

Sample Interview Questions

Although the same steps used to hire full-time employees can be followed to hire interns, employers may find that they need to adjust the interview format in order to fit the nature of the internship and the candidate's experiences.

Because students generally lack professional experiences, **internship interview questions should focus on goals**. Throughout the interview, ask questions that will help you determine if the internship you are offering will be an appropriate experience for the candidate to meet his or her career goals.

When hiring an intern, place as much effort into the selection process as you would hiring a full-time employee. An intern may become a future employee. You will be spend time and money to train the intern, so choose someone you believe would be a good fit in your organization in the future.

Focus on future goals in place of professional experience:

- How do you think this internship experience will prepare you for your career?
- What are your plans for after graduation?
- Where do you see yourself in five/ten years?
- What are your long term and short term goals?

Look for: Answers that indicate that the student has **thoughtfully considered his or her career path and is planning to pursue a career related to your industry after graduation**. In addition, an ideal internship candidate will express a strong interest in the educational and learning value of the opportunity rather than to simply to fulfill a requirement.

Inquire about academic experiences rather than professional:

- Tell me about a time when you had a heavy course load. How did you manage your time?
- How do you feel your campus involvement (if any) relates to the professional workplace?
- What has been your most rewarding college experience thus far?
- Why/how did you choose your major?
- What was your greatest achievement?
- What courses in your major have you completed thus far?

Look for: Answers that highlight the **student's decision-making skills** as well as his or her **ability to manage deadlines** and academic coursework. Also, look for a student who can **transfer the skills gained via campus involvement into the professional workplace**. It is also important to make sure that the student has completed sufficient coursework and has the knowledge necessary to work at an internship level.

Ask questions to determine the candidate's work ethic:

- Tell me about a time when you had to work as a member of a team to complete a task. What role did you fulfill?
- What was your favorite summer or part-time job? Why?
- What have you learned from your part-time or student jobs (if listed on resume)?
- Why did you choose the career field you would like to work in?
- What will motivate you in this position?
- Why do you think you will be successful in your chosen field?
- What do you believe is an intern's role in an organization/company?

Look for: Answers that show a student has found value in past experiences, including part-time or temporary jobs. Look also for student responses that express responsibility, dedication, and a willingness to learn by experience.

Analytical & Problem-Solving:

- Describe a situation when there seemed to be no way to complete a project and yet you found a way. What happened?
- How do you handle projects with short deadlines that require precise calculations and analysis? What is your approach?
- What kinds of problems have people recently called on you to solve? Tell me about your contribution to solving the problem.
- Leadership & Interpersonal:
- What do you do differently from your classmates? What will you bring to the position that other candidates with similar academic and work experience may not offer?
- Give an example of a situation when you had to compromise your own goals/objectives for the sake of the team.
- Please describe a time when your work was harshly criticized? How did you react to this feedback?
- Talk about a group project when a team member was not fulfilling their commitments. How did you deal with the person? What were the end results?