Questions Asked in Interviews by Category

Employers were surveyed and asked, "When interviewing new college graduates for employment in your organization, what are your best, favorite, or most often used questions?"

Some of these questions are listed below, categorized according to the type of information they are seeking. Before you begin interviewing for a career opportunity, you should review these questions, and be prepared with appropriate answers.

Motivational Factors
Please tell me about yourself. Who or what had the greatest influence on your life? How would you describe yourself? What are some of the greatest personal challenges you have faced during your lifetime? What are some of your personal goals, and have you achieved them? What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?

Skills and Abilities
What skills and abilities do you possess that will help make you successful on today's job market? Please discuss some of your past leadership roles and your accomplishments in them. Please describe a frustrating experience from school or work, and tell me how you dealt with it. How do you interact with people around you (i.e., leadership, communication, socializing, etc.)?

Why should our organization hire you? For you, what are some of the pros and cons of working on a team project? Have you ever supervised someone in a similar position with another organization? How would you describe your supervisory style? Who was the most difficult person you have ever dealt with, and how did you respond?

How did you organize your time in school/work/play? What are your major strengths and weaknesses? What personal factors do you consider most important when evaluating yourself? In what organizational structure do you function best? What organizational techniques do you use on a daily basis to accomplish your academic, work, and social goals?

Please tell me about your communication skills, your personal skills relevant to work experiences, and your problem-solving abilities. Please describe your leadership style. What skills and/or special qualities do you possess for this job that would make you stand out from other candidates? How well do you work with others? What skills and abilities do you bring to this job?
Skills and Abilities (continued)

Please list three personal attributes that you would like to improve, and tell me any efforts you have made to make improvements in these areas?

What do you see as your greatest challenge when starting a new career? How would your friends describe you? Who are two people you admire and respect the most, and why? If you could create the perfect job for yourself, what would you be doing? What is special about you that you feel would make you an attractive candidate for our organization?

Career Goals and Objectives
What are your long-range goals and objectives? How are you preparing to achieve them? What are your goals and aspirations for the next three years? Five years? Ten years? What are your standards of success for a job? Are you goal oriented?

Why do you think you would be good at this profession? What geographical location interests you most when working? What is your timetable for achievement of your current goals?

Do you prefer theoretical or practical problems? Please tell me five things about yourself that would make you an asset to any organization that hired you.

Extra-Curricular Activities
With what extra-curricular activities have you been involved? What have been your greatest challenges for improvement of a campus organization? What do you enjoy doing most? Please describe your most rewarding college experiences. Please cite examples of the challenges you experienced during your leadership positions with campus activities.

If you could re-live your college experiences, what would you do differently? What changes would you make in your overall campus life?

Academic Programs and Achievements
Why did you choose this major field of study? Why did you choose your particular college or university? What were your favorite college courses, those you liked most? Least? Why? What is your grade point average? How do you feel about this? Should grades be used as an indicator of future career potential when an organization is considering new college graduates? What electives did you take outside of your major? Why did you choose these courses? What was the most difficult aspect of obtaining a college degree? What courses gave you the most difficulty? If you could, what changes would you make in your school's academic program?

Work Experience
What prior work experiences have you had? What were your accomplishments in these prior work experiences? What were your most significant achievements? What problems did you experience while on the job? What would your last two employers say about you as an employee, either good or bad?
Work Experience (Cont.)

Can you tell me about your toughest job assignment? What experiences did you have when meeting deadlines for project completion? Tell me about a conflict situation, and how you resolved it.

What life experiences have given you the greatest reward? What one experience proved to you that you would be a capable manager? Please elaborate on one of the work experiences on your resume. Please tell me about the duties/requirements of your last job? What did you see as your major strengths/weaknesses on this job?

Knowledge of the Position and Industry
Why do you want to work in the position you are seeking? What attracts you to this industry? What are your expectations of the XYZ Corporation? What do you know about our company? Why did you choose to interview with our company?

Accomplishments and Achievements
In addition to your educational and professional experiences, what else would you like us to know about you in order to make an appropriate decision? Please tell me about some of the accomplishments you achieved during college and which make you the proudest. How did you finance your education?

Salary and Benefits
What starting salary do you expect as an employee? What company benefits are most important to you? How do you feel about an income made up totally of commissions? When comparing one company offer to another, what factors will be important to you besides starting salary? How important is starting salary to you when considering our company's job offer?