

Interview Questions and Answers for an Account Executive.

Current List of Questions/Behaviors you have chosen:	
Behavior	Question:
Ambition/Drive:	
Their heroes demonstrated clear purpose, enthusiasm, character and persistence.	Who are your heroes from the past? Why have you chosen them in particular?
Customer service	
Can handle all types of customers, is not intimidated by aggressive customers, does not become emotional with them, divorces their attitude from the sales issues involved.	Tell me about the most difficult customer you have had? Why was he/she difficult? How did you handle them?
Negotiation Skills	
Applies a structured approach to negotiations, and sees the different motivations, interests and objectives of all parties involved.	Tell me about a successful negotiation that you lead. What were the main factors in your success?
Pressure	
Can perform their sales skills in pressurized conditions with equal effectiveness if not more so.	Give me an example of an occasion when you used your sales skills in a highly pressurized situation? (i.e. needed to reach sales target, major client was going to leave etc)
Problem solving abilities	
Keeps up to date with the latest developments in their industry through seminars, industry newsletters, professional organizations, research papers and networking throughout the industry.	How do you keep up to date with recent developments in your field
Look at things from the customers point of view; wants genuinely to solve their problems; has a solid history of successful problem solving at the highest level.	Tell me about a recent sale that best demonstrates your ability to solve a customer's problem?
Sales ability	
Constantly seeking to improve their sales skills by learning from their mistakes, responding positively to feedback and learning from specialized sales training and product	What steps have you recently taken to improve your sales skills?

knowledge courses.	
Constantly seeks and takes opportunities to maximize sales, although will never jeopardize long-term sales for short-term gains.	Give me an example of a time when you used your sales skills to sell a customer more than he originally asked for?
Too low a rate will suggest very poor self-belief. Too high a rate may suggest a level of arrogance that may be resistant to suggestions of improvement.	How would you rate yourself as a salesperson on a scale from 1 to 10?
Recovers easily from rejection, does not avoid situations where rejection might occur, especially cold calling; sees each rejection as a step bringing them nearer to success.	How have you dealt with rejection in the past? Can you give me some examples?

Sample Interview Questions

The sample interview questions offers possible interview questions. Based on the requirements/duties of the job, identify possible interview questions:

The sample [interview questions](#) for each interview are based on the knowledges, skills and abilities required to perform the job. The key knowledges, skills and abilities from [the job](#) description of the job that you're interviewing for.

Review each interview question and notice how small changes in the interview question will change your answer. Review each interview question to give you the confidence to answer any interview question that may be asked.

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

Answer : 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.

2. What kind of salary are you seeking?

Answer1 : I would expect a salary which reflects the experience and qualifications that I bring to the role. What range do you have in mind?

Answer2 : I've got a strong background in this industry and my skills are a perfect match for this role. I would expect my compensation to be at the upper end of the position's salary band. Can

you tell me what that salary band is?

Answer3 : Based on the information I have about the position, a salary in the range 28,000-32,000 would reflect the experience and expertise that I would bring to the role.

3. What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization like this?

Answer : I think that determination, a willingness to work hard and a desire to excel in everything you do are key attributes for a successful employee in a company like XYZ Corp. A successful employee would also need to handle pressure well, be a great communicator and an excellent team member. These are attributes that have helped me succeed in my past positions and ones that I would like to apply in XYZ Corp..

4. What do you know about this organization?

Answer : 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.

5. What do you know about the position you've applied for?

What duties do you think this job entails?

Answer : The Media Marketing Co-ordinator reports to the Marketing Director. Her role is to co-ordinate all media advertising, particularly print, radio, and television. The Co-ordinator works with Media agencies to profile advertising opportunities, then, working within a strict budget, she organizes cross-media advertising campaigns. An important aspect of the role is to disseminate the customer response to the adverts in order to measure its success and thus improve future campaigns.

At my last job in ABC & Co I worked closely with several different media agencies, including some that specialized in new media platforms such as the Internet. I also gained invaluable experience as a member of the team that established ABC & Co as a national brand by launching ABC DooDaa nationwide. I feel that I can bring this expertise to the Media Marketing Co-ordinator role and help XYZ Corp achieve it's goal of doubling it's customer base every year for the next three years.

6.What do you know about this industry?

