



Behavioral Management Questions and Rational

Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a challenging project in your job.

Be prepared to demonstrate your management and problem solving skills and willingness to tackle any project. The interviewer is testing your initiative and ambition with this question.

Tell me about a time you that made a critical decision without supervision.

Making decisions quickly and confidently is a critical part of being in a key or leading position. Show your confidence by answering this question with directness and authority. Appear firm, but not dictatorial. When you talk about your ability to make decisions, let the interviewer know that you are able to work with peer groups and leaders. Describe how you've incorporated a habit from a leader you admire.

What policies would you establish to deal with the high level of absenteeism that exists at our company?

The interviewer is seeking to determine if your management and problem-solving techniques are suited for the position. Illustrate the kind of plan you could use in this situation to assess the problem, uncover the issues, and help the employees resolve them in a positive manner. Strong interpersonal skills are essential for anyone in the position of supervisor. Interviewers look for candidates who can communicate effectively, and who are naturally sympathetic, diplomatic and yet effective motivators.

Do you believe that your previous supervisor's management abilities were effective? Why?

Turn this question around and talk about your own management style and the type of manager, employee and peer you'll be. Focus on what you have learned from your current employer. Management styles change frequently so keep up to date with the most effective management styles of your time. Even though you may be interviewing for a specific job, the interviewer is interested in your potential ability to handle different management situations in the future.

Describe your management style.

The interviewer will want to know what your management style is and if it's compatible with the needs of the position. This question usually applies to positions of leadership and management. With this question, the interviewer seeks to unearth any problems or weaknesses you may have managing people. This is also a good way for the interviewer to get a handle on your attitude toward the people you supervise.



How do you deal with difficult people?

The interviewer will want reassurance that you understand the potential stressful nature of dealing with difficult people and that you can handle such situations in a professional manner. Reassure the interviewer that you are able to remain professional and diplomatic at all times.

Give me an example of how you would transfer the responsibilities of specific tasks necessary to complete a project to others under your supervision?

Give specific examples of how you work within a group and on team projects and what type of management style you think would be most effective in a team environment. Illustrate how delegation is empowering to the whole team when used appropriately.

Do you feel you are the type of person who anticipates problems in the workplace?

Give descriptions of previous situations where you were not only able to anticipate problems, but you were able to deal with them before they become major issues and resolve them ahead of time.

Have you managed people in any of the positions you have held?

It is best to answer yes. Candidates with experience managing other people are considered more mature, whether or not their subordinates considered them good leaders. What is important is that you earned the confidence of your employers. If you haven't actually had people reporting to you, talk about your experiences building consensus as part of self-managing teams.

Describe a situation in which you demonstrated independent initiative.

Qualified candidates need to show independent initiative. Explain your attitudes about ingenuity and drive and give a specific example of a time when you handled a problem skillfully on your own. This will demonstrate not only your initiative, but your persistence and perseverance.

What qualities would you want to have in a manager?

Show in your answer that you know what it takes to belong to a team and how to be responsive to the needs of its leaders. Describe an experience that taught you a lesson about effective management and describe the tactics of a manager who got you to perform more than you thought was possible. How did he or she motivate you?

If you encountered resistance from someone on your staff, how would you overcome it?

Offer examples if they are available, and if not talk about problem-solving skills and other resolution enabling methods that you could bring to the team.



What is your definition of a perfect supervisor?

The interviewer is probably trying to determine if you have any idea what it takes to supervise or manage people and how well you get along with others. Briefly list the qualities that you know make a good supervisor. Give personal or popular examples of leaders you believe are effective. Why do you believe those people are able to accomplish so much? What tricks have you learned from the leaders you admire?

Describe the strategy that works best for you when you need to get the cooperation of others on the job.

Communication skills are the key to working in a group environment and with a team. Illustrate clearly that this is one of your strengths and that you are constantly working to improve your ability.

How would you describe your philosophy about management?

You want to demonstrate a desire and ability to delegate, teach, and distribute work and credit fairly. Give an answer that conveys both authority and experience. Talk about what makes your personal style unique and effective. For example, how are you able to get cooperation from others? What specific skills and traits help you get results, and why?

What are some characteristics you look for in a manager?

The potential employer wants to know what style of manager you work well with. Talk about a supervisor's management style and interpersonal skills. Focus on the positive: how the person worked rather than what type of work he or she did. How was the person able to accomplish so much and get your support?

Have you ever hired anyone? What qualities do you seek?

