

Quick Reference: Types of Interview Questions

Listed below are the major types of interviewing questions and when each is best used.

Question	Description/Definition	Examples
YES OR NO	Use sparingly because they yield only limited information.	“Do you know Excel?”
DIRECT	Use to obtain very specific information. This approach is valuable for questioning applicants in depth or on topics raised by applicants in response to open-ended or situational questions. Take care in wording these questions to avoid giving away answers or causing feelings of anxiety/defensiveness (ie instead of asking “Why were you fired from XYZ Company?” you may ask, “What were the circumstances that caused you to leave XZY Company?”).	“What accounting courses have you taken?”
COMPARISON	Ask candidate to compare two different situations, only one of which is important to the job.	“Do you prefer establishing your own work priorities or having them pre-determined for you?”
OPEN-ENDED	Encourage applicants to express ideas and information they feel are important.	“Tell me about your supervisory experience.”

<p>SITUATIONAL</p>	<p>Pose job-related situations to evaluate an applicant's ability to recognise important aspects of situations or problems, analyse them and provide reasonable options. Allow the applicant at least 5 minutes to come up with a workable solution.</p>	<p>"Describe how you deal with a peer you need information from who is ignoring your request."</p>
<p>BEHAVIOURAL</p>	<p>Use to make predictions about an applicant's potential to give specific examples (including resolution method and situation outcome) of a past experience that demonstrates their ability to handle a particular position requirement. <i>General answers are not acceptable.</i></p>	<p>"Describe a situation where others you were working with on a project disagreed with your ideas. What did you do?"</p>
<p>THIRD-PARTY APPRAISAL</p>	<p>Places the burden of interpretation of facts on the applicant, not on you. By using third-party's name, you raise the candor level of the answer.</p>	<p>"If I called your manager, Mr. Jones, why would he say you were promoted so quickly?"</p>
<p>CONTINUUM</p>	<p>Ask applicant to place themselves between two positive qualities, only one which may be very important to the job.</p>	<p>"Are you better at handling criticism or handling stress?"</p>



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