Answer : The telecommunications industry is currently going through a period of rapid expansion. The major industry players are positioning themselves for the delivery of the next generation of telecommunication services. New developments in mobile, broadband and satellite communications mean that it's an incredibly exciting time to be in the industry. I've no doubt that the telecommunications industry will be a driving force of the worldwide economy in the 21st century. I know that XYZ Corp intends to be a frontrunner in that expansion. For that reason, this job is highly attractive.

7. Why would you like to work for me?

Answer : 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.

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

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

Answer :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.

9. What salary do you think you deserve?

Answer :Having worked in the advertising industry for seven years, I bring a valuable combination of expertise, experience and dedication to each new job. I expect that a compensation towards the top of the salary range for this position would adequately reflect the value of my skills.

10. What is your salary history? Do you expect that pattern to continue?

Answer 1 :(Candidate with good salary increases)

In the four years of my employment at ABC & Co I was very happy with my salary growth. My most recent increase was a 15% rise after the successful completion of a year-long project. I feel that the increase reflected my performance and the extra responsibilities I assumed during the course of the project. I hope XYZ Corp is an organization that rewards excellent performances in a similar fashion. Is it?

Answer 2 :(Candidate with disappointing salary increases)

My average salary increase during the course of my career has been 6%, although as I moved jobs and assumed extra responsibilities that increase has invariably been higher. Unfortunately I was disappointed with the salary increases at my last job, which averaged 2.5% . This was due to a firm-wide rigid salary structure that I felt did not reward excellent employees over those that made a significantly worse effort. This is one of the reasons that I have decided to [look for a job](#) with a more ambitious company where I will be rewarded according to my performance.

11. What concerns you about this job?

Answer:I have no concerns about this job. I believe it closely matches my skill set and is a natural progression in [my career](#). I look forward to the [challenge](#) but am confident that I can make a success of this role.

12. What concerns you about this _____ company?

Answer:I have no concerns about this _____ company. My research has shown that ABC Corp is dedicated to the development and advancement of its staff. I've also learnt that the benefits package is one of the best within the industry.

13. How long would it take before you could contribute to this [] company?

Answer: I'd need to get a better idea of the full responsibilities associated with this job, along with an idea of the complexities of each.

14. When would you expect your next promotion?

[]

Answer: It's difficult to give an exact time without knowing the personnel structure within XYZ Corp and specifically the line of responsibility associated with this position. However, I'm an ambitious person and through hard work, dedication, and with the guidance of a good manager, I aim to gain my next promotion as soon as possible, ideally ahead of 'normal' timeframes.

15. Why are you seeking a new job?

[]

Answer: I've worked with ABC & Co for three years. During that time I've achieved all of the goals I set myself and I've enjoyed every minute. Now, however, my []

aspirations extend beyond those of ABC & Co. I would like to tackle a new challenge in a different environment.

16. Where do you see this [] company going?

[]

Answer: XYZ Corp is the number three firm in the corporate security sector. The []

company does not hide the fact that it wants to lead the sector within two years. I []

believe that the firm can achieve this. It's a young [] company with a dynamic workforce and a tremendous growth rate. XYZ Corp's bright future make it a very attractive place to work.

17. If you were offered this job, what factors will dictate whether you accept it or not?

[]

Answer: I'm at various stages of the interview process with a number of firms at []

the moment. My preferred position will be in a [] company that offers a challenging environment, a prospect for promotion, and a rewarding working experience. It's important to me that I work for a [company](#) with bright prospects and strong desire for success. Obviously XYZ Corp is one of my preferred companies.

18. This is a much bigger [] company than you've ever worked at. How do you feel about that?

[]

Answer: I'm very excited. I've worked at three small or medium sized companies

during [] my career and while there have been different challenges at each, I've [] always been successful. I'm looking for a new [] challenge in a large organization where I can apply my talents. This position in XYZ Corp certainly matches what I'm looking for []

19. This is a much smaller [] company than you've ever worked at. How do you feel about that?

[]
Answer:It's great. I've learnt a lot working in a large organization and I'm looking forward to applying my knowledge and experience in a smaller arena. I'm under no illusions that the task ahead will be every bit as challenging as my previous role, if not more so, but it's a [] challenge that I'd relish.

