# Interview Guide – Skills/Competencies

**Audience:** Recruiters, Recruiting Coordinators, Hiring Managers, Department Recruiting Assistants

## Overview/Introduction:

Core competencies are a set of essential capabilities that are important for success across many disciplines and professions. CMU's Office of Human Resources has identified seven competencies that align with CMU's core values.

Incorporating CMU's core competencies into the interview guide is vital for selecting candidates who possess the requisite skills and who align with our values, culture and strategic objectives.

Review the Core Competencies below for a definition and selection of recommended and approved interview questions to incorporate into your interview guide/process. After selecting some questions from the Core Competencies, we encourage adding questions from the Additional Competencies to foster a more well-rounded evaluation of the candidate's abilities, potential, and fit.

Not seeing a particular competency or have an additional question you'd like to add to your interview guide? Contact your recruiter.

## Contents

# Interview Guide – Skills/Competencies

**Audience:** Recruiters, Recruiting Coordinators, Hiring Managers, Department Recruiting Assistants

# Carnegie Mellon University

# Interview Guide – Skills/Competencies

**Audience:** Recruiters, Recruiting Coordinators, Hiring Managers, Department Recruiting Assistants

## CMU Core Competencies

## Accountability

**Definition:** Takes responsibility and ownership for decisions, actions and results; accountable for both what and how work is accomplished; eliminates risk, ensures safety and compliance.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1.  What does accountability mean to you? |
| 2.  Describe a time you had to work with others to solve a problem. |
| 3.  How do you motivate yourself to finish a project or task? |
| 4.  Tell about a time when you received constructive feedback. |
| 5.  Share a time you made a mistake at work and the steps you took to correct it. |
| 6.  Tell about a time when you held a colleague accountable. |
| 7.  How have you demonstrated accountability in your previous roles, and what were the outcomes of your actions? |
| 8.  Tell me about a time you failed to meet a deadline. |

## Collaboration and Teamwork

**Definition:** Works cooperatively with other individuals and makes valued contributions to the outputs of others to assist own team or project to achieve the required outputs.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1.  Tell me about a time when you worked closely with colleagues to achieve a certain goal. What was your specific role? |
| 2.  Tell me about a time when you disagreed with a coworker on a project. How did you resolve the disagreement and what was the outcome? |
| 3.  Would you rather work on your own or collaborate with others, and explain your preference? |
| 4.  How have you dealt with a co-worker who is not putting in the expected effort? |
| 5.  Can you share an example of a difficult work scenario that you had to manage? |
| 6.  Tell me about a time you worked well as part of a team. |
| 7.  In your opinion, what qualities make an effective team? |
| 8.  What are the disadvantages of collaboration in the workplace, if any? |

## Communication

**Definition:** Delivers clear, effective communication and takes responsibility for understanding others.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1.  How do you prefer to build rapport with others? |
| 2.  How would you simplify a complex issue to explain it to a client or colleague? |
| 3.  How would you go about explaining a complex idea/problem to a client who was already frustrated? |
| 4.  Talk about a successful presentation you gave and why you think it went well. |
| 5.  Name a time when you had to explain a complicated technical problem to a colleague with less technical understanding? |
| 6.  Provide an example of a time when you misunderstood an important communication on the job. |

## Carnegie Mellon University

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|---|
| 7. Describe a time when you persuaded someone else to do something that they did not want to do. |
| 8. How have you handled working under someone you felt was not an effective communicator? |

## Inclusive Excellence

**Definition:** Respects, seeks to understand, and values individual differences; helps create a welcoming environment that encourages contributions from all individuals; respectfully listens to the opinions, concerns, and ideas of others; pursues opportunities to include and engage others with skills, interests or experiences different from one's own.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. How do you approach understanding the point of view of colleagues whose perspectives differe from your own? |
| 2. Describe a time when a project or decision you made was enhanced by collaborating with someone whose perspective different from your own in a meaningful way. |
| 3. Provide an example of a time when you identified an issue in your organization or worked to make a process more welcoming and inclusive. How did you address it? |

## Leadership

**Definition:** Proactively engages in making the organization a success by working effectively to accomplish objectives in own position and by building consensus on common goals.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Tell me about a time when a mistake occurred at your job, and you took the initiative to solve the problem. |
| 2. Tell me about a time you anticipated a challenge and found a solution. |
| 3. What values do you have as a leader, and how do you try to embody those values? |
| 4. Which of your past experiences best prepared you for a leadership role? |
| 5. Is there any area of leadership where you struggle? How does it impact your performance? |
| 6. How do you monitor the performance of the people that you have to lead? |
| 7. Leaders are often required to make tough decisions. Tell me about a time you made a decision that not everyone agreed with. |
| 8. Can you describe a time when you had to lead a team through a challenging project or task? What were the obstacles you faced, and how did you motivate and guide your team to overcome them? How did you ensure that everyone was aligned and working towards a common goal? What was the outcome, and what did you learn from the experience? |

