

**MACAULAY HONORS COLLEGE**  
CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

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# **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS BY INDUSTRY**

**CAREER  
DEVELOPMENT** | 



# CONTENTS

READING TIME: 40 MINUTES

- 02 INTERVIEWS 101
- 06 COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
- 09 ADMINISTRATION
- 10 DESIGN
- 13 EDUCATION
- 17 ENGINEERING
- 19 FINANCE
- 22 GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC POLICY
- 24 HEALTH SCIENCES
- 26 LAW
- 27 MUSEUMS
- 29 NON-PROFIT
- 30 PUBLIC RELATIONS & MARKETING
- 32 PUBLISHING & JOURNALISM
- 35 SALES, SERVICE & HOSPITALITY
- 37 TECHNOLOGY
- 40 KEY TAKEAWAYS
- 41 RESOURCES AT YOUR CAMPUS



# INTERVIEWS 101

A job interview is one of the most critical parts of the job search. Strengthening your interview skills and effectively preparing for one is critical in understanding how to best present yourself and your skill set for future employers.

## GENERAL TIPS

### RESEARCH

Visit [Vault](#) or [Glassdoor](#) to read about the interview process (what is the format—one-on-one or committee—and the types of questions that might be asked). Visit the company website and search for articles on the company to learn more about them so that you can learn what they value. This way, you can speak to why you are passionate about working for them and what you find most appealing about the company's vision.

### DRESS TO IMPRESS

You want to make a good first impression, and your appearance is the first thing the interviewer will notice on the day of. Do you fit the culture at their company (e.g. are you dressed for a startup or are you dressed for a corporate position)? Make sure to conduct your research beforehand so you know the appropriate way to dress for the interview/industry. Find out how you can dress for success for your next interview in [this helpful blog post](#) from our [Macaulay Career Development Blog](#). [The Balance Careers](#) also has a great [in-depth outfit guide](#) on what to wear (and what not to wear) depending on the type of job and company!

### BE YOURSELF

An interviewer can always tell when someone is trying to tell them what they want to hear. The purpose of the interview is for both parties to get to know each other. Will this be a good fit? Answer questions honestly without giving away more information than necessary.



## PRESENT CONFIDENCE

You want to make sure that you highlight your best characteristics and knowledge. Confidence comes in the way you approach the interview and the way that you answer their questions. This is why it is important to practice, practice, practice. Visit your Career Center on campus or reach out to the Macaulay Career Development Office to schedule a mock interview. To schedule an appointment, please contact Gianina Chrisman, Associate Director of Career Development, at [gianina.chrisman@mhc.cuny.edu](mailto:gianina.chrisman@mhc.cuny.edu) or Jamie Ruden, Career Program Coordinator, at [Jamie.Ruden@mhc.cuny.edu](mailto:Jamie.Ruden@mhc.cuny.edu). It helps to have constructive criticism on your interview skills. Even better, record it. This will help you see if you're fidgeting, saying "um" too much, or doing any other behaviors that you want to minimize during an interview.

## AND, SMILE

You're already halfway there. Being chosen for the interview means that they believe you are qualified for the position. Now, they want to confirm your qualifications and, most importantly, they want to see if you're the right fit. Will they want to work alongside you for the next 3-6 months or 3-6 years (depending on the position you're applying for)?

## QUESTIONS

Always have questions that you want to ask your interviewer. Prepare at least two beforehand and one question that you formulate during the interview (that demonstrates that you were listening).

- Don't ask about salary/compensation.
- Do ask questions that you would value the answer to (e.g. Are there any concerns that I can address? What is your management style? What do you think are the most important qualities that would make someone be successful at this position?—Then show them how you're a good fit).

## COMINGS AND GOINGS.

When you walk into an interview, you should smile and firmly shake hands. When you end the interview, ask for business cards, exchange pleasantries, and shake hands as you leave again. Express what a pleasure it was to meet them and that you hope to hear back from them soon. Within 24-48 hours, you should send them a thank you note. See [tips for writing professional thank you notes](#) on our [Macaulay Career Development Blog](#)!

## ADDITIONAL TIPS

- **Take notes:** Taking quick short-handed notes helps to remember the questions that are being asked or important comments that the interviewer made that you might include in your thank you note. Do not take lengthy notes where you bury your head and never look up during the interview.
- **Sweaty palms:** Keep a napkin in your pocket that you can use quickly before shaking hands.
- **Dry mouth:** You can ask for a glass of water before the interview. Take quick short sips during the interview to wet your palate before you speak.
- **Questions you weren't expecting:** If you don't know how to answer a question immediately, it's ok to ask them for a few seconds to think about it, and then give them a thoughtful answer. But, only take a few seconds. No one likes awkward long pauses.
- **Forgot to mention something?** Use the thank you note to address any concerns that were expressed by the interviewer—assure them that you're the right candidate—or information that you feel is important for them to know.

## TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

The three main types of interviews are in-person, phone and virtual interviews. You can find [interview checklists](#) for each of these interview types as well as [tips on acing a virtual interview](#) on our [Macaulay Career Development Blog](#)!

### ALSO CHECK OUT:

- [10 Types Of Interviews And How To Ace Them](#) from [Muse](#)
- [Types Of Job And Employment-Related Interviews](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)



## OVERVIEW OF QUESTIONS BY INDUSTRY

[This infographic](#) from [Muse](#) offers a broad overview of industry- and role-specific questions and what companies are looking for when they ask them! You can find a master list of [Job Specific Interview Questions](#) along with sample answers on [The Balance Careers](#).

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Job Interview Questions, Answers, and Tips to Prepare](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)
- [Can You Please Walk Me Through Your Resume?](#) from our [Macaulay Career Development Blog](#)
- [How To Show Off Your Industry Knowledge In An Interview](#) from [Muse](#)
- [An Overview of Mock Interviews](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)



# COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Once you've done your research, it's good to practice common interview questions.

## ABOUT YOURSELF

01. Tell me about yourself.
02. What are your greatest strengths?
03. Where could you use some improvement?
04. Why should we hire you (over another candidate)?
05. Where do you see yourself five years from now? Ten years?
06. What are your goals?
07. Describe your ideal company, location, and job.
08. What type of work environment do you prefer?
09. I'm concerned that you don't have as much experience as we'd like in....
10. How do you define success and how do you measure up to your own definition?
11. What are you passionate about?
12. Why did you choose your major? Your college?
13. Which classes in your major did you like best? Least? Why?
14. Of which three accomplishments are you most proud?
15. What motivates you the most in a job?
16. What job-related skills have you developed?
17. Do you prefer to work under supervision, or on your own? What kind of boss do you prefer?
18. What do you worry about?
19. How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?
20. Are you able to work on several assignments at once? How do you prioritize your work?

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

- Why do you want to work at our organization/company?
- What do you know about our organization/company?

- 
- How does your college education or work experience relate to this job?
  - What changes would you make if you came on board?
  - What do you see as the role/responsibilities of this position/a good leader/etc?
  - What do you see as the most difficult part of this position?
  - What do you think it takes to be successful in an organization/company like ours?
  - If you were hiring someone for this position, what would you look for?

## **ABOUT A SITUATION**

- Tell me about something you did—or failed to do—that you regret.
- Tell me about a situation where your work was criticized.
- What was the toughest decision you ever had to make?
- Tell me about a challenge or conflict you've faced at work, and how you dealt with it.
- What's a time you disagreed with a decision that was made at work?
- Have you ever had difficulty getting along with a former professor/supervisor/co-worker? How did you handle it?
- Give me an example of your creativity/analytical skill/managing ability/etc.
- How would you handle (hypothetical situation)?
- Describe your leadership skills. Give an example of a time in which you held a leadership position.
- Give an example of a situation in which you provided a solution to your employer.
- Give an example of a time in which you worked under deadline pressure.
- Would you be successful working with a team? Can you give an example of a time in which you worked with a team?

## **ABOUT PREVIOUS JOBS**

- Could you have done better in your last job?
- What was the toughest part of your last job?
- How do you think a former supervisor would describe your work?
- (if applicable) Can you explain why you changed career paths?