20. What do you know about our products?

[]
Answer:I know that XYZ Soft specialize in the development of software solutions for small and medium sized businesses. The firm's best-selling products are leaders in the field - the XYZ [Project Management Tool](#) and the XYZ Personnel Management Tool. I feel that XYZ Soft has a solid product and customer base upon which it can build in the future. I understand that the firm's aim is to develop existing and new products with the aim of breaking into the Corporate sector. It's an ambitious aim but one that I believe XYZ Soft are more than capable of achieving. A major attraction of this position is the opportunity it offers to be a part of the challenging and exciting times ahead at XYZ Soft.

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21. Why did you apply for this job?

Why do you want this [] position?

What interests you about this [] position?

Answer :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.

22. What separates this company from our competitors?

Answer :ABC Corp spent much of the eighties and nineties among the top seven [engineering](#)

companies in the state. It is now the undisputed leader in five states with aspirations to become the leading company in the sector countrywide. That tells me that the company is highly ambitious, with a commitment to excellence in every department that enables it to meet, and indeed surpass, its aspirations. ABC Corp is now the company that its competitors aspire to become. That is what separates this company from its competitors.

23. What attracts you to this company?

What interests you about this company?

Answer :ABC Corp is a leading national software vendor. It has set itself aggressive targets to achieve in the near to medium term. In particular, the firm aims to become the leading vendor on

the Internet within three years. I respect the history of the firm from a small start-up to one of the largest employers in the state. I also respect the principles upon which it has

grown. The firm has achieved magnificent results to date and I would like to help it achieve its goals in the future.

24. Do you feel overqualified for this job?

Answer :I don't think there's such a thing as being over-qualified for a job. Every position brings with it a new environment, new people and new challenges. I feel that the skills I would bring to a new job can only help me to do a better job, and would in no way hinder the challenges I would face.

25. Do you feel underqualified for this job?

Answer :I attended weekend computer courses at my local district college for three years. It has changed me from someone who was scared of using a computer into a very competent computer user. My training has enabled me to gain promotion into a senior administrative role in my current job.

26. What courses/classes have you taken to stay ahead in your field?

Answer :I attended weekend computer courses at my local district college for three years. It has changed me from someone who was scared of using a computer into a very competent computer user. My training has enabled me to gain promotion into a senior administrative role in my current job.

27. What educational goals do you currently have?

Answer :I enjoy sailing very much. In the near future I plan to begin studying in order to become a qualified yachtsman. My ultimate goal is to become sufficiently experienced that I could skipper a crew in a competitive race.

28. Have you completed your education?

Answer :I believe that I've finished my formal school and college education. Right now I'm focusing on my career and on being as good at my job as I possibly can. I enjoy learning and I

think it's essential in both personal and career development. Ideally, I hope that the firm I join will encourage growth and learning through in-house and/or external training. I strongly believe that the most important component of learning occurs 'on the job' where you learn from your peers, manager and others around you. In summary, my answer is 'No', I very much hope that my education is not over.

29. What did you like most about college?

Answer : I enjoyed many things about college. It was a new challenge and an opportunity for me to expand my horizons both educationally and personally. Perhaps the most enjoyable aspect was the chance to meet new people from different backgrounds. Of course the social aspect of college was immense fun, but I also relished collaborating with other people with different specializations from me.

30. What did you like least about college?

Answer : It may seem a bit premature, but I would very much like to develop my [project management](#) and team leadership skills. I would very much like to take responsibility for a project or team in the next twelve months and I think developing those skills now would make the transition easier.

31. What skills do you need to develop most?

Answer : It may seem a bit premature, but I would very much like to develop my project management and team leadership skills. I would very much like to take responsibility for a project or team in the next twelve months and I think developing those skills now would make the transition easier.

32. Do you have any financial qualifications?

Answer 1: Yes, I took a finance module for two semesters in college. I've been surprised how useful my financial knowledge has been during my career. It has helped me schedule project budgets, analyze financial reports and prepare financial projections. There's no doubt that I'm a better manager for having this knowledge.

Answer 2: I haven't had the opportunity to take any formal financial training yet. However I've had an informal training through the various project management roles I've fulfilled. I've gained some very good experience projecting budgets and preparing financial statements and I would feel comfortable undertaking similar duties.

33. Do you have any IT (Information Technology) qualifications?

Answer 1: Yes, I took a computer applications module for two semesters in college. It's helped give me a better knowledge of how computers, operating systems and a wide range of software packages work. I've been able to apply this knowledge when tackling problems.

