

Interview Prep

Questions You Should Be Prepared to Answer

FRESNO STATE

Jordan College of Agricultural
Sciences and Technology



Your Education

1. Why did you select this university for your academic preparation?
2. Why did you choose to major in _____?
3. What is your overall grade point average?
4. What is the grade point average in your major?
5. Have you changed your major while in college?
6. What subjects did you like best? Why?
7. What subject did you like most? Why?
8. What was your greatest strength as a student?
9. What leadership positions did you hold?
10. What extracurricular activities have you participated in?
11. Describe your most rewarding college experience?
12. Who was your best teacher, and why?
13. If you were to start over, what would you change about your education?
14. Do you feel you have attained the best scholastic record of which you are capable?
15. If I were to ask your professors to describe you in three words, what would they be?
16. What are your plans for graduate school (if any)?
17. How has your college experience prepared you for a career?

Your Work Experience

1. Describe situations where you used your leadership skills.
2. Have you completed any internships? What did you gain from the experience?
3. Tell me about your work experience? How has it prepared you for this position?
4. What have you learned from your mistakes?
5. What do you expect from a supervisor?

Your Career Goals

1. Why are you interested in this position?
2. Why should we hire you?
3. Do you have any geographical restrictions?
4. What goals have you established for yourself?
5. What are your salary expectations?
6. Where do you expect to be in five or ten years?
7. What do you know about our organization?
8. What attracted you to our company?
9. What position in our organization interests you?
10. Are you willing to travel?
11. What qualifications do you have that would make you particularly qualified for this job?
12. How did you happen to apply for this job?
13. When are you available for employment?
14. Describe your ideal job. Describe your ideal boss. What would you consider an ideal company culture?
15. Describe your relationship with your last boss?

Your Personality and Other Concerns

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What do you do in your spare time?
3. What do you consider your strengths and weaknesses?
4. How do you overcome your weaknesses?
5. How do you handle stress and pressure?
6. What motivates you?
7. Have you ever used drugs?
8. Do you have any physical disabilities that would impair your employment with us?
9. Have I missed anything?

Behavioral Interview Questions

1. Describe how in a previous job or school situation you worked as a member of a team, and how you were specifically able to contribute to a project's success.
2. Give me an example of how you were able to meet a deadline.
3. We all occasionally miss deadlines. I'm interested in hearing about a time when this happened to you. What happened, and how did you handle to fallout?

More Behavioral Questions

4. This can get stressful around here as they do in most businesses. Can you give me an example of how you were able to work successfully when things got very stressful on your current job or in a past job?
5. Describe a situation when you were faced with conflicting priorities. How did you determine what was important and the order in which you would get each done?
6. Tell me about a situation on a past job where you were able to identify a problem. Then explain what you did about it.
7. Describe a time when you made a mistake. What did you do about it, and what did you learn from it?
8. Tell me about a time when your boss criticized you. Did you think it was fair? How did you handle it?
9. Tell me about a time when you disagreed with your boss. What was the nature of the disagreement, and what did you do about it?
10. We're all sometimes faced with tough choices when a boss expects us to do something and it conflicts with plans or demands in our personal lives. Can you describe a time on a previous job when you had to make such a choice and what you learned from it?
11. We all have to work with people - bosses, coworkers, or customers - who are difficult. Would you describe for me one of the most difficult people or situations you've had to deal with and, specifically, how you handled that person or situation?
12. Describe a time when you took the initiative - that is, when you did something that you were not expected to do or asked to do by your boss and how she or he reacted.

What Questions Are Illegal?

The California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) prohibits employment practices that discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of:

- race,
- religious creed,
- color,
- national origin,
- ancestry,
- physical disability (including HIV-positive status) or mental disability,
- medical condition (specifically cancer-related conditions and genetic characteristics),
- marital status,
- sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, and gender identity),
- age (40 years and older),
- or sexual orientation.

It also includes discrimination based on a perception that a person is a member of a protected class or is associated with a person who is, or is perceived to be, a member of a protected class (CA Gov. Code Sec. 12940 et seq.).

The FEHA specifically prohibits employers from asking questions about these characteristics, either on an application form or in a job interview, unless the characteristic is related to the applicant's ability to perform the job. The FEHA applies to employers with five or more employees.

Questions about physical fitness are allowed if they are directly related and pertinent to the job. The Act also prohibits any non-related inquiry: for example, what your parents do, whether you rent or own a home, if you are planning to be married. This law ensures that an employer makes hiring decisions based on your skills, attitude, and ability to do the job.

Questions to Ask the Recruiter at a Job Fair

1. What does _____ mean for your company? (Do your research on trends and issues that affect the company and ask this question based on this research.)
2. What do you feel are the future trends in this industry?
3. Do you have plans for expansion?
4. What are the opportunities for advancement?
5. What types of training programs do you offer?
6. What qualities are you looking for in prospective employees?
7. What type of educational background do you look for in your employees?
8. What are the biggest challenges for this position?
9. How would you describe the working environment within this company?
10. What do you enjoy most about working for the company?
11. May I contact you with further questions? Do you have a business card?

Questions You Should Be Prepared to Ask During an Interview

1. Why is the position open?
2. Where will this job be performed? Is based at headquarters or is it field-based?
3. What is the extent of travel required on this job?
4. What do you see as the primary focus for this position? What is the greatest challenge?
5. When do you want someone in the position?
6. Can you describe the best performer that you have on your team in a similar role?

The Key to Interview Success is Preparation

Research the company by:

- Visiting the company's website.
- Viewing the company's LinkedIn profile.
- Follow the company through their social media - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and even Pinterest.
- Use your network to connect people who already work in the company. Fresno State Alumni are a great resource. The staff in the Office of Internships and Professional Experience for the Jordan College of Agricultural Science and Technology can assist you in connecting with Alumni.

You're thinking, "Great, I'll research the company, but what specifically do I need to research?" Research:

- The company's mission, products, services, their competitors, and the industry.
- Their recent achievements.
- Your interviewers.
- What to wear.

Need help? Give us a call at 559.278.4207 or email Mary Willis at mwillis@csufresno.edu.