## OTHER

- What good books have you read lately?
- What are your hobbies/outside interests?
- Who has inspired you in your life, and why?
- Who are your role models, and why?
- What do you like to do outside of work?
- Is there anything else you'd like us to know?

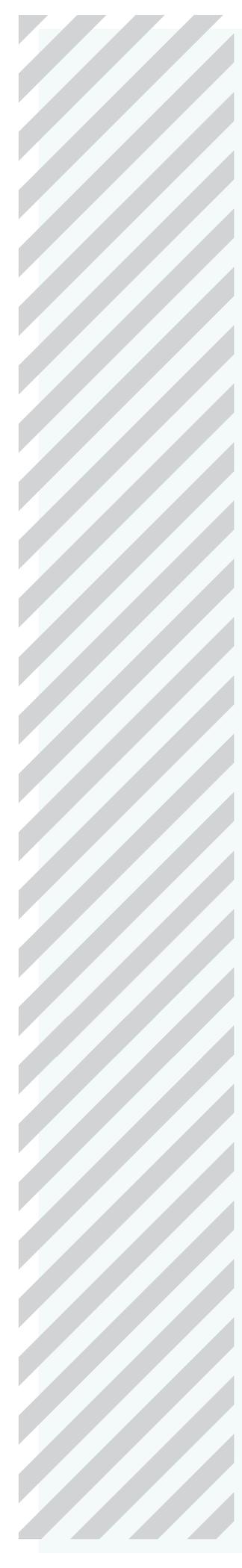
## ASK QUESTIONS

You should also be prepared to ask the interviewer questions. Pick questions that will demonstrate your interest in the job and the company. This might include commenting on the news you learned from the company website, and then asking a question related to it. Don't ask about salary/compensation.

- What do my day-to-day responsibilities at this job look like?
- What do you appreciate the most about working here?
- How will my responsibilities and performance be measured? By whom?
- Could you explain your organizational structure?
- What computer equipment and software do you use?
- What is the organization's plan for the next five years?
- Are there any concerns that I can address?
- What is your management style?
- What do you think are the most important qualities that would make someone be successful at this position?
- What kinds of assignments might I expect the first six months on the job?
- In what ways is a career with your company better than one with your competitors?
- What are the next steps from here? (This question is used at the end of an interview if the interviewer has not indicated what will happen next).

## MORE RESOURCES:

Check out this [complete list of common interview questions](#) from [Muse](#), which also includes an answer guide for each question!



## ADMINISTRATION

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** administrative assistant, receptionist, secretary

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM THE BALANCE-CAREERS:

- What computer skills do you have, and what programs are you comfortable using?
- Are you comfortable using a phone with multiple lines and handling a high volume of telephone calls?
- How do you prioritize calls, clients, deliveries, and other issues that must be addressed immediately?
- How do you handle stress and pressure?
- What do you do to keep up in a fast-paced work environment?
- What role does a receptionist play in a customer's first impression of an organization?
- Tell me about a time you had to deal with an angry customer or guest, either on the phone or in person. How did you handle the situation?
- Describe your previous duties as an administrative assistant, secretary, or receptionist.

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Common Receptionist Interview Questions](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)
- [25 Interview Questions for Administrative Assistants](#) from [Robert Half](#)



## DESIGN

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** user experience (UX) designer, user interface (UI) designer, product designer, graphic designer, animator, web designer, fashion designer, multimedia designer

### SAMPLE DESIGN JOB QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM VITAMIN TALENT:

- Where do you find inspiration?
- How did you design your portfolio?
- Tell me about the projects you're most proud of and why. What was your role?
- What software do you use?
- How do you work cross-functionally with developers, copywriters, project managers, etc.?
- Are you typically involved in the strategy or 'concept' phase of a project?
- What's your creative process?
- How do you deal with feedback?
- How do you hand off a project?

### SAMPLE GRAPHIC DESIGNER QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM WORKABLE:

#### **AGENCY DESIGNER:**

- How would you rate yourself on producing appropriate work for a broad range of clients?
- How comfortable are you with short deadlines and new trends?
- Describe your experience with presenting your work to clients.
- Have you ever represented your agency at a client meeting? How did you handle it?

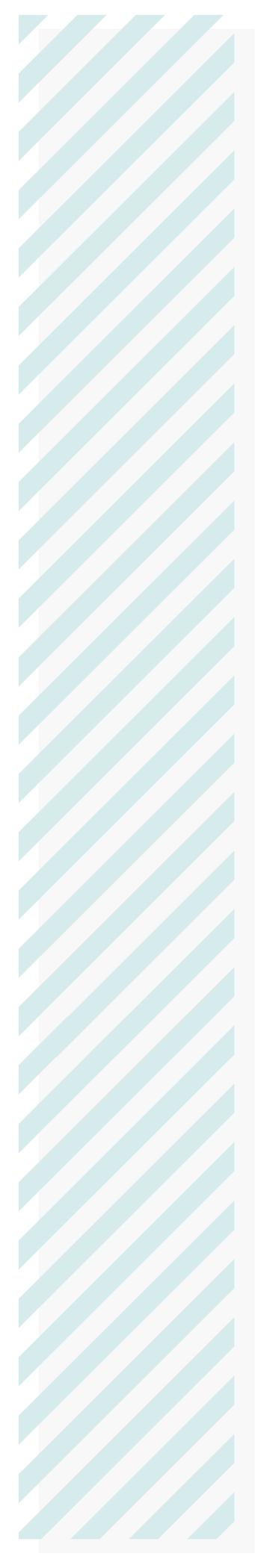


## **IN-HOUSE DESIGNER:**

- How has the brand you most recently worked with evolved over time? What part did you play in that?
- How do you sustain long-term interest in designing for one brand?
- How do you adapt a brand for different audiences?
- How much experience do you have with presenting work to key stakeholders?
- How would you learn about our brand during your first week at work?

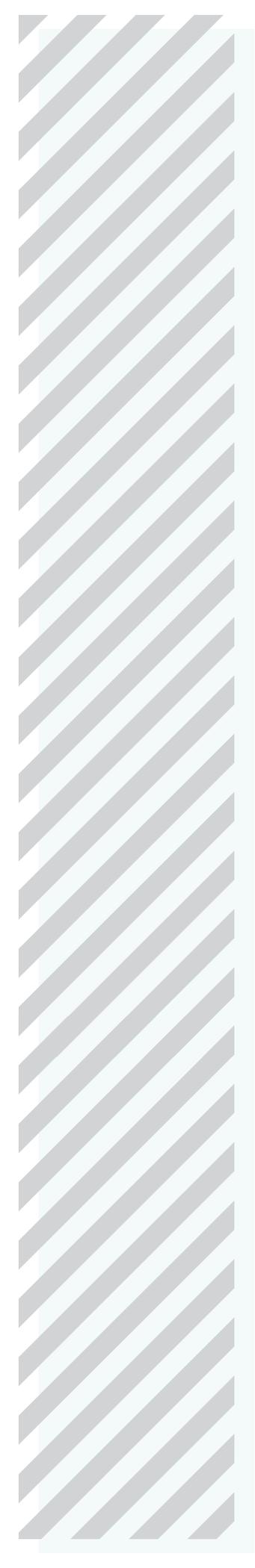
## **ROLE-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:**

- As a graphic designer, whose work do you admire? Who are your design heroes?
- How do you stay updated on the latest tools and trends?
- Who would be your ideal brand or client to work on, and why?
- Describe the structure of your current/previous team. Who did you work with on a regular basis? What did they do?
- How do you prepare to present your work to clients or stakeholders?
- What do you do when clients or stakeholders give you negative feedback?
- How do you start a project? How do you know when it is finished?
- What do you do when you hit a creative block? Talk about a design challenge you encountered and how you overcame it.
- What type of design work do you enjoy the most; print or digital? How do you find transitioning between the two?
- How do you prepare your work for production? (e.g. Prep work for print or for front end development)
- What do you do when you're running out of time on a project?