Answer 2: I haven't had the opportunity to take any formal IT training yet. However, I've used computers extensively at every job I've had and I'm very much at home using a word processor, spreadsheet, database and project management software. I have a computer at home too which I use to track my family's finances and to access the Internet. I'm very comfortable using computers.

34. Would you object to attending training seminars in your own time?

Answer : Not at all. I'm looking for a company with an active training program, and I'm always willing to attain new skills. Other company's I've interviewed with host training within the working day. Is it XYZ Corp company policy to always hold training outside of working hours?

35. Why did you select your college or university?

Answer : I was glad to be accepted at my number one choice college. I spent quite a lot of time researching colleges with biochemistry faculties. It became obvious that this college commanded a tremendous reputation for its pioneering work and is one of the best in its field in the country.

36. What are your strengths? How do they help you?

Answer : 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.

37. What are your weaknesses? How do you overcome them?

Answer :I'm always ready to learn new skills and adapt my methods to become better at what I do. If I become aware of a weakness in my knowledge base or in the way I perform my duties, I do my best to fill that gap whether through formal training, informal training, or directly from my colleagues.

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

Answer :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.

39. Tell me about yourself.

Answer :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.

40. Do you like to work as part of a team or alone. Why?

Answer :I work very well when I'm part of a team, I value the ability to bounce ideas off other people and also provide my input, whenever it's wanted. Of course I'm more than capable of working alone whenever I'm required to do so too.

41. What motivates you?

Answer :A little appreciation for a successfully completed work. If failed in that task, I am motivated to do it [better than ever](#). If completed successfully, the success motivates me to go in for a tougher project/work which is a new challenge for me. As it is, winning challenges is the spirit in me.

42. [How do you handle stress?](#)

Answer :I'm not the type of person that becomes stressed very easily. However, if in an extreme circumstance I did start to become stressed, I would look to the cause of it and attempt to identify a solution. I would certainly [not be afraid](#) to look to others for their input and assistance. In a [working environment](#) I think stress comes around from pressurized situations. In such cases the best solution is often one of situation management until the crisis abates.

43. I'm worried about your lack of _____ experience.

Answer :I don't feel you've anything to worry about. While I've only been a designated team leader for one year, I've spent eighteen months as the most experienced member of the team and in many situations I effectively led the team. I very much enjoy team management and am confident in my own abilities.

44. What do you like to do in your spare time?

Answer :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.

**45. You've been in the same firm for a number of years.
you'll adjust to a new one?**

How do you think

Answer :Sample Answer(s) I'm looking forward to the challenge. Even in [this day and age](#) there is a lot of value in staying in the one company for a prolonged period of time. In my current role I have had an opportunity to work with many people throughout the company and build great working and personal relationships. In addition, I had enough time in each area I worked to make a real and lasting difference.

Also, I'd also like to think the firm's decision to retain my services for so long is indicative of the esteem in which I'm held. However, it's now time for me to move on so I can take the skills I've attained at ABC Corp and apply them in a new environment.

46. How often do you miss deadlines?

Answer :As infrequently as possible. In the reality it may be impossible to achieve every single deadline, however in my experience good planning and project management can alleviate late deliveries.

47. Why should we hire you?

Answer :I believe that I've got the skills and enthusiasm required to fulfill the role that's available. I think I'd be a valuable asset to the firm and, from my experience, I'm sure I'd make a positive contribution to the company's ambitions.



48. How do you measure 'success'?

Answer :I measure my own personal success by how well I've achieved the goals I set myself. I feel I've been successful to date - I attended my college of choice, I graduated with a degree, and I've spent three successful years at XYZ Bros. The key in being successful is to set challenging yet attainable goals, while always remaining focused on what you hope to achieve. My current goal is to succeed at this interview.

49. In what kind of work environment are you most productive?

Answer :Tailor your answer to the job. For example, if in doing your job you're required to lock the lab doors and work alone, then indicate that you enjoy being a team player when needed, but also enjoy working independently. If you're required to attend regular project planning and status meetings, then indicate that you're a strong team player and like being part of a team.