## Problem-Solving

**Definition:** Identifies problems and uses logic, judgment, and data to evaluate alternatives and recommend solutions to achieve the desired organizational goal or outcome.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe for me a decision you made that would normally have been made by your supervisor. What was the outcome? |
| 2. How do you analyze different options to determine which is the best alternative? |

## Carnegie Mellon University

# Interview Guide – Skills/Competencies

**Audience:** Recruiters, Recruiting Coordinators, Hiring Managers, Department Recruiting Assistants

3. Tell me about a time when you had a work problem and didn't know what to do.
4. Tell me about a time when you solved one problem but created others.
5. What was one of the toughest problems you ever solved? What process did you go through to solve it?
6. If you're not confident in your math skills, but need to conduct a statistical analysis of your group's performance to share with other departments, what steps should you take?
7. What have you done when faced with an obstacle to an important project? Give me an example.
8. Can you describe a time when you identified a problem before it became a major issue and what steps you took to solve it?

## Service

**Definition:** Helps others in support of organizational goals. Ability to meet or exceed customer service needs and expectations and provide excellent service directly or indirectly.

### Questions

1. Give an example of a time you had a conflict with a customer/colleague? How did you handle it?
2. Describe a situation where you had to handle a customer's problem, but you didn't have the authority or resources to resolve it immediately. How did you handle the situation, and what steps did you take to ensure the customer felt heard and valued while the issue was being resolved?
3. When working with multiple customers, how do you prioritize their needs?
4. Describe a time when you turned a dissatisfied customer into a satisfied one? What steps did you take to do so?
5. Give me an example of a time when you had to explain something complex to a frustrated client or coworker. How did you make sure they understood you?
6. Describe a time when it was especially important to make a good impression on a client. How did you approach things?
7. Tell me about a time that you were unclear about a customer's request. What steps did you take to clarify things?
8. Can you give me an example of a time when you went above and beyond to exceed a customer's expectations? What motivated you to take those extra steps, and what was the outcome?

## Additional Competencies

## Adaptability

**Definition:** Easily adjusts to changing circumstances; can keep up with moving priorities, projects, clients, and technology; skilled at dealing with changes at work, whether to process updates or their work environment.

### Questions

1. Tell me about a time you had to learn a new task at work. What did you do to speed up the learning process?
2. What are some challenges you have experienced when starting a new job?
3. Can you describe a time when you were assigned a project or task that was outside your comfort zone or expertise? How did you approach the situation and learn what you needed to be successful? What strategies did you use to stay motivated and overcome any challenges or obstacles that arose during the project? What was the outcome, and what did you learn from the experience in terms of adaptability?

# Carnegie Mellon University

4. Tell me about a time someone asked you to do something outside of your job description. How did you handle it?
5. Give an example of a time when you were required to adapt to your job and how you did it.
6. In the past, how have you helped your colleagues adjust to changes?
7. Tell me about a time when you were working on a project for a client and the requirements changed unexpectedly. What was your reaction, and how did you handle the situation?

## Advocate for Change

**Definition:** Promotes change and champions their efforts toward making the change happen. Change advocates can exist at all levels of an organization; advocates for the change by publicly supporting it and recommending it to others.

| Questions |
| --- |
| 1. Tell me about a time when you encountered resistance to change. How did you handle the situation, and what was the outcome? |
| 2. Describe your experience with change management. What methods have you found to be effective in managing change, and what challenges have you faced in the past? |
| 3. Can you share an example of a significant change initiative you led or were involved in? What was your role, and how did you approach the change process? |
| 4. Suppose you identified a process that could be improved. How would you propose and implement the change? What steps would you take to ensure that the change is successful? |
| 5. Have you ever implemented changes that didn't have the intended effect? What did you do to address the situation, and what did you learn from the experience? |
| 6. How do you ensure that everyone's perspectives are considered when working with a large group of people? What strategies have you found to be effective? |
| 7. When faced with a problem or challenge, describe your process for generating new ideas and solutions. What methods have you found to be effective in stimulating creativity and innovation? |
| 8. In your opinion, what is the most critical factor to consider when implementing significant changes in an organization? How do you ensure that the change is successful and sustainable? |

## Attention to Detail

**Definition:** Completes a task while demonstrating a thorough concern for all areas involved, no matter how small; monitors and checks work or information, while organizing time and resources efficiently.