## MORE RESOURCES:

- [Interview Questions to Ask Designers](#) from [HubSpot](#)
- [UX Design Interview Questions and Answers](#) from [Springboard](#)
- [Essential Visual Interview Questions](#) from [TopTal](#)
- [Graphic Designer Interview Questions](#) from [Indeed](#)
- [Product Designer Interview Questions](#) from [Workable](#)
- [Web Designer Interview Questions](#) from [SkillCrush](#)

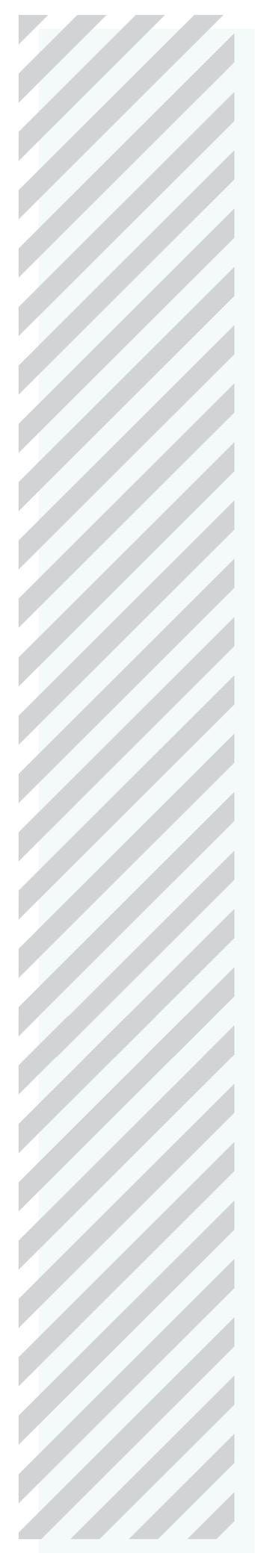


## EDUCATION

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** teacher, school administrator, higher education administrator, academia (general)

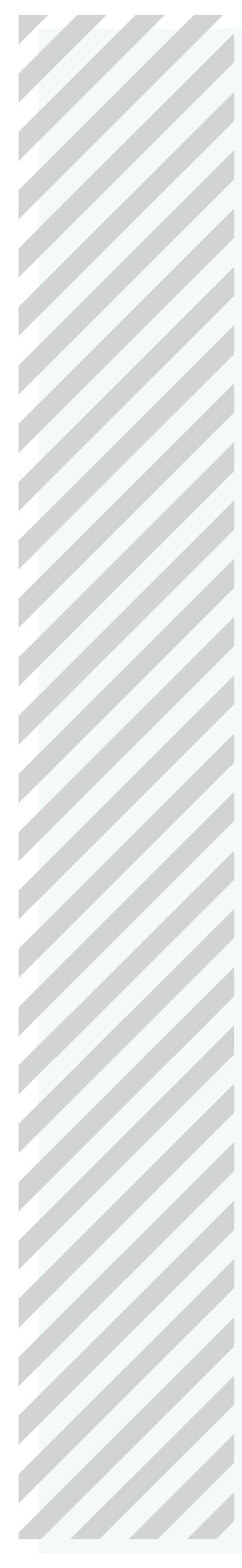
### SAMPLE TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- What do you do to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of individual learners?
- What has been your most positive/negative teaching experience?
- What is your philosophy of teaching?
- Define cooperative learning and give an example of how you have used it.
- What is the most exciting initiative happening in your area of education today?
- What are some of the greatest challenges of being an educator?
- Tell me about your student teaching/internship experience(s).
- What classroom management techniques did you use?
- What methods of classroom discipline have you found most effective?
- How do you keep students on task?
- A student is consistently late for class. How would you handle this situation?
- During class a student directs profane or abusive language toward you. How would you handle this situation?
- Describe the components of an effective lesson plan.
- What do you feel are the most important things students learn in your classroom?
- How would you work with a mainstreamed learning disabled student?
- What are several effective ways to motivate students toward active participation in the learning process?
- What kind of learning environment do you try to create?
- How do you organize a teaching day?
- If more than half of your students fail your first exam, what does this mean? What would you do?

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- What curricular materials have you developed?
  - Describe an ideal curriculum in your area of study.
  - How comfortable are you with integrating technology into your lesson plans?
  - Tell us about your experience with multicultural students.
  - How do you provide feedback to students about how they are doing?
  - How will you determine if students are learning? What evaluation techniques do you use?
  - How do you reinforce major ideas or concepts that you want students to learn?
  - Describe your ability to listen and be responsive. Can you give me an example?
  - You have a student who is unmotivated, will not do homework, and earned all F's the first quarter. What would you do?
  - What kind of relationship do you have with your students?
  - How do you involve parents in the learning process?
  - I'm a parent of a boy who has done well in all classes but yours. In a conference I accuse you of not teaching my son what he needs to know. How would you answer my concerns?
  - What type of relationship do you strive to have with the parents of your students?
  - How do you communicate to a parent how a student is performing?
  - If I were to walk into your classroom unannounced, what would I see? What would the students be doing? What would you be doing?
  - If you were given \$500 to spend for your classroom, how would you spend it?

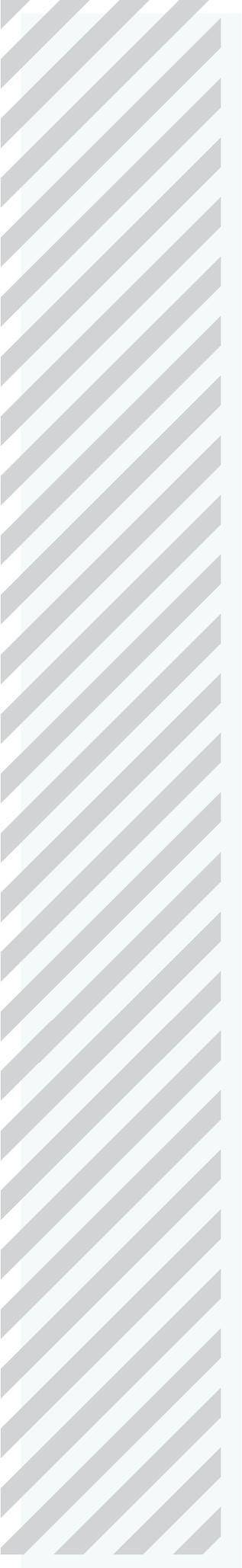
### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Full Document of 100+ Teacher Interview Questions](#)
- [Common Teacher Interview Questions](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)
- [Interview Questions for Positions in Academia](#) from [UC Davis](#)



## **SAMPLE HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM THE EDVOCATE:**

- What type of institution of higher education would be a good fit for you?
- If you had the power to change one thing in education, what would it be, and how would you go about implementing that change?
- What role should learning analytics play in higher education?
- What is your experience with online learning platforms?
- Do you have any higher education teaching experience?
- What is your process for working with other departments within the university, many of which don't know much about how your area operates?
- How can social media be beneficial to higher education institutions?
- What strategies do you use to integrate career preparation into the higher education learning environment?
- Describe your experience in developing a strategic plan.
- Do you have any experience developing and managing a budget at a university? If so, describe your process for developing and managing a budget?
- Talk about any community partnerships that you have led?
- Tell us about a time when you had to make an unpopular decision that impacted several campus departments.
- How do you ensure that your efforts have a positive impact on the students who attend this university?
- Do you have any experience with public relations or engaging with the community?
- Tell us about an encouraging educational innovation that you are aware of. Why is it innovative, what value will it bring to our university, and what have you done to incorporate it into your administrative process?



## MORE RESOURCES:

- [Higher Education Administrator Questions](#) from [Job Interview Questions](#)
- [School Administrator Interview Questions](#) from [School Of Educators](#)
- [School Administrator Interview Questions](#) from [AASA](#)

# ENGINEERING

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** aerospace engineer, chemical engineer, civil engineer, computer engineer, electrical engineer, environmental engineer, industrial engineer, mechanical engineer, petroleum engineer, software engineer (see also Technology)

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM DUMMIES:

- Can you describe the most significant written technical report or presentation you had to complete?
- Can you tell me about your greatest success in using the principles of logic to solve an engineering problem in your last job?
- What checks and balances do you use to avoid mistakes?
- Some of the best-engineered ideas are born of an individual's ability to challenge conventional thinking. Can you tell me about a time when you were successful in doing this?
- What factors would you consider in building an engineering department from scratch?
- In the field of engineering, priorities often change quickly. Can you give me an example of a time when that happened? How did you handle it?
- Are you keeping pace technically and technologically? How?