50. How do you handle pressure?

Answer : This is sort of a double whammy, because you're likely already stressed from the interview and the interviewer can see if you're handling it well or not. Everybody feels stress, but the degree varies. Saying that you whine to your shrink, kick your dog or slam down a fifth of Jack Daniels are not good answers. Exercising, relaxing with a good book, socializing with friends or turning stress into productive energy are more along the lines of the "correct" answers.

51. How do you plan to achieve those goals?

Answer :I plan on gaining additional skills by taking related classes and continuing my involvement with a variety of professional associations.

I noticed that XYZ company (the company you are interviewing with) provides in-house training for employees and I would certainly be interested in taking classes that would be relevant.

I will continue my professional development by participating in conferences, attending seminars, and continuing my education.

52. You haven't worked for a long time. Are you sure you can handle this job?

Answer : You may have gaps in your employment due to family responsibilities. Perhaps you've been a homemaker or a caregiver. You may have retired and then decided to work again.

Memorize one phrase or short sentence to explain your situation. Then emphasize the experience you've gained.

53. What kind of worker are you?

Answer : Again, no one is perfect. Showing that you tackle every assignment with all of your energy and talents is admirable but mention that you also learn from your mistakes.

54. What causes you to lose your temper?

Answer : Everybody has a low boiling point on some particular issue. Pick one of yours; something safe and reasonable. People who are late to meetings, blame shifting, broken appointments and office "back-stabbing" are suitable responses. Don't say that you never fly off the handle. You won't be believed.

55. What did you like most about your previous job?

What did you like least about your previous job?

Answer : An employer can evaluate the type of worker you will be by the items you choose. Cite specifics. You are also providing clues about the environment you seek. What you liked most can include a strong teamwork atmosphere, high-level of creativity, and attainable deadlines. What you liked least should include any situations you are unlikely to encounter in your new position.

56. Your resume suggests that you may be over-qualified or too experienced for this position. What's Your opinion?

Answer : Emphasize your interest in establishing a long-term association with the organization, and say that you assume that if you perform well in his job, new opportunities will open up for you. Mention that a strong company needs a strong staff. Observe that experienced executives are always at a premium. Suggest that since you are so wellqualified, the employer will get a fast return on his investment. Say that a growing, energetic company can never have too much talent.

57. How long would you stay with us?

Answer : Say that you are interested in a career with the organization, but admit that you would have to continue to feel challenged to remain with any organization. Think in terms of, "As long as we both feel achievement-oriented."

58. Tell me about a time you had to handle multiple responsibilities. How did you organize the work you needed to do?

Answer : While attending college, I also worked at a law firm. I was successful because I practiced good time-management skills and I made a to-do list every day. As I completed each task, I checked it off the list. It is funny how something so simple can keep you so organized. As a result of my to-do lists, I was able to visualize my daily progress.

59. Describe a situation in which you found that your results were not up to your professor's or supervisor's expectations. What happened? What action did you take?

Answer : Recently I was asked to put together a proposal for a migration of network systems. Misunderstanding my boss, I thought it was just an informal paper. When I presented it to him days later, he was upset with the quality since it had to be presented to our VP. I explained my misunderstanding, apologized, reworked the paper, and had it back to him with enough time for him to review it before he presented it successfully at the meeting.

60. What would you do with your life if money was not a concern?

Answer : I am not depending on money to make me happy. What makes me happy is having a satisfying job that provides challenge and new situations daily.

61. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?

Answer : "Making a more significant contribution to whatever organisation I'm working for. To have developed new skills, abilities, maturity - perhaps a little wisdom even. To have become better qualified in whatever way suits the [situation](#) and opportunities I have. To be better regarded by my peers, and respected by my superiors as someone who can continue to

increase the value and scale of [what I do](#) for the organisation."

"I'd like more responsibility, because that's a result of [personal growth](#) and progression, and it's important for my personal satisfaction."

"I have no set aspirations about money and reward - if I contribute and add value to the

organisation then generally increased reward follows - you get out what you put in."

"Long term I want to make the most of my abilities - if possible to build a serious career, but in [this day and age](#) nothing is certain or guaranteed; things can change. I'll do my best and believe that opportunities will arise which will enable me to keep contributing, increasing my worth, and developing my ability in a way that benefits the [organisation](#) and me."

Employers will respond well if they see that you are mature, independent, self-motivated; that you will make a positive and growing contribution, and that you understand that reward (financial, promotion, [responsibility](#), etc) will always be based on the quality and value of your input.

