

MOUNT HOLYOKE

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Phone 413-538-2080/Fax 413-538-2081

Potential Questions for the Interviewing Process

Congratulations! Either you have scheduled an interview or are preparing for the inevitable by brushing up on possible areas that an employer might cover in an interview. Below is a list of questions that are potential interview questions. There is no way to guarantee exactly what questions may be asked, but this list can serve as a primer as to what types of questions to expect.

Personal Qualities

1. What are the most relevant and specific items in your background, which show you are uniquely qualified for this job?
2. What do you think you could present that would be a stronger asset than other candidates?
3. Why should we hire you?
4. What makes you want to be a _____?
5. How are you doing in your present job search?
6. What other organizations are you looking into?
7. What do you expect to get out of your career?
8. What aspects of a job are most important to you?
9. What are your goals for the next 4-5 years or ten years from today?
10. What is your greatest accomplishment to date, and why?
11. What do you consider to be your weakness?
12. What do you consider to be your strength?
13. How would you define success?
14. Describe a situation in which someone was unhappy with your performance and how you responded?
15. Do you read, speak, or write a foreign language?
16. How do you spend your spare time?
17. Tell me about the way you work under pressure.
18. Describe a team experience and your role on that team.

Interpersonal Skills

1. Describe a time when you were able to effectively communicate with a co-worker even though you may not have had a positive, personal relationship.
2. Tell me about a time when you needed to defend your ideas/projects in the face of opposition?
3. Describe a time when you and a good friend/co-worker were in a competitive situation. What happened?
4. How would you describe your work style?
5. How well do you work independently? With others?
6. How do you feel about routine work? Regular hours? Overtime work?

Drive, Ambition and Motivation

1. Give me an example when you were exceptionally motivated. Describe this experience.
2. Tell me about a time when you were told that a goal that you set was unattainable. What was your reaction?

3. We often have very long hours and we expect a great deal from your people. Describe a time when you went above and beyond the “call of duty”

Independence, Maturity, Stress

1. Describe a time when others looked to you for leadership and guidance. What was the situation and how did you conduct yourself?
2. Tell me about a situation in which you needed to juggle several high-priority tasks. What was the outcome?

Educational Background

1. Why did you decide on this course of study?
2. What quantitative courses did you take?
3. Which did you enjoy?
4. What elements of your major program appealed to you the most?
5. What areas of interest will you continue to pursue on your own?
6. How effectively do you balance your course load at school with any jobs or extracurricular activities that you may have?
7. Why did you choose Mount Holyoke College?
8. How has your field of study prepared you for this position?
9. Do you plan for further education?
10. Describe a time when you were faced with challenge and you developed an innovative way to meet that challenge.
11. Tell me about an innovative response to challenging work or client situation.
12. Describe a time when your analytical skills were put to the test. What was the challenge, how did you react, what was the outcome?
13. What project provided you with the greatest challenge?
14. How do you analyze information and arrive at decision? Give me an example.

Co-curricular Related

1. What activities have you been involved in?
2. Which one do you find most rewarding and why?
3. What is the most important thing you’ve learned from your co-curricular activities?
4. Tell me about a challenging situation you faced in _____, how did you deal with it?
5. Describe a situation where you had to take the initiative to start and begin a project, and what you learned from it?

Work Experience Related

1. How did you like your summer jobs, or internship?
2. What did you learn about yourself?
3. What was the most rewarding thing about this job?
4. What kind of boss would you prefer?

Industry Questions

1. What do you consider to be the most important skills for this position?
2. What personal characteristics are necessary for success in this field?
3. What is your understanding of this industry?
4. Where do you see our industry heading?

Specific Firm Questions

1. What contribution could you make to our firm?
2. Why are you interested in this organization?
3. What interests you about our products/services?
4. What do you know about our organization?
5. How do you judge a company when you're looking for a job?
6. What sources did you use to find out about us?
7. Why do you want to work for a large/ small firm?
8. Why do you want to work for an international/ local company?
9. What do you think you'll be doing in this position?
10. What do you think this job requires, and how do you match those requirements? Are you free to relocate? How do you feel about traveling?

Financial Institutions: Possible Questions

1. Do you regularly follow the national financial news or business news? (Wall Street Journal, WWW, Business Week, etc.)
2. What are your sources for current financial information?
3. Where do you see interest rates heading in the short term (six months, to one year) and in the long run?
4. What is the current rate on the 30-year US T-Bill?
5. Today, if you were to design a balanced portfolio of assets, what would it consist of and what would be the percentage of holdings among the assets (real estate, stocks, bonds, gold and precious metals)?
6. How was the Dow Jones doing as of yesterday?
7. Does the name Alan Greenspan mean anything to you?

Investment Banking

1. What is an "Investment Banker"?
2. What does one do?
3. What aspects of career in investment banking appeal to you most?
4. As a new employee at global firm, what would you bring into the firm?
5. Why do you think you would be successful?
6. How would you cope with a demanding schedule?
7. Are all investment bankers the same, or are their differences among investment bankers?
8. Many investment bankers today are given high profiles in the national news and in the business news. Are there any you can think of who presently command national attention?
9. What have they done to gain notoriety (publicity, fame)?
10. How does an investment banker calculate the rate of return on assets?
11. What is the difference between calculating the rate of return on assets and calculating cash flow?
12. In the past year, which mergers can you think of that rank among the all-time mega-deals in merger history?
13. What was the role of investment bankers in all of this?
14. What are your expectations for the first five years of your investment-banking career?

Questions for Employer

1. What are your plans for this department next year?
2. Which is the faster growing department in your company?
3. How did you enter this field?
4. What sorts of changes are occurring in your field?
5. How are employees assigned to projects?

Company Related

1. Beyond the statistics, what differentiates your firm from other firms?
2. How old is your organization?
3. Has your firm shown substantial and consistent growth?
4. What is the financial condition?
5. Are there any plans for expansion?
6. Who are your most immediate competitors?
7. What would you say are the objectives or “the mission” of the organization?
8. What do you like most or least about this organization?
9. What are the training opportunities available in the company?
10. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing the firm in the next five years?
11. What percentage of the managing directors are female or minorities?

Culture Related

1. How are decisions made in the organization—by “committee” or participatory management?
2. Would you say that people here feel more closely tied to their group, their division, or the firm as a whole?
3. How much contact and exposure to management is there?
4. How much freedom is given and discipline required of the new people?
5. Can I progress at my own pace or is it structured?

Career Path Related

1. How long does it take most people here to become managing directors? What’s the path?
2. Is there a definite career path in your organization?
3. How did you reach your current position?
4. Would you recommend it to others?

Other

1. What kind of person are you looking for?
2. Please describe the job responsibilities for me.
3. How often are performance reviews given?
4. What do you do in a typical workday?
5. What are your major responsibilities?
6. What do you deal with?
7. How many hours do you work in the average week?