| Questions |
| --- |
| 1. Can you describe a time when you were working on a project or task that required both attention to detail and a focus on the bigger picture? How did you balance these two aspects, and what was the outcome of your approach? |
| 2. Can you provide an example of a time when your attention to detail and desire for quality positively impacted the outcome of a project or task? Conversely, have you ever encountered a situation where your focus on quality may have hindered progress or negatively affected team dynamics? |
| 3. What methods do you use to check for quality, especially when you must meet tight deadlines? |
| 4. How do you manage daily tasks at work? Name the organizing tools and technologies you use. |
| 5. Describe a time when your attention to detail ensured that the quality of a project was high. What steps did you take to ensure that everything was accurate, and what was the outcome of your efforts? |

6. How do you manage to limit distractions in the workplace?
7. What techniques do you use when you want to find errors that are not easily noticeable?
8. Describe a time you identified an error made by your manager or a colleague. How did you address it with them?

## Analytical Thinking

**Definition:** Comprehends a situation by breaking it down into its components and identifying key or underlying complex issues.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe a time when you were given a problem without much information. How did you handle this situation? |
| 2. How do you compare the pros and cons before you decide?  Describe your process for troubleshooting an issue. |
| 3. Give an example of a time when you had to take a risk to achieve your desired goal. What was your approach, and what was the outcome? |
| 4. Describe a situation where you had to use your research skills to gather the information that was necessary to solve a problem. How did you go about this? |
| 5. Imagine a situation in which one of your colleagues wants to solve a problem in a certain way, but the other colleague has a different approach in mind. They come to you asking for help in deciding on the right approach. What do you do? |
| 6. Describe a project or situation where you successfully demonstrated your analytical abilities. |
| 7. Your manager is keen to buy a new piece of software or hardware that is intended to increase team productivity and asks you for a recommendation. How would you approach this request? |
| 8. Can you tell me about a time when you had to analyze a complex situation, break it down into smaller parts, and develop a solution? What analytical tools or techniques did you use, and what was the outcome? |

## Building Relationships/Relationship Management

**Definition:** Builds and maintains ethical relationships or networks or contacts with people who are, or maybe, potentially helpful in achieving work-related goals and establishing advantages.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. How do you build relationships with your colleagues within the workplace? |
| 2. Describe a time when you were unsuccessful in building a productive relationship with a difficult person. |
| 3. Can you provide an example of a time when you received constructive criticism from a colleague, supervisor, or team member? How did you respond to the feedback, and what impact did it have on your relationship with the person providing the criticism? |
| 4. Can you describe a time when you successfully built a productive relationship with a colleague, supervisor, or team member? What specific actions or behaviors did you engage in to establish and maintain the relationship? |

**Carnegie Mellon University**

5. Can you provide an example of a project or task where you worked as part of a team? What role did you play in the team, and what did you find to be the most rewarding and challenging aspects of working collaboratively?
6. What have you done to improve relationships with your customers?
7. Can you tell me about a time when you developed and maintained a relationship with a business partner and explain how you did it?

## Business Acumen

**Definition:** Understands the business implications of decisions and the ability to strive to improve organizational performance.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Tell me about a time you used your knowledge of the organization to get an idea approved. |
| 2. Tell me about a time you used financial data to support a successful project. |
| 3. Tell me about a time when you used industry data to support a successful project. |
| 4. Tell me about a time when you used economic environment data to support a successful project. |
| 5. What have you done in your previous positions at other companies/organizations that made a significant difference to the business and for which you believe you will be remembered? |
| 6. Recall an occasion when you had to explain your department's losses. |
| 7. Can you give me an example of a time when you demonstrated excellent business judgment and problem-solving skills? |
| 8. Tell me about the most successful project you worked on, where your strong business acumen was instrumental in its success. |

## Continuous Improvement

**Definition:** Proactively takes actions to improve personal capability to meet organizational goals; willing to assess their level of development, expertise and performance relative to one's current job, or as part of focused career planning.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. In the last year, what skills have you learned to make your job easier? How did you start learning these skills and how did you develop them to their current level? |
| 2. Have you ever been in a role that required you to learn new skills? What were they? |
| 3. What do you think is an area you need to keep growing in professionally? |
| 4. What are new skills you plan to learn over the next six months? |
| 5. Are there any apps/programs/websites you regularly use to stay current on industry knowledge/skills? |
| 6. If you are uncertain about how to proceed with a task or project assigned by your manager, what actions would you take? |
| 7. Have you ever wanted to expand or change your role? What skills were required to do this? What steps did you take toward learning these skills? |

