

Managerial Interviews

When interviewing for managerial positions, the candidate's ability to lead, plan, and get along with others must be determined. Here are example questions that can reveal these desirable characteristics.

- Why do you think a team of people, such as a sports team or a work team, may or may not work well together?

- Tell us about your management style; touch on how you manage people, encourage teamwork, and set direction.

- Describe an ideal supervisor.

- What is your own management philosophy?

- How have you participated in planning processes for your current company?

- Is it more important to be a detail oriented person or a big picture person?

- What was the most challenging personnel issue you've had to handle? How did you deal with it?

- Describe a time when you have encountered questionable business practices. How did you handle the situation?

- A new organization-wide policy is to be implemented. You do not agree with this new policy. How would you discuss this policy with your staff?

- Describe for me a decision you made which would normally have been made by your supervisor. What was the outcome?

- Discuss and differentiate between remediation, corrective action, and discipline.

Explain, step by step, how you have handled an employee who had performance problems.

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Why should employees seek to improve their knowledge and skill base? How would you motivate them to do so?

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What coaching or mentoring experience have you had? How did you determine the appropriate way to coach or mentor an individual? Have you ever coached or mentored a team of people? What were the results?

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Managing people requires good communication skills; both writing and speaking skills are important. When it comes to giving information to employees that can be done either way, do you prefer to write a memo OR talk to an employee?

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When making a decision to fire an employee, do you find it easy because of the company's needs or difficult because of the employee's needs?

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Managing requires motivating employees, as well as accomplishing tasks. Do you find it more natural to point out what's wrong so employees can accomplish tasks competently or to praise employees for their work and then point out what may need correcting?

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Managers need good information to make the right decisions. Do you tend to gather information up to a deadline in order to make a better-informed decision or gather just enough information to make a good decision quickly?

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What is the largest number of employees you have supervised? What were their job functions?

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Are you best at dealing with details and day-to-day operations or with concepts, envisioning and future planning? Describe several examples.

Few of these questions have a right or wrong answer. Instead, they are intended to probe the candidate's intellect and suitability for the position.

You should consider the position, your company's culture and your organizational structure when evaluating a candidate's answers. The applicant's reasoning and thought processes are often more important than the answer itself.

The questions in this section are not applicable to every situation. Select those that make sense for the specific position.