed. Be ambitious in your aspirations without being unreasonable.

n. Why did you apply for this job?

Why do you want this position?

What interests you about this position?

Sample Answer(s)

I've worked in the travel industry for five years and I've enjoyed every minute. I'd like to work for XYZ Corp because they are industry leaders and I want to work with the best people and the best products I can. There are exciting times ahead for the firm, particularly in light of the firm's recent announcement that it was expanding its product range by 25% over the next 24 months. I feel that my drive, creativity and determination will be an asset to the firm and will enable me to succeed in this role. This position would enable me to apply my skills in an exciting and challenging environment. I think this position is a perfect match for my talents and my career goals.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

This is a great chance to sell yourself but don't waste the opportunity by reciting your resume. You should describe the assets you bring with you to the company and express the depth of your interest in this job. Your answer should be direct and unequivocal. Leave the interviewer in no doubt that you are the perfect person for the job.

o. What do you like to do in your spare time?"

Sample Answer(s)

I enjoy participating in and watching most sports. I discovered golf at college and find it a great way to relax and spend time with friends. I also enjoy playing football and tennis. I was captain of the school swimming team and I try to keep that up as best I can too. I also enjoy listening to music, watching movies, and being around my friends.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

Employers like rounded employees that have a balanced life with interests out of the workplace. Believe it or not the perfect employee does not work eighteen hours a day, seven days a week and employers realize that. They're looking for an employee that will spend a number of successful years at the company, not someone who will burnout in no time.

Most honest answers are acceptable here. Be sure to include outdoor and team pursuits. Someone whose only pastimes are playing computer games and listening to their personal stereo may give the perception that they're insular in nature and would not fit in well in a team environment.

Any pursuits that can be perceived to bring benefit to the workplace (such as captain of a sports team) are greatly respected.

p. What makes you think you're qualified for this job?"

Sample Answer(s)

I studied for a diploma in computers which I enjoyed immensely. In my last job I was able to apply

knowledge I'd gained on the course to do my job better. I streamlined many of the department's manual tasks by moving them from paper to a computer-based solution. I've also got an advanced sailing certificate. This has helped me build many team-working skills. When I worked at XYZ Corp I voluntarily attended a series of in-house personal development training programs.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

This is an opportunity not only to specify your relevant educational and professional qualifications but also to describe their relevance to this job. A 'qualification' in the context of this question is not restricted to a certificate/diploma/degree. Feel free to include relevant work and/or leisure experience which makes you a better candidate for this job.

q. What size organization do you prefer to work for? Why?"

Sample Answer(s)

There are advantages to working for a small company and advantages to working for a large company. Size is not the critical factor when I choose an employer. It's more important to me that the organization I work for is an ambitious, forward-moving company. I want to help it attain its goals and contribute towards its growth and development.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

In some questions, the key to a great answer is in understanding the importance of the context in which the question is posed. This is one such question. Measure your answer to this question in light of the company you are interviewing for. It would be unwise, to say the least, if you express a preference for small companies while interviewing for a multi-national and vice versa.

r. Why would you like to work for us?"

Sample Answer(s)

I've been aware of your reputation for some time. You're regarded as an innovator within the industry and beyond. I appreciate that your team's success is due to a number of factors, not least of which is hard work. I'm an excellent team player, I'm a very good problem solver, and I work hard to get the job done. For these reasons, I'm confident I'd be an asset to your group. I hope that my experience shows I'm suitably qualified to fulfill the position.

I know that your position within this firm speaks for itself. My ideal manager is someone that fosters excellence, innovation, and success, as well as personal and professional growth. It's widely recognized that XYZ Corp's strongest asset is its staff thanks to its strong belief in training and development. For these reasons, this is a highly desirable role.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

There are two approaches to answering this question. If you know the interviewer personally or by reputation you can allude to qualities in him that you respect and the complimentary qualities you could bring to him and his team. If you do not know the interviewer, answer this question by referring to how your qualities would match those of a suitable, hypothetical manager.

s.What type of a work environment are you seeking?"

Sample Answer(s)

I'm looking for a challenging working environment in which my abilities will be regularly tested. It's important to me that I work in an environment where teamwork is fostered and I can learn and share with those around me.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

The interviewer is once again trying to learn more about you, than the actual work environment you're seeking. The reason the question is framed this way is because most employees will describe an environment which best matches their talents. Focus on keywords such as 'challenging', 'innovative', 'hardworking' and 'team-driven'.

t.What are your strengths? How do they help you?"

Sample Answer(s)

I'm well motivated, I've got a strong desire to succeed, and I'm always ready and willing to learn new information and skills.

Advice from the recruitment consultant

Resist the temptation to expound your greatest qualities to the interviewer. Keep your answer brief, naming no more than three of your qualities. Know when to stop or you will invalidate your entire answer.

u.What Are Your Strength and Weaknesses?

"My strength is my flexibility to handle change. As far as weaknesses, I feel that my management skills could be stronger, and I am constantly working to improve them."

v.Why Should We Hire You?

"I have a unique combination of strong technical skills, and the ability to build strong customer relationships. This allows me to use my knowledge and break down information to be more user-friendly." "With five years' experience working in the financial industry and my proven record of saving the company money, I could make a big difference in your company. I'm confident I would be a great addition to your team."

w.WHAT is ur goal

"My immediate goal is to get a job in a growth-oriented company. My long-term goal will depend on where the company goes. I hope to eventually grow into a position of responsibility."

If you are employed, focus on what you want in your next job: "After two years, I made the decision to look for a company that is team-focused, where I can add my experience."