Carnegie Mellon University

# Interview Guide – Skills/Competencies

**Audience:** Recruiters, Recruiting Coordinators, Hiring Managers, Department Recruiting Assistants

## Conflict Resolution

**Definition:** Involves developing the skills necessary to effectively navigate conflict in the workplace. This includes building positive and productive relationships that facilitate the prevention and/or resolution of conflicts, identifying sources of conflict and implementing strategies to address them, actively listening to all parties involved, and collaborating to find mutually beneficial solutions.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Tell me about a time you disagreed with a coworker's idea on a project you were both working on together. How did you express your opposition and what happened? |
| 2. What would you do if your manager gave you constructive feedback on the way you approached a problem? |
| 3. How do you deal with dissatisfied customers who complain about your products/services? |
| 4. Describe a situation where you faced a conflict at work. What was your role and how did you handle it? |
| 5. How would you advise a team member who complained about a coworker's behavior? |
| 6. Have you ever faced a conflict of interest during a cross-departmental project? What did you do? |
| 7. A co-worker keeps raising objectives on a project.  How would you approach this person for a productive outcome? |
| 8.  How would you react if a coworker blamed you for something that wasn't entirely your fault (e.g., missing a deadline) during a meeting? |

## Creativity

**Definition:** Able to express creativity through ideas or products that are both original and effective.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe a time when you had to think "outside the box" and how you went about it? |
| 2. Provide an instance when you employed innovative or creative thought to resolve any issues with a product or process that caused frustration? |
| 3. Tell me about a time when you had to develop a creative approach to problem-solving to get the job done. |
| 4. In what ways have you encouraged your work team to be more creative and innovative? |
| 5. Tell me about a business problem that you had to solve uniquely or innovatively. What was the outcome? |
| 6. Give me an example of a time when someone presented an innovative new idea to you that was a bit unusual. How did you react? What did you do? |
| 7. What is the most creative idea or project you have generated in your current role? How was it received? |
| 8. How do you deal with colleagues not understanding or appreciating your creative ideas? |

## Decision Making

**Definition:** Accepts responsibility, determines a course of action, and accounts for their actions; focuses on taking action to achieve goals or standards.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Two employees are having regular conflicts with each other and often disturb the team's balance. How would you handle this situation? |
| 2. Describe a time you made an unpopular decision. How did you handle the feedback? How might you have handled the situation differently? |
| 3. Do you usually make better decisions alone or with a group? Why? When do you ask for help? |

**Carnegie Mellon University**

4. In your experience, when you're working on a team project, do you make the most decisions or do you prefer to step back and follow someone else's guidance? Why?
5. Describe a time when you had to make an immediate decision on a critical issue.
6. While working on a team project, you notice that some of your coworkers are falling behind. What would you do to help your team meet the deadline?
7. How would you deal with a demanding external stakeholder who keeps changing requirements about a specific project you're working on?
8. You want your manager to buy new software that will help your work and you're trying to choose between two options. The first is more expensive but has better reviews and the second has fewer features but is within budget. Which one would you recommend and why?

## Dedication

**Definition:** Commitment to produce high-quality results by developing and achieving goals that align with the university's distinctive work ethic and commitment to excellence.

| Questions |
| --- |
| 1. Why did you leave your previous position? |
| 2. What do you think could have motivated you to stay in your previous position? |
| 3. Where do you see yourself 5 years from now? |
| 4. What career goals have you set for yourself? |
| 5. How do you define success? |
| 6. From your experience, what motivates you to do your best work? |
| 7. Please share a time when you went above and beyond your job description. What did you do and what was the outcome? |
| 8. If you're stuck in a rut at work, which can happen to anyone for a myriad of reasons, what do you do to keep yourself motivated? |

## Developing Direct Reports and Others

**Definition:** A manager's ability to identify and nurture the potential of their team members, provide feedback, coaching, and support to help them achieve their goals, and ultimately help them develop their skills and advance their careers.

| Questions |
| --- |
| 1. What three words would you use to describe your management style? |
| 2. What was your greatest disappointment as a manager and how did you navigate that challenge? |
| 3. Is there a difference between a manager and a leader? Please explain. |
| 4. How would you provide positive feedback or praise to a team member for their efforts? |
| 5. What did or what would you do if a direct report was not meeting expectations? Please explain your strategy and outcome (if relevant). |
| 6. Do you believe that competition is healthy among a team? Why or why not? |
| 7. Have you ever held a position or assumed a task for which you were not prepared or qualified? What did you learn in that process and how has that experience shaped your supervisory approach? |
| 8. Tell me about the most difficult situation you have had when leading a team. What happened and what did you do? Was it successful? What was the most important thing you did? |