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM SOLID PROFESSOR:

- Tell me about the most challenging engineering project you've worked on.
- Explain a time you had to use logic to solve an engineering problem.
- Describe a time you demonstrated leadership skills at work.
- What processes do you follow to catch any mistakes in your work?
- What engineering skills have you learned or improved upon in the past six months?
- What software packages are you familiar with?
- Describe a time you used problem-solving skills to figure out a design problem.

- What strengths do you have that make you a good engineer?
- What's your most successful engineering project?
- Describe a time you had to work on a team and something didn't go well. What would you do differently?
- Have you ever had an experience with a difficult client, employer, or employee? How did you handle the situation?
- Tell me about a time you got negative feedback on your work. How did you respond?
- Do you have security clearance to work on classified projects?

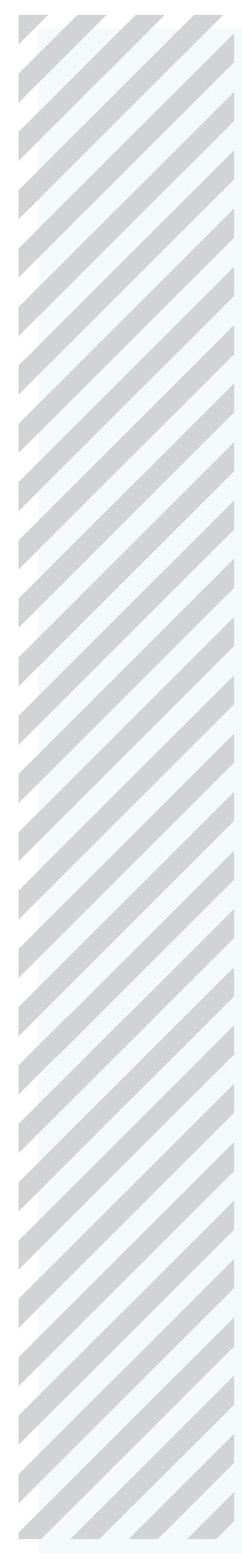
### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Common Engineering Job Interview Questions](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)
- [40 Engineering Interview Questions](#) to Help You Prepare from [Indeed](#)

Be sure to also search for interview questions based on your particular **engineering discipline**. See some examples below.

### **BY DISCIPLINE:**

- [Aerospace Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [Best Value Schools](#)
- [Chemical Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [Indeed](#)
- [Civil Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [Target Jobs](#)
- [Computer Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [Betterteam](#)
- [Electrical Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [Dare Energy](#)
- [Environmental Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [The HR Blog](#)
- [Industrial Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [My Interview Practice](#)
- [Mechanical Engineering Interview Questions](#) from [Interview Penguin](#)
- [Petroleum Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [Betterteam](#)
- [Software Engineer Interview Questions](#) from [Springboard](#)



## FINANCE

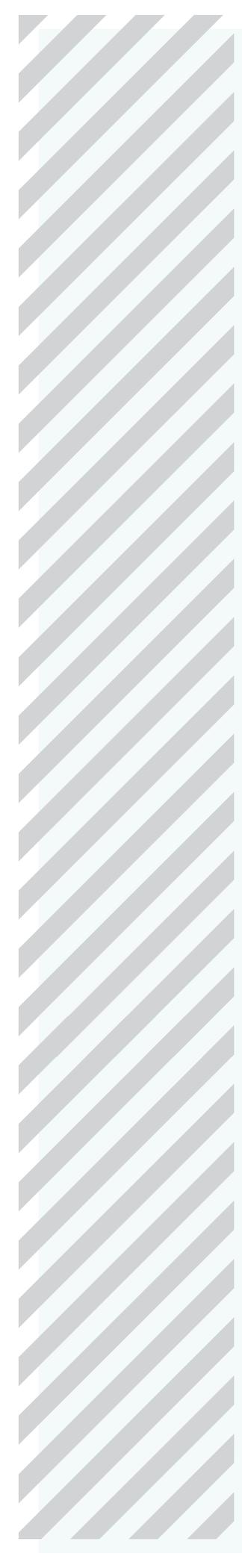
**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** accountant, investment/financial analyst, credit analyst, investment banker, risk manager, private equity analyst, financial advisor

### **SAMPLE ACCOUNTING QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM ROBERT HALF:**

- What is the difference between accounts receivable (AR) and accounts payable (AP)?
- When a company is using double-entry accounting, what elements of a given ledger must be equal?
- If a company has three bank accounts for processing payments, what is the minimum number of ledgers it needs?
- What methods have you used for estimating bad debt?
- Why is it easier for someone to perpetrate fraud using a journal entry than with a ledger?
- Which enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems have you used?
- What is your experience with developing business metrics?
- When you buy a piece of equipment for a company, what is the impact on the three financial statements?
- How do you differentiate between auditing and accounting?
- What accounting software are you most familiar with?

### **SAMPLE ACCOUNTING QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM THE BALANCE CAREERS:**

- Which accounting applications are you familiar with?
- Describe the advantages and disadvantages of different accounting packages you have used in your most recent accountant jobs.
- Describe any accounting process that you've developed or sought to improve.
- Describe a time when you helped to reduce costs at a previous accounting job.

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- Describe a time when you faced a particularly demanding deadline to prepare a financial statement or report. How did you react? What was the result?
  - How do you ensure that you don't forget details and ensure accuracy when you prepare monthly journal entries, record transactions, etc.?

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

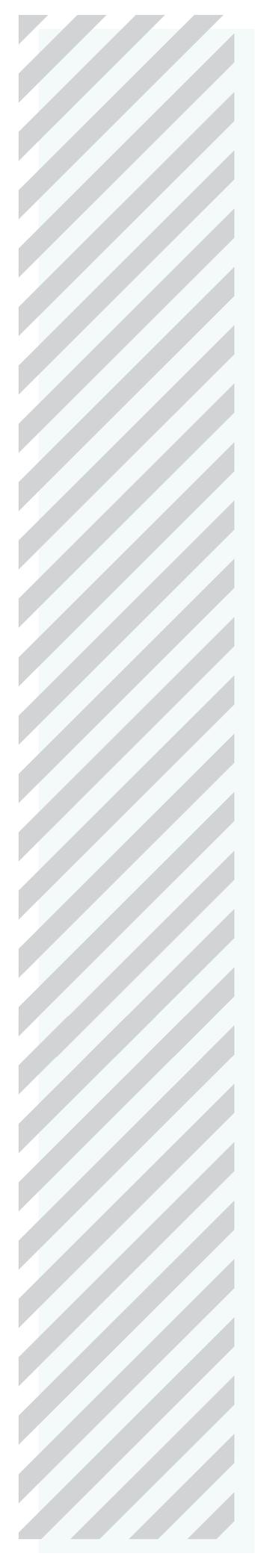
- [Top 10 Accounting Interview Questions](#) from [Indeed](#)
- [Accounting Interview Questions](#) from [Corporate Finance Institute](#)

### **SAMPLE FINANCE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM CHEGG:**

- If you could pick only one, which stock would you pick and why?
- How are the three main financial statements connected?
- What is EBITDA?
- Walk me through a DCF.
- If you were the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of a Fortune 500 company, what would be your long-term concerns?

### **SAMPLE FINANCE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM CORPORATE FINANCE INSTITUTE:**

- If it were up to you, what would our company's budgeting process look like?
- If I could use only one [financial] statement to review the overall health of a company, which statement would I use and why?
- When should a company consider issuing debt instead of equity?
- What, in your opinion, makes a good financial model?
- Why would two companies merge? What major factors drive mergers and acquisitions?



## MORE RESOURCES:

- Check out [the full article](#) which includes links to [Corporate Finance Institute's](#) interview guides for investment banking interviews, accounting interviews, financial planning & analysis (FP&A) interviews, credit analyst interviews, macroeconomics interviews, and behavioral interview questions!
- [Top Finance Interview Questions and Sample Answers](#) from [Indeed](#)
- [JP Morgan's Guide To A Successful Interview](#)

## TIPS FOR TACKLING SUPERDAYS:

A Superday is the final round interview process for prospective employees at investment banking or financial firms.

