
COMMONLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CO-OP

Miscellaneous

- Tell me about yourself. (#1 most frequently asked, similar to an elevator pitch.)
- How do you fit the qualifications for this position?
- Why are you interested in this position?
- How have you prepared yourself for this position?
- Why should we hire you?
- What do you know about this company/department?
- What are your professional goals? What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
- What's the most difficult challenge you have faced in life?
- How long can we expect you to stay with us?

Employment History/Skills

- What part of your co-op/previous position did you enjoy most/least?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Describe a typical day in your previous co-op/position.
- Which area of your performance has been criticized?
- How have you helped reduce costs in an organization or team project?
- What was your greatest achievement so far?
- Tell us how your experience, skills, coursework, and/or capabilities tie in with our job requirements.
- Have you ever done any _____ ? (a specific function that is mentioned in the job responsibilities, e.g. AutoCAD, budget forecasting, programming, purchasing, etc.)
- How does your current (or past) manager rate your performance?

Character Traits/Personality

- What are the reasons for your success?
- How would your friends describe you?
- What do you do when you have trouble solving a problem?
- How do you spend your spare time?
- Are you active in the community?
- What was the last book you read?
- What motivates you?
- What frustrates you the most? How do you handle it?

Behavioral Style Questions

- Tell me about a time you worked on a team and things didn't go so well. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time you managed a project. What was the process and the outcome?
- Tell me more about how you led and managed a team.
- Tell me about a time that you failed or did not meet a goal. What did you do?
- Tell me about a time you had to persuade others to consider your idea on how to solve a problem. What did you do?

Leadership/Management Style

- Describe your management style.
- How effective are you as a motivator?
- What decisions do you delegate?
- How do you foster teamwork?
- How do you handle confrontation?
- What are some things you and your manager disagreed about?
- What are some of the things your supervisor did that you liked? How about those you disliked?

Education

- Why did you choose your major/Wentworth Institute of Technology?
- What subject did you enjoy most? Least?
- Do your grades reflect your abilities? Why/Why not?
- What other activities were you involved in?
- What specialized training have you had?
- How did you finance your education?
- How have your education and training prepared you for this job?

Salary

- How much are you currently making?
- What are your salary expectations? How did you arrive at that figure?
- What do you consider satisfactory earnings professionally at this point?

Unusual Questions

- If you had all the money in the world, what would you do?
- What piece of advice or question would you ask the CEO of our company?
- If you were a kitchen utensil, which would you be and why?

Reminders

- Remember always provide examples of your work, skills and abilities.
- Speak slowly, clearly and enunciate.
- It is okay to ask the interviewer to repeat a question.
- If you didn't understand the question, you can ask the interviewer for clarification or to rephrase the question.
- If you need time to think about your answer, you can say, "What an interesting question! Let me think about that for a moment." and then take some time to compose your answer.
- If you blank on a question and can't answer it at the moment, it is okay to revisit it later in the interview by saying something like, "I'd like to revisit that earlier question re: X. I've thought about it and . . ." or answer it the thank you note.
- If they ask you something you just don't know, it is okay to say "I don't know, but I will look into that and get back to you." Then provide the answer in your thank you note.
- Note: Questions about salary come up less often in a co-op interview, but it is always better to be prepared.
- The first time they ask you about salary, don't let them make it about the money. Say something like: "For me, it is not about compensation, I am more interested in the development opportunity." If they ask you again, then never give a number, always give a range. Most co-ops are paid on an hourly basis.
- Take notes during your interview. They will be useful when writing your thank you notes and it indicates that you are diligent and interested in the position.
- Ask prepared questions (3-4) during your interview to express your interest and have at least one question that demonstrates that you've done research on the company.
- Always close the interview by thanking them, restate your interest in the position and why (top 3 qualifications that make you a strong candidate), ask for a business card or contact information so you can send a thank you note.