## Carnegie Mellon University

# Interview Guide – Skills/Competencies

**Audience:** Recruiters, Recruiting Coordinators, Hiring Managers, Department Recruiting Assistants

## Drive for Results

**Definition:** Focuses on desired results and sets and achieves challenging goals.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Tell me about your current or most recent position and how you helped the organization accomplish its goals and mission. |
| 2. How have you reacted when you found yourself stalled in an inefficient process? |
| 3. Tell me about a time when you inherited a process that wasn't working and you had limited time to fix it. |
| 4. A project is brought to a standstill due to a co-worker's lack of productivity. What are your next steps? |
| 5. Can you share the most challenging goal you have set for yourself and your team? How did you approach achieving it? |
| 6. Describe a time when you achieved a goal that seemed to big to achieve.  What did you do to make this happen? |
| 7. Discuss a time you failed to meet your goals.  Why did this happen? In hindsight, what would you do differently? |
| 8. Can you share your approach to implementing a plan? |

## Empathy and Compassion

**Definition:** Listens attentively to understand the other person's point of view and communicates effectively with many diverse types of people.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. What does empathy mean to you? |
| 2. When is it most important to use empathy? |
| 3. What is the most important thing about using empathy in the workplace? |
| 4. How would you describe the relationship between empathy and leadership? |
| 5. How would you describe the relationship between empathy and collaboration? |
| 6. What's your process for resolving disagreements at work? |
| 7. How would you describe the relationship between empathy and problem-solving? |

## Financial Acumen

**Definition:** Maintains and applies a broad understanding of financial management principles to ensure decisions are fiscally sound and responsible.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe a time when you went over budget at work? How did you handle this? |
| 2. Describe a tough financial analysis problem you were able to solve and how you solved it. |
| 3. What would you do if your proposed budget was rejected by management? |
| 4. Discuss a situation when an expense was greater or less than originally planned. How did you address the surplus or shortage? |
| 5. What experience do you have with financial planning and analysis? |
| 6. Is it possible to have a positive cash flow but to be in financial trouble? |
| 7. Describe your budget creation and management experience. |

## Carnegie Mellon University

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|---|
| 8. Tell me about your fiscal management experience: budgeting, reporting, cutting costs, and building and maintaining reserves. |

## Flexibility

**Definition:** Able and willing to adapt to and work effectively within a variety of diverse situations, and with diverse individuals or groups.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Give an example of a time when you were trying to meet a deadline and you were interrupted and did not make the deadline. How did you respond? |
| 2. Give an example of a time when you had to quickly change project priorities. How did you do it? |
| 3. Describe a situation in which you went out of your way to help someone even though it was outside of your comfort zone. |
| 4. How do you adjust to changes you have no control over? |
| 5. How do you handle having multiple priorities at the same time? |
| 6. How do you work with people who have a different work style than yourself? |

## Impact

**Definition:** Seeing positive, effective, and worthwhile outcomes and results from your work that reflect the university's commitment to addressing critical issues.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. What is your most significant achievement and why? |
| 2. What do you see as the major challenge of this position and how would you meet this challenge? |
| 3. Why did you choose this profession or field? |
| 4. What professional development activities have you been involved in over the past few years? |
| 5. Who has had the biggest impact on you professionally? Please explain. |

## Influence/Negotiation

**Definition:** Able to influence, persuade, or convince others to adopt a specific course of action, negotiating to achieve a desired result.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Have you ever had to champion an unpopular change? What was the situation, and how did you handle it? |
| 2. Have you ever had to persuade a peer or supervisor to accept an idea that you knew they would not like? Tell me about the resistance you met and how you overcame it. |
| 3. Have you ever had to persuade a group to accept a proposal or idea? How did you go about doing it? What was the result, and how did you feel about it? |
| 4. Have you ever had to persuade an executive (or supervisor) to accept a proposal or idea? How did you go about doing it? What was the result, and how did you feel about it? |
| 5. Describe a time you used your communication skills to negotiate with an unhappy customer or co-worker. |
| 6. Can you give an example of a time when you had to negotiate? |
| 7. Describe a time you negotiated a successful outcome. |
| 8. Describe a time a negotiation failed. What did you learn from this experience? |

## Carnegie Mellon University

# Interview Guide – Skills/Competencies

**Audience:** Recruiters, Recruiting Coordinators, Hiring Managers, Department Recruiting Assistants

## Initiative

**Definition:** The ability to recognize and create opportunities and to act accordingly. Starting something rather than waiting passively for it to happen.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe a project or idea (not necessarily your own) that was implemented primarily because of your efforts. What was your role? What was the outcome? |
| 2. Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do? What was the result? What, if anything, do you wish you had done differently? |
| 3. Tell me about a project you initiated. What did you do? Why? What was the outcome? Were you happy with the result? |
| 4. Tell me about a time when your initiative caused a change to occur. |
| 5. What has been the best idea you have come up with during your professional career? |
| 6. Detail a situation when you recognized there was a better way to do something, and you took the initiative to improve the process. |
| 7. Tell me about a time when you took on extra responsibility or went beyond your set role. |