- [Superday Tips](#) from [Corporate Finance Institute](#)
- [The Investment Banking Interview Selection Process](#) from [Mergers & Inquisitions](#)

## GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC POLICY

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** public policy analyst, policy strategist, public administrator, political scientist, political analyst, politician, campaign manager, legislative aide, legislator, international relations, [government jobs \(general\)](#)

### SAMPLE GOVERNMENT JOB QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM INDEED:

- When did you realize you wanted to have a career in government?
- Can you tell me about your first job working for a government agency?
- What interested you in our agency?
- How would you describe the role of our agency within the government to a member of the general public?
- This role involves a lot of interaction with concerned citizens. Is that something you can see yourself doing on a daily basis?
- If there was one aspect of our government you could change, what would it be and why?
- How would you describe the role of our agency within the government to a member of the general public?

### SAMPLE PUBLIC POLICY QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM FORD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY:

- What are some of the policy issues you've dealt with generally? Those you've analyzed?
- What type of experience have you had evaluating policy?
- Talk about your experiences working with community members.
- What areas of community development interest you most?
- Tell me about a time when your ethics were challenged and how did you handle it?
- Pick a state. Tell me the five most important policy problems in that state. Now pick one of those issues - what is the nature of the problem? What could be done about it? What information would you need to gather?

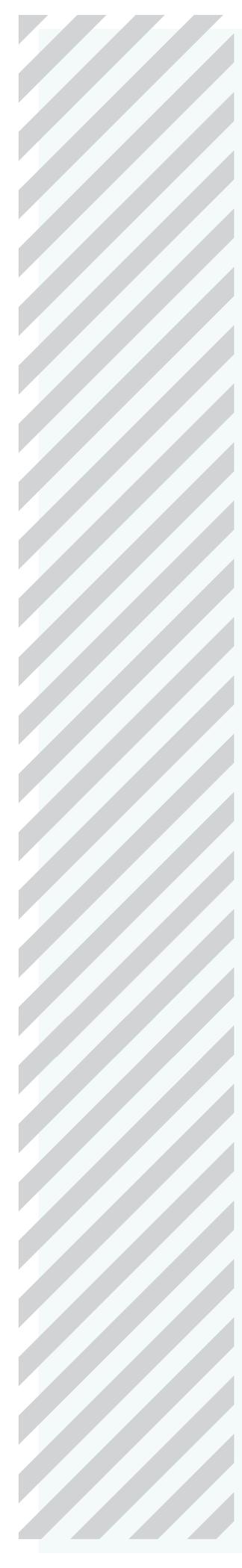


## • **SAMPLE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS QUESTIONS** **ADAPTED FROM TOGETHER ABROAD:**

- What, in your opinion, can be done to overcome difficulties in a situation in which people from contrary cultural backgrounds need to cooperate? Did you ever experience such a situation yourself and how did you cope with it?
- Please tell us about a negotiation in which you successfully represented your standpoint.
- How familiar are you with managing funds?
- What experiences do you have that showed you that you are suitable to a position in which you have to operate internationally?
- Based on your experience in the past, with people from which cultural background do you easily form relationships and with which cultures do you have difficulties?
- How would you deal with travelling to underdeveloped countries?
- In your eyes, what especially is important for our company while doing business with other countries? What should we take care of in international contexts?
- Tell me about a suggestion that you made and was implemented in the international relations field.
- Which procedures do you find necessary to develop a foreign policy concept?
- How do you think race, gender and ethnicity affect international relations?
- How is globalization affecting the environment in your opinion?
- What are the practices that a country must follow to ensure security?

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [How to Prepare for a Government Job Interview](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)
- [Example Questions to Ask in a Government Job Interview](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)
- [Campaign Manager Interview Questions](#) from [Betterteam](#)



## HEALTH SCIENCES

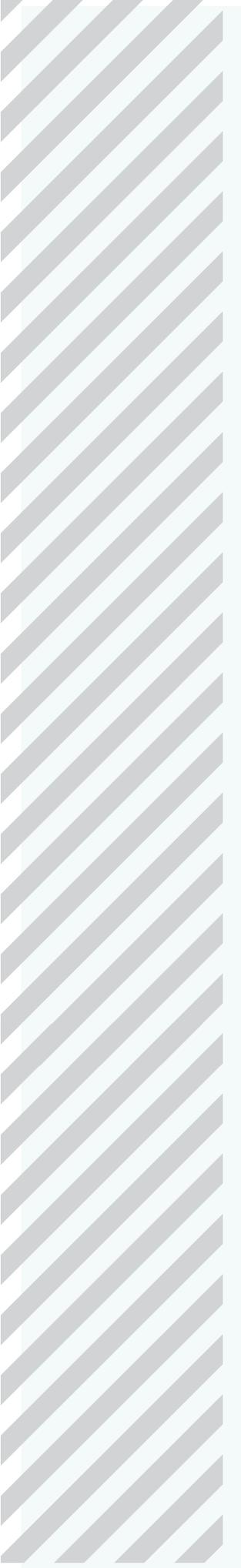
**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** nurse, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, physician, paramedic, surgeon, therapist, pharmacist, dentist, dental hygienist, medical or clinical laboratory technician, nutritionist, veterinarian

### **SAMPLE HEALTHCARE JOB QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM KUNUNU:**

- How would you handle a patient who constantly complains about being in pain?
- How do you handle stress on the job?
- Describe a situation where you had problems with poor communication. How did you resolve it?
- How would you deal with a family member who isn't happy with your care of the patient?
- Families very often want to know a timeline for a sick person. How do you handle that?
- How do you respond when family members ask for your personal diagnosis?
- Why does this hospital or medical department interest you?
- How do you keep up to date about healthcare advancements?

### **SAMPLE NURSING JOB QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM NURSE.ORG:**

- Talk about a conflict within your healthcare team. What was the conflict and how did you handle it?
- What approach do you take in communicating with people who do not know medical jargon? Give an example of a time you explained medical terminology to someone who is not medically trained.
- Describe a time you provided effective patient or family education.
- Talk about a time a patient or their family were particularly pleased and appreciative of your care.

- 
- Give an example of a time you had to interact with a hostile patient. How did you handle the situation and what was the outcome?
  - Describe a time you were faced with a patient who chose not to communicate or disclose important information. How did you handle the situation and what was the outcome?
  - Tell me about a time when you didn't know the answer to something at work? How did you go about finding the information?
  - Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems with a patient and initiated preventative measures.
  - Describe your experience with a very ill patient who required a lot of your time. How did you manage this patient's care while ensuring your other patients were adequately cared for?
  - Talk about a time when you felt overwhelmed with your work or patient-load. What did you do?
  - Give an example of a time when you were able to successfully persuade a patient to agree to something. How did you persuade this person?
  - Tell me about a time when you had to rely on written communication to explain yourself to your team or to a patient.

#### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Healthcare and Medical Interview Questions](#) from [Betterteam](#): interview questions for the most common jobs related to healthcare and the medical field!
- [Healthcare Interview Questions](#) from [Indeed](#)
- [8 Questions You Might Get Asked in a Nursing Interview](#) from [Muse](#)

## LAW

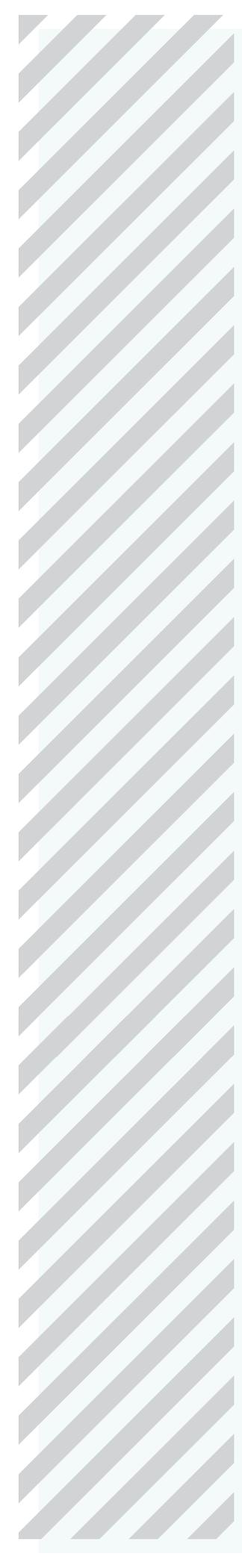
**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** attorney, prosecutor, paralegal, legal secretary, compliance specialist, conflicts analyst, mediator, public policy analyst, judge or hearing officer, court administrator or reporter

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM YALE LAW SCHOOL:

- What qualifications do you have that will help you be successful in law practice?
- Why did you choose law as a career?
- How would you feel about representing an unpopular client (e.g., a serial murderer, terrorist, tobacco company, foreign client defending its policy of not hiring women or religious minorities or defending against alleged human rights violations)?
- What law school subjects have you liked best? Least? Why?
- What are you writing about for your SAW or Substantial Paper?
- Give me an example of a written legal project that you're proud of.
- What factors are most important to you when selecting a law firm?
- In what particular area(s) of practice are you most interested?
- Do you see yourself as a litigator or transactional lawyer? Why?
- Discuss a recent experience when you had to work under pressure.
- Describe a situation where you had to convince someone of your viewpoint.
- Give an example of a situation where you used good judgment and logic.