A good way to turn the table on you. Speak about the kinds of qualifications that you know the interviewer is looking for and that you, of course, possess in abundance. Describe the process that demonstrates your ability to check qualifications and intuit the necessary skills, personality, and qualifications required for the position.

If I asked people who have worked with you before about you, what would they say about your management abilities?

Briefly and unobtrusively state your strengths and that you have always related well with subordinates that you have worked with in the past. Although you cannot speak for them, you can describe positive character traits that you find agreeable in others.



How would you define "leadership"? How would you rate yourself as a leader?

Leadership has many definitions, but most examples stress such characteristics as being charismatic, having a strong sense of direction, being able to influence others because they have confidence in you and being able to instill a sense of confidence in them. The interviewer wants to know how you rate your personal success as a leader. What a great opportunity to remind them of your own potential. Stress that individual success depends on the success of the whole. It suggests that the role of the supervisor and manager is to facilitate the success of those who they work with and for.

Why do you think that some companies with great products fail?

This is a question about your vision as a leader. If you are asked this question, you would do well to discuss a specific example of a product or idea that failed because of poor enthusiasm from employees or consumers. Without being overly critical, you should discuss what you would have done differently.

Describe a time when you had to alter your leadership style to be more effective.

Your answer to this question should emphasize your ability to make different kinds of people feel comfortable, so that a reasonable working relationship results. What initiatives did you take to improve a less than ideal situation? Demonstrate that you are willing to modify your leadership style and are flexible when the need arises.

Describe the situation in which you are most comfortable as a leader.

Describe situations in which you have had experience as a creative leader and people have trusted you. This is more an issue of earned authority than of outright authority. Describe instances when you have played the leader well.

Tell me about an effective manager, supervisor, or other person in a leading role that you know personally.

Talk about a supervisor's management style and interpersonal skills. Focus on the positive: how the person worked rather than what type of work he or she did. Explain how the person was able to accomplish so much and get support from everyone.

What types of management do you think are effective?

Give a personal or popular example of a leader you believe is effective. Explain why this person is able to accomplish so much. Talk about your management style and interpersonal skills with peer groups and leaders, and describe how you've incorporated habits from leaders you admire.



What aspect of your management style would you like to change?

Talk about one aspect of your management style that you are working to improve. Tell the interviewer the steps you're taking and give evidence that you're making progress.

Describe a time when you listened to a coworker's suggestion.

This is an opportunity to practice speaking about your flexibility and your interpersonal skills. Demonstrate how people feel comfortable offering you suggestions and believe that you will listen fairly and objectively. Reassure the interviewer that your approach to management is reasonable and fair, and that you respect other people's good ideas.

Tell me about a learning experience that affected your management style.

Describe an experience either positive or negative that taught you a lesson about effective management. Illustrate how you were able to learn how to perform more than you thought possible and how you were motivated to do so.

What do you think are critical skills for a project manager?

As you seek to add responsibility and earn promotions within your company, you have to be able to serve as a project manager. This involves either selling or promoting potential projects internally or selling to corporate groups. Presentation skills, finesse, and judgment are skills you will be evaluated on in interviews to determine your long-term viability.

What kinds of events have you planned in the past? How did they go?

Planning an event can be anything from an in-house training to a trade convention. The best thing to do is to give the interviewer a range of events that you've worked on and then be able to explain one uncomplicated event in depth.

How closely do you monitor your employees' work?

Your answer to this question needs to take into consideration the type of work people will be doing for you. Your answer should be sure to emphasize that your approach involves a balance in supervising people at all times to increase productivity and motivation.

How do you get people who report to you to give you their best performance?

The key here is creating an environment that encourages people to give their best work, and doing what you can to marshal the resources necessary to free them from unnecessary hindrance. Your answer should emphasize the things you do to positively motivate people.



When do you think meetings are an appropriate use of time?

Different interviewers will look for very different answers to this question. Some companies place a great deal of emphasis on meetings and have many, whereas others place little importance on meetings and have very few. Try to gauge the kind of answer the interviewer is looking for.

Does your staff come to you with personal problems?

The interviewer is attempting to determine your management style and whether you have an "open door" policy. It is appropriate to encourage staff to come to you with personal problems when they are interfering with their work progress. Stress that your advice and solutions have always been offered with the company's goals in mind.

Do you run your department by the book or are you flexible?

In many companies, management style is dependent on corporate culture and company philosophy. When that philosophy dictates a very strict interpretation of rules and procedures, it is important to adhere to it. Explain that your main goal is to get the work done by people who perform their jobs with energy and initiative. It is hard to write that in a policy manual.