## Integrity

**Definition:** Gains the trust of others by taking responsibility for own actions and telling the truth.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. How do you behave when you have made a mistake? |
| 2. How did you handle a failure at work in the past? |
| 3. What values are important to you in your workplace? |
| 4. Tell me about a time your integrity was challenged. |
| 5. Tell me about a specific time when you had to handle a tough problem that challenged fairness or ethical issues. |
| 6. Tell me about a time when you experienced a loss for doing what is right. How did you react? |
| 7. Think of a situation where you distrusted a co-worker/supervisor, resulting in tension between you. What steps did you take to improve the relationship? |
| 8. What does integrity mean to you? |

## Leveraging Technology

**Definition:** Seeks out ways to employ technology to optimize organizational and individual performance.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. How do you keep your technology skills current? |
| 2. To be successful in this position, what technological skills do you believe are essential? |
| 3. How do you think technology advances will impact your job? |
| 4. Describe an experience in which you used your own time to stay up to date with innovations and industry trends in your area and/or in general. How did the information you gleaned become useful, and what do you do today to stay on top of technological advancements? |

**Carnegie Mellon University**

5. Can you explain how you use technology to effectively organize and prioritize your work to meet team goals, expectations, and deliverables?
6. What's a new software or technology you recently worked with and how did you come to learn it?
7. How do you handle having multiple tasks at a time and how do you stay organized?

## Managerial Courage

**Definition:** Tactfully dispenses direct and actionable feedback; is open and direct with others without being intimidating; deals head-on with people's problems and uncertain situations.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe your most recent discussion with one of your direct reports who was having or causing problems. How did you get involved? How did it turn out? |
| 2. Tell me about a time when you had to provide constructive feedback to a direct report, outside contractor, other agency, etc. who was not meeting expectations. |
| 3. Discuss a time when you managed someone who had a performance problem. What was your relationship with this individual? Describe what you did, said, felt and thought as well as the outcome. |
| 4. Share an example of a time you helped someone identify and modify a behavior that was impeding their performance. |
| 5. Can you give an example of a situation where your presence is authoritative, but not intimidating to others? |
| 6. Can you share an experience where you struggled to address someone's problems directly? What factors contributed to your success or failure in handling the situation? |
| 7. Tell me about a situation when you had a differing opinion from others in a group and how you got your point across. |
| 8. Give me an example of a time you needed to give constructive feedback to one of your peers or someone at a higher level in the organization about their behavior. |

## Message Development and Delivery

**Definition:** Uses writing skills and editorial judgment to strategically develop messages for various audiences; and delivers them by evaluating the most appropriate media channel(s) for the particular needs of the target audience.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe a situation where you had to share negative information with a client? |
| 2. Give an example of a situation where you demonstrated exceptional verbal communication skills. |
| 3. An important event is scheduled for next week. How would you remind others of it, using written communication? |
| 4. Give me an example of a situation where you needed to handle a customer complaint using written communication. How did you resolve it? |
| 5. Can you elaborate on why it's important to have strong non-verbal communication abilities while interacting with coworkers? |
| 6. Have you ever had to communicate with a colleague who was not comfortable with verbal communication? Which methods did you use? |
| 7. How would you explain a complex issue that requires technical knowledge to a colleague who had just begun work at the company/organization? |

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# Interview Guide – Skills/Competencies

**Audience:** Recruiters, Recruiting Coordinators, Hiring Managers, Department Recruiting Assistants

## Motivating Others

**Definition:** Inspires others' commitment to their work and organizational excellence. Helps others see the personal benefits of doing their job well. Encourages others to do their best. Looks for and uses new, creative ways to motivate others. Acknowledges achievements and contributions.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Give me an example of a time when you had high morale on the job and what caused it? How did you contribute to the morale of others? |
| 2. In your current role, what do you think is your organization's greatest concern? What have you done to affect some change? How? |
| 3. What do you do to reward good performance on your team? |
| 4. What have you found to be the best way to get other people to accept your ideas? |
| 5. What motivates you to go to work every day? |
| 6. How have you created a work environment that employees find motivating? |
| 7. In your experience, what is the key to developing a high-performing team? |
| 8. Can you describe a time when you had to complete a task that you found repetitive and how did you keep yourself motivated to complete it? |