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Full PDF of 100+ Sample Interview Questions](#) from [Yale Law School](#)
- [Common Questions Asked During Law Job Interviews](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)
- [21 Questions to Ask During a Legal Job Interview](#) from [Vault](#)



## MUSEUMS

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** archivist, conservator, curator, museum technician, exhibit designer, historian, museum educator

### **SAMPLE MUSEUM CURATOR QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM EVERYDAY INTERVIEW TIPS:**

- What do you find important about preserving history?
- Have you been to any museum exhibitions recently?
- Have you been to any galleries recently?
- What did you like/dislike about the galleries/exhibitions?
- How would you organize information about an upcoming gallery?
- Is there a specific time period in which you are most interested?
- What do you think is the primary challenge facing museums today?
- How do you feel about interactive exhibitions?
- What situations might occur that would cause you to cancel/rethink an exhibition?
- What tools do you believe are most effective for marketing your exhibitions?
- Are you comfortable travelling to find new pieces for an exhibition?
- What were your favorite museum studies classes in college?

### **SAMPLE MUSEUM PROFESSIONAL QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM MUSEUM CAREERS:**

- What experience do you have with museum databases or collections management systems?
- Given that museum objects are at their most vulnerable when being handled, what practical steps would you take to ensure the safe transportation of an object from an exhibition space and into a storage area?

- 
- A member of the public has emailed you with an enquiry about the function of an object that they have seen on display in the museum. Set out the steps you would undertake in order to provide them with an answer.
  - Which of the [large heritage organization's] sites have you enjoyed visiting?
  - What specifically about the Museum and its collections would you be most excited to work with?

#### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Museum Assistant Interview Questions](#) from [Job Interview Questions](#)

## NON-PROFITS

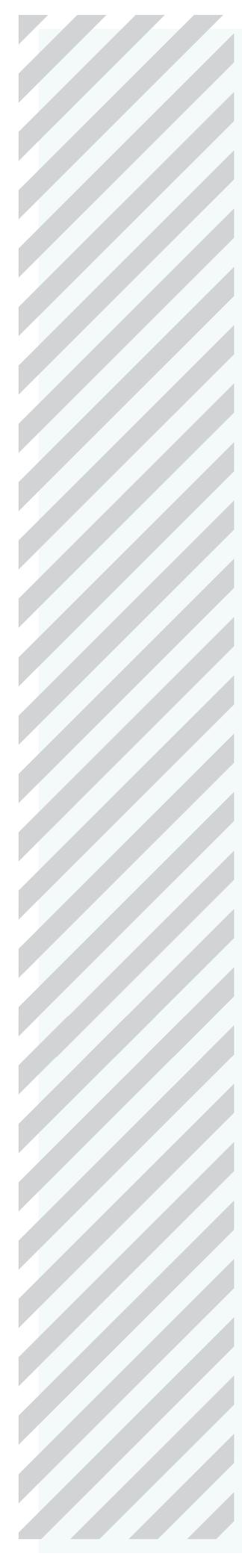
Interview questions might not differ too much between profit versus non-profit jobs, but non-profits can focus more heavily on their mission statements or on collaboration.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM BRIDGESPAN:

- Let's open up with your interest in this role and our organization – tell me more about your interests and why you feel your background and experience are uniquely suited to being successful here.
- What skills/experience do you hope to gain working at our organization?
- Tell me about your current/most recent role at XYZ organization. How big is your team? Budget? How does your work fit into the organization's overall structure?
- Walk me through the best example of (growth, turnaround, etc.) that you led. What did it take?
- Tell me about a time when, because of your analysis, there was a major change of strategy, operations, or key decisions in your organization.
- What was the highest performing team in which you worked? What was your role? What was your contribution?
- What is your leadership style? How has your leadership style evolved over time?
- Tell me more about your volunteer experience and why you think it has prepared you for a full-time nonprofit role.
- What (volunteer-related) results make you proud? How did that work help you refine what you're now looking for in a nonprofit role?
- Why do you want to work in the nonprofit sector? What do you think would be different about it compared to your role in the for-profit sector?
- How do your experiences translate to this role at our organization?
- Why does our mission resonate with you?

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Interview Questions of Nonprofit Employers](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)

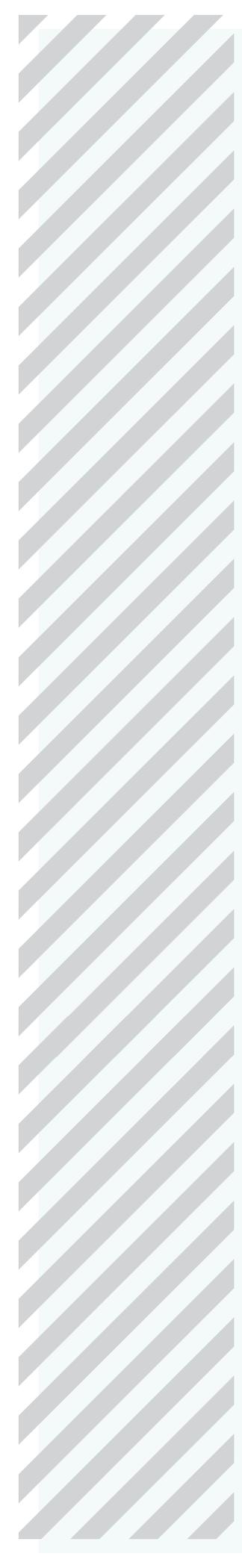


## PUBLIC RELATIONS & MARKETING

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** public relations specialist or coordinator, publicist, content creator, marketing specialist, social media manager, product manager, advertising manager, brand manager

### SAMPLE PUBLIC RELATIONS QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM REUBEN-SINCLAIR:

- Can you tell me about a recent PR campaign that you thought worked well and why?
- Can you tell me about a recent PR campaign that you thought failed and why?
- What writing experience do you have in PR?
- How would you go about finding relevant contacts and sources?
- Which PR firms do you admire and why? Which PR figures do you admire and why?
- Which media outlets do you follow?
- What areas of PR or communications do you see growing/being important in the future?
- Can you tell me about a favourite campaign you worked on?
- How do you measure your personal and team ROI on campaigns?
- How much involvement do you have in new business?
- How do you use social media to reach and impress traditional media?
- How is PR different from advertising?
- Tell me about a time when you had to overcome a challenge with an individual or group when developing and executing a PR campaign?
- What was the most difficult situation you have been in when responding to media and public enquiries. What made it difficult? How did you handle it?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of appointing a PR consultancy?
- What would you consider to be your most creative or effective campaign?

- 
- What would you do if a client or manager disagreed with your PR strategy?
  - Describe a time you had to manage negative media attention.
  - Describe a time your PR communications were misunderstood by your target audience. How did you handle it?
  - What's interesting about our current PR work? What would you improve?

