



Job-Specific Interview Template

Position: _____

Date: _____

Preliminary Statements:

- Thank you for your time.
- We have a list of questions we have prepared and will ask every applicant the same questions.
- We will go through each question, then give you the opportunity to ask a few questions.
- If you are ready to get started, let's begin.

Sales Representative

1) **Could you tell me about a situation when you had to be assertive with a customer, co-worker, or manager in a past job?**

Look for an example that demonstrates a bold approach to solving the problem, without crossing the line from assertive to aggressive. Applicants should be able to resolve issues, not force a decision on someone.

2) **Could you give me an example of a situation where you had to deal with a difficult person (co-worker, customer, etc.). How did you resolve that situation?**

Examples will vary depending on the level of experience. With any conflict, a collaborative problem-solving approach is best: listening to all sides, maintaining composure, balancing emotion and logic, trying to come up with a mutually beneficial solution. Avoid applicants who blame or withdraw from conflict.

3) **Could you give me an example of when a customer, vendor, or co-worker got angry at you. How did you respond?**

Applicants may not be forthcoming about mistakes that they have made. The point is to "learn from mistakes" and ensure that situation does not occur again.

4) **Could you tell me about your actions in taking ownership of a special project or unique situation?**

Look for the applicant's examples of spotting an issue and taking ownership for fixing the situation without being told to do it.

5) **What drives you and how has your motivation contributed to a specific outcome?**

This question reveals insight on their motivational factors. Look for a self-awareness of their own motivations and an understanding of how that has helped or hurt them. Even if the example reveals an obstacle, this example will reveal a high level of self-awareness, which is a strong attribute.

6) **In a past job, what was your role on the team and how did you contribute to the team's success?**

Look for examples of offering support, taking on additional tasks, going above and beyond. Consider how much credit the applicant takes and whether they credit the team for results.

7) **How do you work with others to get what you want?**

Most positions require the ability to persuade, negotiate, or at minimum communicate positively. Look for examples of the applicant listening to the needs of the customer (internal or external), overcoming objections, offering options, and determining the best result.

8) **What experience do you have working in this industry?**

The applicant may not have specific industry experience, but hopefully they will be able to find some connection between your industry and their past experience(s). If they don't have any past experience in this industry, are you

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able to observe whether or not they did any research, conduct interviews, or at a minimum, review the website?

9) How have you acquired knowledge about our products and services?

A well-prepared applicant will take the initiative to research your products, services, competitive advantage, management team, and other details about your organization. Consider how in-depth their knowledge is and try to assess how much research they did for the interview. If it seems that the interviewee knows a lot about the organization they're interviewing for, it could indicate their determination to get a job there.

10) Could you tell me about how your achievements in past jobs could help us in this job?

Are the accomplishments something that could be useful in this job or completely unrelated? Look for a balance of confidence and humility.

11) Could you name a recent success you've had in dealing with (vendor, customer, etc.)? How did you accomplish it?

This question will provide insight into the applicant's level of authority and actual accomplishments. It's an easy starting point for the interview to get them talking and gaining confidence by talking about a success.

12) Could you give me an example of how you had to resolve a customer complaint? What was the outcome?

Internal or external customer examples will work to demonstrate how the applicant resolved a customer issue appropriately.

13) Could you tell me about how one of your closer customer relations developed?

Developing relationships with internal or external customers is important in every job. Examples should provide insight on specific steps the applicant took to develop rapport, get to know the customers' needs, and develop a productive work relationship.

14) What methods do you use to make decisions? Please give me an example of your approach.

Does the answer reveal a systematic approach to decision making, using facts and evidence to support opinion? Look for the applicant to reveal a specific example of a decision they made that considered the pros and cons of the situation.

15) Could you tell me about a time when you were held accountable for reaching a goal?

Look for answers that reveal a goal-oriented person, one that is honest and credible about their abilities and are determined to achieve a goal.

16) How do you define success? How are you working towards your goals?

The answer should reflect the opportunities of the position; for example if they respond money and power for a low-level position, this is not a good match.

Points to Wrap Up:

- What questions do you have for me?
- Next steps...
- Don't make any promises about the job.
- Thank you for your time. We appreciate it.