## Navigating Ambiguity

**Definition:** Maintains focus and productivity in uncertain situations or without complete information.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision without all of the required information. |
| 2. Share an example about a situation when you were not clear on what your supervisor wanted from you on a project/assignment and how you handled it. |
| 3. Describe a time when you took a risk in your work. What was the outcome? |
| 4. Tell me about a time when you had to work on a project with unclear responsibilities. |
| 5. Decision-making in the face of uncertainty can be difficult. What, if anything, are you doing to increase your tolerance for ambiguity? |
| 6. Tell me about a situation where you persuaded your team to move forward instead of waiting for more data? |

## Planning and Prioritization

**Definition:** Plans and organizes work activities; manages several tasks at once; assesses the relative importance of activities and assignments; adjusts priorities when appropriate.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. How do you organize your day when you have to work on multiple projects simultaneously? |
| 2. Describe a situation where unexpected changes or disruptions forced you to adjust your priorities or plans. How did you handle the situation, and what steps did you take to ensure that your team or stakeholders were informed and able to adapt to the new circumstances? |
| 3. Describe a time you felt overwhelmed with competing priorities at work. What did you do? |
| 4. If you're reporting to more than one manager, how do you prioritize your duties? |

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| 5.  How would you reply if your manager suddenly asked you to complete a challenging task on a tight deadline? |

## Political Sensitivity

**Definition:** The ability of an individual to understand and navigate complex interpersonal dynamics and power structures within an organization or environment. It involves being aware of the different perspectives, needs, and interests of various stakeholders, and being able to communicate and interact with them effectively and diplomatically, particularly when dealing with sensitive or contentious issues.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1.  Being cognizant of organizational culture and politics is useful in many circumstances. Tell me about a time that demonstrates your ability to appropriately adjust your style to be more effective because you understood the dynamics of a specific organizational culture and its politics. |
| 2.  Can you share an example of a time when you successfully demonstrated political sensitivity by anticipating, planning for, and mitigating complex political situations within a work environment? What steps did you take to navigate these situations effectively, and what was the outcome of your efforts? |
| 3.  Describe a time you had to maneuver around potential organizational landmines to bring a project to completion successfully. |
| 4.  Tell me about a time you had to use your understanding of the politics of the business/organization to push a program through that you believed in. |
| 5.  Tell me about a time that demonstrates your skill to both anticipate and solve complex political problems. |
| 6.  Describe a situation that demonstrates your skill to maneuver through complex political situations. |
| 7.  Describe a situation that demonstrates your skill in building and using effective relationships and networks, both inside and outside of an organization. |

## Program, Process or Project Management

**Definition:** Is strategic to set direction; provide support; as well as anticipate and remove obstacles related to a project; is accountable for all tasks and responsibilities associated with a project and its deliverables.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1.  Tell me about a long-term project that you were responsible for that required you to communicate with numerous people and departments. |
| 2.  Tell me about your favorite project that you managed and what you enjoyed about it. |
| 3.  Tell me about the most challenging project you managed. |
| 4.  Have you had a nonproductive team member on your project team? What happened, and how did you handle this situation? |
| 5.  Tell me about a project you worked on and how it helped the organization meet its business goals. |
| 6.  Give me an example of a project that best describes your organizational skills. |
| 7.  Describe an incident where something went wrong in your project while you were managing it. How did you resolve the issue? |
| 8.  Describe a time when one of your projects fell behind schedule. How did you recover? |
| 9.  What do you do to ensure you meet strict deadlines to ensure the project, program or process is implemented timely without delays? |

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| 10. How do you measure the success of a program, process or program? |

## Persistence

**Definition:** The ability to hold on to views and plans of action despite adversity.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. What has been the biggest disappointment/failure you have encountered in your work? How did you deal with it? |
| 2. Can you provide an example of a time when you encountered resistance from others regarding an idea you believed in? How did you handle the situation, and what steps did you take to ensure that the idea was thoroughly evaluated and considered before making a decision? |
| 3. Describe a specific setback you have faced. How did you deal with it? |
| 4. Give an example of a situation in which you feel you did not persist long enough? |

## Presentation

**Definition:** Speaks effectively before an audience, and imparts knowledge and key information.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe a time when you had to educate yourself about a topic to make a presentation. |
| 2. Have you ever given a presentation to a group? How did you prepare for it? What would you do differently? |
| 3. How do you adapt your presentations for different audiences? |
| 4. If your listeners look bored, uninterested, or unengaged in a presentation, what do you do? |
| 5. Describe a time when you had to present complex information to a non-technical audience. How did you ensure that they understood the information, and what steps did you take to simplify the content? |
| 6. Tell me about a time when you had to deliver a presentation with limited time to prepare. How did you manage to create a quality presentation under time constraints, and what was the outcome? |
| 7. Describe a presentation you gave that didn't go as planned. What happened, and how did you handle it? What did you learn from the experience? |
| 8. Tell me about a presentation you gave that required you to use multimedia or visual aids. How did you incorporate them into your presentation, and what was the outcome? |