62. How do you make yourself indispensable to a company?

Answer : "We are looking for both technical and interpersonal competence," says Doris J. Smith-Brooks, recruiting and advertising manager for Boeing Co. in Seattle, Washington.

Smith-Brooks explains that students who have interned or completed cooperative education assignments generally answer the question best because they know what working for a company entails.

63. What's your greatest strength?

Answer : "Don't just talk about your strength," relate it to the position," Ferguson says. "Let them know you are a qualified candidate."

64. What's your greatest weakness?

Answer : "Say something along the lines of, 'I have difficulty with this thing, and these are the strategies I use to get around it,'" Ferguson says. "For example, you could say, 'I'm not the most organized of individuals, so I always answer my e-mails and phone calls right away. I'm aware of the problem and I have strategies to deal with it.'"

65. Where do you see yourself five (ten or fifteen) years from now?

Answer : Explain your career-advancement goals that are in line with the job for which you are interviewing. Your interviewer is likely more interested in how he, she or the company will

benefit from you achieving your goals than what you'll get from it, but it goes hand in hand to a large degree. It's not a good idea to tell your potential new boss that you'll be going after his or her job, but it's okay to mention that you'd like to earn a senior or management position.

66. Why did you leave your previous jobs (if any)?

Answer :The interviewer may want to know if you had any problems on your last job. If you did not have any problems, simply give a reason, such as: relocated away from job; company went out of business; laid off; temporary job; no possibility of advancement; wanted a job better suited to your skills.

If you did have problems, be honest. Show that you can accept responsibility and learn from your mistakes. You should explain any problems you had (or still have) with an employer, but don't describe that employer in negative terms. Demonstrate that it was a learning experience that will not affect your future work.

67. What major challenges have you encountered and how did you deal with them?

Answer :When going to an interview, you should always be prepared to speak about difficult situations that you have encountered in the past and how you were able to effectively resolve

them. It is good to remember at least three. And remember, the situation should always reflect an attribute that you think the employer/interviewer would admire.

68. Tell me how you handled an ethical dilemma.

Answer :Suppose you worked at a bank and a long-time customer wanted a check cashed right away but didn't have the fund balance in his account to cover the check, Martinez says, explaining that if the bank's policy prohibited cashing checks in that manner, the teller would have a choice of violating bank policy or alienating a good customer.

Martinez says the best way to handle such a situation would be to go to a supervisor, explain the situation, and ask for advice. He adds that students who can offer a situation that they handled correctly the first time can explain how they learned from making mistakes.

Explain that the next time, this was how you handled it, he says.

69. Tell me about the culture at your last company/employer.

Answer :If the past culture was good then explain how and why in terms that the interviewee is likely to identify with, for example:

"The culture encouraged people to develop, grow, take responsibility. People were coached and mentored towards quality and productive effort. All of this helped me a great deal because I identify with these values, and respond to these opportunities."

A good answer, in referring to a non-supportive culture would be to express the positive aspects (eg lots of freedom for me to take initiative, responsibility, find new ways to

contribute, a free market allowing the good workers to naturally excel and develop reputation and internal working relationships, etc.)

70. Tell me about your life at College or University (or even your time in your previous job).

Answer : The question is an opportunity for you to demonstrate the qualities that the interviewer is seeking in for the job, so orientate your answer towards these expectations (without distorting the truth obviously).

In your answer, emphasise the positive behaviour, experience and achievements (ideally backed up with examples and evidence) which will impress the interviewer because of its relevance to the role requirements.

The interviewer is looking for the same capabilities and behaviour in your college (or university or previous job) life that they want in the job.

Your emphasis should be on your achievements, and how you achieved them, that are relevant to the job requirements.

Interviewers with special interest in behaviour and personality may also use a question like this to assess your self-awareness and maturity, in the way you consider your answer and relate it to your own experience and development.

71. What did you achieve in your last job?

Answer : Prepare a number of relevant examples and explain one (two or three if they're punchy and going down well). Make sure you feature as the instigator, or the factor that made the difference. Examples must lead to significant organisational benefits; making money, saving money/time, improving quality, anticipating or creatively solving problems, winning/keeping customers, improving efficiency.

72. Give me some examples of how you have adapted your own communicating style to deal with different people and situations.