Answers to Some other Interview Questions

1. How has your experience prepared you for your career? Coursework: Aside from the discipline and engineering foundation learning that I have gained from my courses, I think the design projects, reports, and presentations have prepared me most for my career. Work Experience: Through internships, I have gained self-esteem, confidence, and problem-solving skills. I also refined my technical writing and learned to prepare professional documents for clients. Student Organizations: By working on multiple projects for different student organizations while keeping up my grades, I've built time management and efficiency skills. Additionally, I've developed leadership, communication, and teamwork abilities. Life Experience: In general, life has taught me determination and the importance of maintaining my ethical standards.

2. Describe the ideal job. Ideally, I would like to work in a fun, warm environment with individuals working independently towards team goals or individual goals. I am not concerned about minor elements, such as dress codes, cubicles, and the level of formality. Most important to me is an atmosphere that fosters attention to quality, honesty, and integrity.

3. What contributions could you make in this organization that would help you to stand out from other applicants? In previous internships, my industriousness and ability to teach myself have been valuable assets to the company. My self-teaching abilities will minimize overhead costs, and my industriousness at targeting needs without prompting will set me apart from others. Additionally, one thing that has always set me apart from my scientific/engineering peers are my broad interests and strong writing abilities. I am not your typical "left-brained" engineer, and with my broad talents, I am likely to provide diverse viewpoints.

4. What sort of criteria are you using to decide the organization you will work for? Most importantly, I am looking for a company that values quality, ethics, and teamwork. I would like to work for a company that hires overachievers.

5. What made you choose this college? I chose this college for the following reasons: my budget limited me to in-state schools, I was seeking an area with dog-friendly apartments, the MSU web site impressed me, I saw active student groups, and the people were very friendly.

6. List 2-3 of your greatest achievements since you've been in college and why? Receiving the SWE Outstanding Member Award and College of Engineering Student Service Award I got involved with student activities to overcome my debilitating shyness. Receiving these awards signified that I had accomplished a transition from dragging myself to participate to feeling energized by it. Receiving the SWE Web Site Award Without training in web design, I competed against not only the other student sections, but professional sections around the nation. Despite competing with more HTML-experienced people, I brought this award to my section. After getting so much from SWE, I was able to give something back. Earning the highest grade in an organic chemistry class of ~200 people I worked very hard for this grade and loved the subject, so it was a great feeling to see that the hard work paid off.

7. Which subjects have you enjoyed studying the most and why? I have enjoyed hydrology, fluids, solid & hazardous waste management, water and wastewater treatment, and oceanography because I love water and environmental topics. Calculus and linear algebra excite me because I love logic. I enjoyed the writing and analysis in economic history. Business law thrilled me because I have a strong interest in legal matters.

8. Which subjects did you dislike and why? Introductory soil elicited little interest in me, most likely because the professor was inexperienced, the book was ineffective, and I had little spare time that semester to look into other resources.

9. How would a professor who knows you well describe you? One who does not know you well? A professor who knows me well would likely describe my personal qualities: sweet, down-to-earth, smart, hard-working, and conscientious. As specific examples of those who did not know me well, my soils professor and soils teaching assistant each considered me smart and respectful, and both thought that I must have enjoyed the class a lot, due to my performance.

10. What are your strengths? My strongest strength is the ability to teach myself difficult material, regardless of the subject (with the exception of theater and drawing blood from dogs, which I have no talent for). Additionally, I have always excelled verbally and look forward to writing opportunities.

11. What are your weaknesses? I tend to try to do too many things, leaving little time for myself. I have worked on balancing myself for the last several months. I am also working on improving my public speaking skills.

12. What sort of serious problems have you experienced, and how have you handled them? My apartment building burned down at the end of January during one of my semesters at MSU. Before the fire got too bad, I was able to rescue my pets and the neighbor's dog, as well as my textbooks and backpack, but I lost most of my mementos and possessions. While the firemen were preparing their hoses, I drove to school (with the animals in the car) to meet my lab partners, who were waiting for me. I explained the situation, emailed my professors, and rushed back to the apartment. Fortunately, I had renter's insurance. I missed about a week of school to deal with the insurance matters and find a new place to live. In order to salvage my grades and sanity, I dropped a course and honored my existing student group and research commitments. Staying active socially and keeping myself well-rounded were the best healing tools for me. Within a few weeks, I was caught up and had recovered reasonably from the loss of sentimental items.

13. Which is more important to you, your salary or your job? Salary is important, but I couldn't stay with a job that brought me misery when I could support myself doing something else; hence, my job is more important.

14. What have you found to be the biggest source of motivation in your life? Taking advantage of my strengths so that they are not wasted. Since nobody is lucky enough to be strong in every area, I think it is important to make good use of one's strengths.

15. What sorts of things cause you stress, and how do you deal with them? Lack of organization throws me off. To deal with this, I come up with some kind of system to organize things, even if it is only in my head, in the case when chaos is desirable.

16. What is your definition of success? Being a good person by improving the quality of the lives of others, whether it be through work, doing sweet things, improving the environment/community, taking care of one's family, etc. Superficially, I tend to measure success by level of education and abilities within one's career; however, I try to remind myself of the things that are more important.

17. How would you develop team spirit among the people that you supervise? My experience in student groups has taught me that people work best when their friends (teammates) are counting on them to do well; therefore, I believe that bonding motivates people. I would also foster team pride by promoting our team's assets.

18. How would you resolve conflicts with employees, coworkers, and supervisors? If possible, I would refresh my memory on what I've learned about conflict communication, and then I would discuss things, honestly and tactfully. I am a big fan of kind sincerity and honesty, as well as humility (when appropriate).

19. In what ways have you learned from your mistakes?

Upon getting myself overwhelmed with involvement in too many projects, I changed my approach. When possible, I now start with less than I can handle and add more only as time allows, and in small increments. 36. In what areas do you need to improve your skills? I would like to improve my public speaking skills.