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Public Relations Interview Questions and Answers](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)
- [5 Common PR Interview Questions](#) from [WayUp](#)

### **SAMPLE MARKETING QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM THE BALANCE CAREERS:**

- Tell me about a marketing project in which you had to coordinate and manage a diverse team of people to achieve deliverables.
- Give me an example of a marketing campaign (either your own or someone else's) that you consider to have been very successful.
- Tell me about a campaign with which you were involved that did not go as well as expected. What do you think went wrong?
- What do you consider the five most important aspects of successful marketing?
- Tell me about a time when you successfully changed a customer's mind.
- Give an example of a time when you accomplished a marketing activity on a tight budget.
- How have you successfully incorporated online marketing tools into your previous marketing campaigns?
- How familiar are you with our target market?
- What marketing strategies would you consider using for our product?
- Why are you interested in our product/service?



## PUBLISHING & JOURNALISM

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** content or staff writer, author, book editor, copy editor, literary agent, reporter, correspondent, news analyst, journalist

### SAMPLE EDITOR QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM WORKABLE:

- Everyone needs a break. What do you read on your own time?
- How do you sustain interest in even the most mundane aspects of editing – proofreading, fact-checking, source-checking, etc?
- What social media platforms work well for increasing the reach of your content?
- How much do you know about SEO?
- What publishing platforms have you used before?
- Which style guides do you prefer?
- Describe your experience with creating style guides.
- What advice would you give writers trying to pitch stories to your publication?
- What topics would you want to cover in an editorial calendar from October to December?
- What's your approach to giving constructive feedback to a fellow writer?
- What would you do if you or a member of your team made a very public error or created a PR crisis? How would you handle it?
- How would you describe the voice of our brand?
- What is one thing you'd change about our publication?
- Which story in your portfolio are you most proud of?
- What was your role in conceptualizing and editing [this work sample]?
- Which of your pieces would you consider to be successful?



## MORE RESOURCES:

- [5 Questions Likely to Come Up in a Publishing Interview](#) from [Pathway to Publishing](#)
- [Acing the Interview: Tips for Young Publishing Job Seekers](#) from [Young To Publishing](#)
- [Job Interview Questions for Writers and Editors](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)

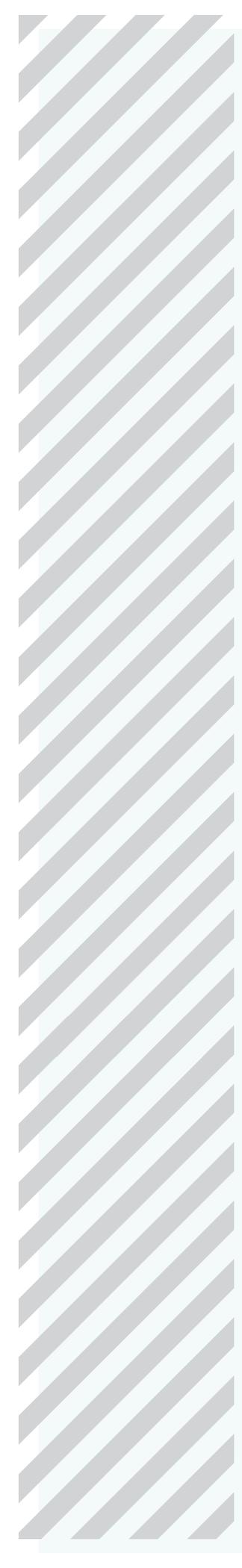
## **SAMPLE JOURNALIST QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM INDEED:**

- What are the best qualities of your writing style?
- What topics would you like to cover at our publication?
- How would you improve our publication?
- How often do you use social media? Do you use it for identifying new stories?
- What publications do you read in your personal time?
- What are some of your strengths and weaknesses in using technology for storytelling?
- Who do you think our competitors are?
- What qualities make good journalists?
- How have you managed the stress of tight deadlines?
- Can you explain a time when you worked with an uncooperative interviewee?
- How much experience do you have with content management systems?
- Can you describe a time you pitched a unique story?
- What publishing software are you familiar with?
- Have you ever stretched the truth in your stories?
- How have you prioritized multiple deadlines in the past?

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- What have you done to increase readership in previous publications?
  - Did you ever intern at a news publication?
  - Are you more comfortable with Chicago or AP style writing?
  - What precautions do you take to ensure your collected information is accurate?
  - Can you list at least three stories our publication would be interested in at this moment?
  - Are you familiar with our staff members? Are there any you would prefer to work with?
  - Do you have any particular methods of staying informed with accurate information?
  - Considering all the major stories from last year, which would you have liked to cover?
  - What content would you most prefer to write about?
  - Can you list three concepts or elements you implement into every story?
  - Are there any famous journalists that inspire you? Why are they inspirational to you?
  - If you could improve your writing, what would you change?
  - What was your worst-performing story? What did you learn from it?

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

[Journalist Interview Questions](#) from [Workable](#)



## SALES, SERVICE & HOSPITALITY

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** sales associate, retail and restaurant workers, customer service representative, event planner, [hospitality jobs \(general\)](#)

### **SAMPLE CUSTOMER SERVICE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM THE BALANCE CAREERS:**

- What does good customer service mean to you?
- Tell me about a time you had to deal with a difficult customer, and how you handled it.
- What would you do if you did not know how to help a customer?
- What would you do if a customer said you were taking too long to handle an issue?
- What do you know about our products and services?
- Tell me about your previous customer service experience.

### **SAMPLE SALES ASSOCIATE QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM WORKABLE:**

- Imagine a customer is upset because there is a shortage of a product they want to buy. How would you handle it?
- Have you used any retail software before?
- If a customer destroyed a piece of merchandise, what would you do?
- What would you do to let customers know of temporary discounts?
- How would you handle it if you saw a customer stealing an item?
- Imagine a customer told you they're looking for a gift. Can you walk me through the process of closing a sale?
- Are you familiar with our products? Which one would you most enjoy selling and why?
- Do you know how to operate a cash register?

- 
- How would you greet each customer when they enter the store?
  - How do you stay calm and motivated when there are too many customers in the store?

#### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Hospitality and Tourism Interview Questions](#) from [Betterteam](#): interview questions for the most common jobs related to hospitality and tourism!
- [9 Common Customer Service Job Interview Questions](#) from [Muse](#)
- [Best Sales Interview Questions](#) from [Workable](#)
- [12 Restaurant Job Interview Questions](#) from [7 Shifts](#)

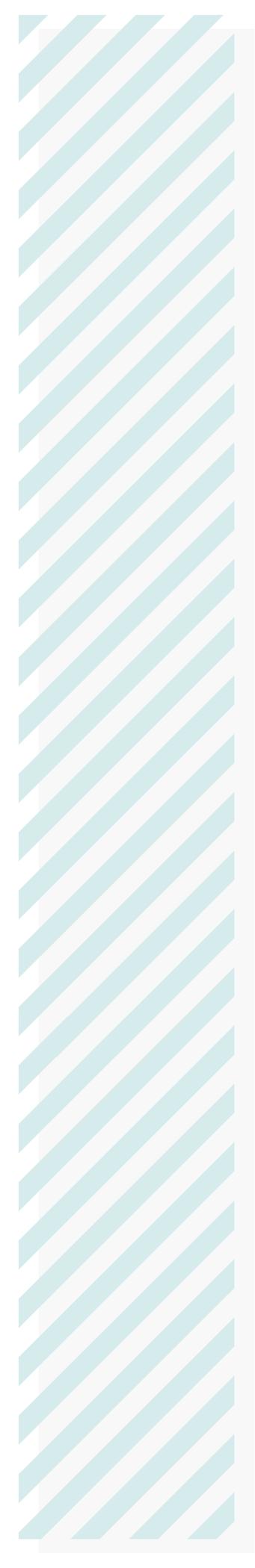


## TECHNOLOGY

**COMMON ASSOCIATED ROLES:** computer programmer, computer support specialist, computer systems analyst, computer & information research scientist, database administrator, information security analyst, network and computer systems administrator, software developer, web developer

### SAMPLE TECHNICAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM THE BALANCE CAREERS:

- What are your technical certifications?
- Describe a time you were able to improve upon the design that was originally suggested.
- Describe your production deployment process.
- How did you manage source code?
- What would you do to ensure consistency across the unit, quality, and production environments?
- You have learned that a business unit is managing a major component of the business using Excel spreadsheets and Access databases. What risks does this present, and what would you recommend be done to mitigate those risks?
- What development tools have you used?
- What languages have you programmed in?
- What source control tools have you used?
- Describe the elements of an in-tier architecture and their appropriate use.
- Compare and contrast REST and SOAP web services.
- Define authentication and authorization and the tools that are used to support them in enterprise deployments.
- What is a SAN, and how is it used?
- What is clustering, and describe its use?
- What is the role of the DMZ in network architecture?