## Resilience

**Definition:** Learns from experience; exhibits flexibility; demonstrates self-awareness; focuses on solutions.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe a work situation where you were close to giving up.  How did you overcome this? |
| 2. Describe a time you were stressed at work. How did you respond? |
| 3. Describe a time when someone else put pressure on you.  How did you respond? |

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4. Can you tell me about a time when you faced a difficult situation at work that tested your resilience? How did you handle the situation, and what strategies did you use to cope with the challenges you encountered? What did you learn about yourself and your ability to bounce back from adversity?
5. How do you ensure your team doesn't get overwhelmed?
6. Give an example of where resilience helped you overcome adversity?
7. Tell me about a time when you had to adjust to someone's way of working to achieve a goal or complete a project.

## Self-Development

**Definition:** Takes advantage of all opportunities for professional development, seeking feedback on both style and performance, learning from others and gaining valuable lessons from successes and mistakes.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Describe a time when you were not very satisfied or pleased with your performance. What did you do about it? |
| 2. Describe a situation where your professional/technical expertise made a significant difference. |
| 3. Describe a time in which you took initiative rather than waiting to be told what to do. |
| 4. Tell me about a situation in which you had to adjust to changes over which you had no control. How did you handle it? |
| 5. Describe a time when you were asked to do something you did not know how to do.  What steps did you take to understand and complete the task?  What was the outcome? |
| 6. Can you share your thoughts on the essential elements for building and sustaining fruitful business relationships? Additionally, could you provide some examples of how you have effectively implemented these strategies in your own experiences? |
| 7. Can you share how you stay up-to-date with the latest industry changes to maintain your job knowledge? |

## Strategic Planning/Agility

**Definition:** Supports organizational goals and objectives by strategic and/or operations plans. Sees ahead clearly and can anticipate future consequences and trends accurately.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Can you give me an example of a situation where you utilized your skills in envisioning multiple perspectives or future scenarios to address a problem or challenge? |
| 2. Describe the most challenging project you have planned, where you needed to juggle the needs of multiple stakeholders. What did you do? |
| 3. Describe a project you've managed where things did not go to plan. How did you handle it? What was the result? |
| 4. What tools or techniques do you use to manage your time? How do you prioritize projects? Provide an example of when it was difficult to do this. |
| 5. In any project there are times that you will find that people lose focus on the objective. Can you describe a time this has happened to you and what you did about it? |
| 6. Can you tell me about a time when you were able to anticipate and prepare for risks during a project? |
| 7. How do you communicate important information to your team members? |
| 8. Tell us about a time that you demonstrated your skills in building effective networks and relationships, within and outside your organization. |

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| 9. Tell me about a time when a project's requirements changed at the last minute. What did you do? |

## Stress Management/Composure

**Definition:** Keeps emotions under control and restrains negative actions when provoked or faced with opposition or opposition from others, or when working under increasing levels of stress.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Tell me about a work "nightmare" you were involved in. How did you approach the situation, and what was the outcome? |
| 2. Have you ever been caught unaware by a problem or obstacle that you had not foreseen? What happened? |
| 3. What has been the most stressful situation you have ever found yourself in at work? How did you handle it? |
| 4. What have you done in the past to prevent a situation from becoming too stressful for you or your colleagues to handle? |
| 5. Can you give me an example of a time when the demands of your job were constantly changing? How did you manage the situation? |
| 6. Which specific elements of your current role do you find the most stressful? |
| 7. Can you tell me about a time when you received constructive feedback from your manager or peers? How did you handle it? |
| 8. Could you give an example of a time when you had to make an important decision, but you didn't have all of the information? |

## Time Management

**Definition:** Effectively managing one's time and resources to ensure that work is completed efficiently.

| Questions |
|---|
| 1. Please describe how you planned your use of time over the past several weeks. What methods did you use? Please share some decisions you faced when allocating your time. |
| 2. Describe a time when you identified priorities and consciously kept non-critical issues and distractions from interfering with your progress. How did you stay focused? What was the result? |
| 3. It's not always possible to get everything on your task list completed in a single day. Describe a time when your responsibilities became overwhelming. What did you do? |
| 4. Tell me about a time when you had to juggle several projects at the same time. How did you organize your time? What was the result? |
| 5. Describe a long-term project that you kept on track. How did you keep everything moving? |
| 6. Tell me about a time an unexpected problem derailed your planning. How did you recover? |
| 7. How do you ensure that your team members meet the set deadlines? |
| 8. How do you handle several conflicting tasks? |