Answer : Prepare this as one of your strengths, as there's not a single job that won't benefit from good adaptive communication skills. Give examples of how you've been detailed and given written confirmation for people who need it. Give examples of how you verbally enthuse and inspire the people who respond to challenge and recognition. Think of other examples of adapting your style to suit the recipients. Give examples when you've had to be task-driven, process driven, people-driven, and how you change your style accordingly. A chance for you to truly shine.

73. What do you find difficult in work/life/relationships (etc)?

Answer : Pick a relatively irrelevant skill and say that you don't find it as easy as you'd like, so you're working on it (don't just make this up - think about it and be truthful). Don't own up to a weakness in an area that's important to the role. As with the weaknesses question, you can state certain difficulties because they are actually quite acceptable, even commendable, they'd include: suffering fools gladly, giving up an impossible task, tolerating unkind behaviour like bullying, having to accept I can't help certain big problems in the world, etc.

74. How do you plan and organise your work?

Answer : Planning and writing a plan is very important. I think how best to do things before I do them, if it's unknown territory I'd take advice, learn from previous examples - why re-invent the wheel? I always prioritise, I manage my time, and I understand the difference between urgent and important. For very complex projects I'd produce quite a detailed schedule and plan review

stages. I even plan time-slots for activities that aren't in themselves organised, like thinking time, and being creative, solving problems, etc.

75. How many hours a week do you work/prefer to work?

Answer :It varies according to the situation. I plan and organise well, so unless there's a crisis or unusual demand I try to finish at a sensible time so as to have some time for my family/social life/outside interests. It's important to keep a good balance. I start earlier than most people - you can get a lot done before the phones start ringing. When the pressure's on though I'm happy to work as long as it takes to get the job done. It's not about the number of hours - it's the quality of the work that you do; how productive you are.

76. Do you make mistakes?

Answer :Be honest. Yes of course on occasions, but I obviously try not to, and I always try to correct them and learn from them.

77. (Follow above question with) - Can you share your mistakes with others?

Answer :Absolutely I can - I get the guidance I need, and it may help prevent others from making the same mistake.

78. How to do measure your own effectiveness?

Answer :By the results that I achieve, and that I achieve them in the most positive way. If there isn't an existing measure of this I'll usually create one.

79. What personal goals do you have and how are you going about achieving them?

Answer :Prepare for this - be able to state your personal and career goals - keep them reasonable, achievable and balanced. Explain how you see the steps to reaching your aims. An important part of achieving progress is planning how to do it. Be able to demonstrate that you've thought and planned, but also show that you are flexible and adaptable, because it's impossible to predict the future - the important thing is to learn and develop, and take advantage of opportunities as they come along.

80. What makes you mad?

Answer :Nothing really makes me mad - it's not a good way to deal with anything. Certain things disappoint or upset me - rudeness, arrogance, spitefulness (pick any obvious nasty traits or behaviours, particularly behaviours that you believe your interviewer will personally dislike too.)

81. What do you think of your last boss/employer?

Answer :Don't be critical. If possible be generous with praise and say why, giving positive reasons. If there was a conflict don't lie, but describe fairly and objectively without pointing blame.

82. How would you react if I told you that your interview, so far, was terrible?

Answer : He is trying to find out how you react to criticism.

Well, I'd be quite surprised and rather sad. I have put a lot of work into preparing for this interview and getting this job is very important to me.

May I ask you, what parts of my presentation did you consider were not up to an acceptable standard? If you could pinpoint these areas to me, maybe I could go over them again and clear up any misunderstandings that might exist. I'm sure that's where the problem lies"

83. What influenced you to choose this career?

Answer :My past experiences have shown me that I enjoy facing and overcoming the challenge of making a sale. Without a doubt, once I have practiced my presentation and prepared myself for objections, I feel very confident approaching people I don't know and convincing them that

they need my product. Lastly, I like sales because my potential for success is limited only by how much of myself I dedicate toward my goal. If any profession is founded on self-determinism, it surely must be sales.

84. Which is more important to you, the job itself or your salary?

Answer :A salary commensurate with my experience and skills is important, but it's only one piece of the package. Many other elements go into making up a compensation package, but more importantly, it's critical to me to enjoy what I'm doing, fit into the corporate culture, and feel I'm making a genuine contribution.