- 
- What is a cross-site scripting attack, and how do you defend against it?
  - In network security, what is a honeypot, and why is it used?
  - Tell me about some of the databases you have designed.
  - How do you enforce relational integrity in database design?
  - What is the difference between OLAP and OLTP? When is each used?
  - What automated-build tools or processes have you used?
  - What is the role of continuous integration systems in the automated-build process?
  - Describe the difference between optimistic and pessimistic locking.
  - What are transaction logs, and how are they used?
  - What are the most important database performance metrics, and how do you monitor them?
  - What is the role of SNMP?
  - What percentage of your time do you spend unit testing?
  - How much reuse do you get out of the code that you develop, and how?
  - Which do you prefer; service-oriented or batch-oriented solutions?
  - What technical websites do you follow?

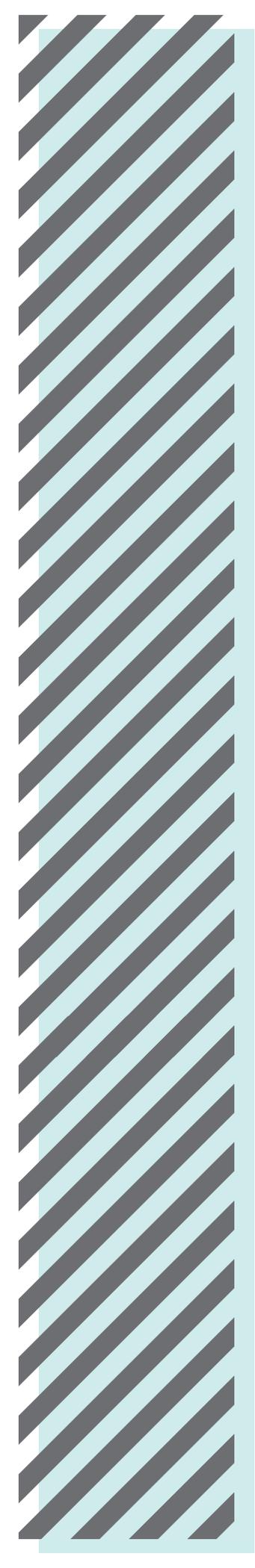
### **SAMPLE NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONS ADAPTED FROM THE BALANCE CAREERS:**

- How do you remain current with your technical expertise and skills?
- What's your experience of configuration management?
- What is your home network set up like?
- How do you archive your network?
- Explain the differences between a hub, switch, and router.
- How would you diagnose a DNS issue compared to a network issue?
- What is the difference between TCP and UDP?
- What is a VLAN?

- 
- What is a TCP three-way handshake?
  - What is 255.255.255.255 used for?
  - When would you use a crosslink cable?
  - What will happen if you leave the default gateway information empty while manually configuring TCP/IP?
  - How can you access a shared folder from a remote computer? Name at least three methods.
  - How do you perform system maintenance? Walk me through your preferred process.
  - What's your background in operating systems and maintenance?
  - What is DHCP?
  - What is the difference between a workgroup and a domain?
  - What are the main differences between Windows Home, Windows Pro, and Windows Server?
  - How would you recommend we support our virtual employees?
  - What auditing tools or approaches do you prefer? Why?

### **MORE RESOURCES:**

- [Ultimate Guide to Technical Interviews](#) from [LearnToCodeWithMe](#)
- Practice with virtual mock technical interviews from [Pramp!](#)
- [13 Common Technical Interview Questions](#) from [Indeed](#)
- [Technical Interview Questions](#) from [Workable](#)
- [IT Job Interview Questions](#) from [The Balance Careers](#)



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### **JOB INTERVIEWS ARE SPECIFIC AND UNIQUE.**

Job interviews vary by industry depending on the duties, qualifications, and skills required so it is critical that you have a good understanding of what exactly recruiters are looking for. It is important to master not only general interview questions, but also industry-specific ones. This is especially key when your industry has its own unique interview type and process, such as the technical interview for computer science related jobs.

### **LOOK AT BOTH INDUSTRY-WIDE AND JOB-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS.**

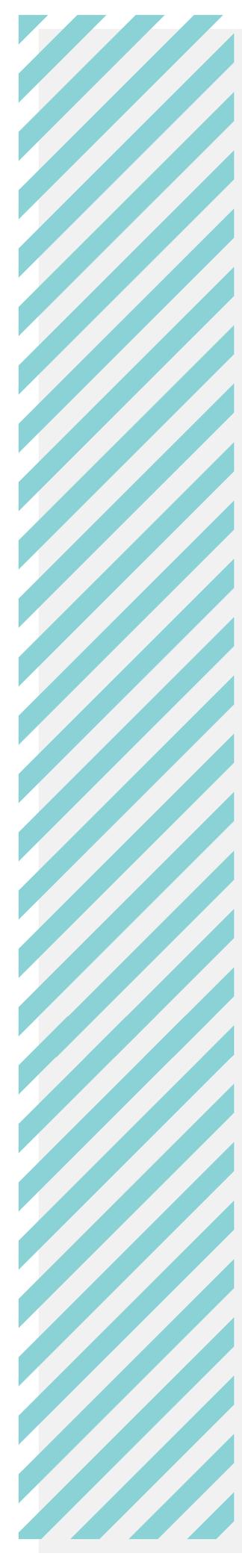
Industry-wide questions offer a useful overview of the general ideologies, new developments, industry knowledge, and certifications required for candidates applying for similar positions. Job-specific questions offer a more detailed picture as to your potential job responsibilities and the technical knowledge you need to master.

### **DO YOUR OWN RESEARCH.**

This guidebook is just a starting point. Be sure to research on your own as well! Great sites to explore further for interview questions and tips include [The Balance Careers](#), [Muse](#), [Betterteam](#), [Workable](#), and [Glassdoor](#). You should also look for industry-specific sites for job search advice and interview preparation tips.

### **UTILIZE MACAULAY'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE!**

Take advantage of [One-On-One Coaching](#) and get help with resumes, cover letters, interviews, the job search, and more! To schedule an appointment or for more information, please contact Gianina Chrisman, Associate Director of Career Development, at [gianina.chrisman@mhc.cuny.edu](mailto:gianina.chrisman@mhc.cuny.edu) or Jamie Ruden, Career Program Coordinator, at [Jamie.Ruden@mhc.cuny.edu](mailto:Jamie.Ruden@mhc.cuny.edu).



## RESOURCES AT YOUR CAMPUS

See below what your campus offers to help you succeed!

### CITY COLLEGE

- Contact a [Career Counselor](#) to schedule a practice interview.

### HUNTER COLLEGE

- Contact a [Career Counselor](#) to schedule a practice interview.

### JOHN JAY COLLEGE

- Attend an [interview workshop](#).
- Borrow a suit through the [Suitcessful Professional Attire Closet](#).

### BARUCH COLLEGE

- Attend an [interview workshop](#) (dates are listed on the Calendar in [STARR Search](#)).
- Contact the [Starr Career Development Center](#) to schedule a mock interview.
- Watch [videos](#) from the Starr Career Development Center on how to prepare for an interview.

### LEHMAN COLLEGE

- Sign-up for [various interview workshops](#).
- Contact the [Career Services Center](#) or log into [Simplicity](#) to schedule a mock interview.

### COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND

- Contact the [Career Services Center](#) to schedule a practice mock interview.

### QUEENS COLLEGE

- Contact the [Career Services Center](#) for various career related appointments.
- Attend an [Interview Workshop](#) (dates are listed on the [QC Calendar](#)).

### BROOKLYN COLLEGE

- Review the [Interview Preparation Checklist](#) from the Magner Career Center.
- Contact the [Magner Career Center](#) to schedule a practice interview.