

Interview Guideline

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POSITION: Systems Engineer

INTERVIEWEE: Jane Doe

DEPARTMENT: Engineering

INTERVIEWED:

CREATION DATE: Dec 19, 2019

INTERVIEWER: Kate Horstman

INTERVIEW GUIDE OVERVIEW (DO NOT READ OUT LOUD TO CANDIDATE)

The purpose of this interview guide is to help you evaluate candidates. The questions shown here are drawn from a behavioral analysis of this position, conducted by you or a previous manager. Guidelines are suggested for evaluating the strength of candidates' answers.

We recommend you ask the questions *exactly as they are worded*. This is particularly important if multiple interviewers are interviewing 1 or more candidates (which we also recommend).

Please take notes in the space provided. *Write down what the candidate SAYS, rather than your impressions*. That will help you share the behavioral reasons for your conclusions and decision.

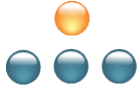
Remember to be as pleasant and friendly as you can be. You can deliver a demanding interview while also being polite and kind.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

(PLEASE READ THIS OUT LOUD)

Thank you for interviewing with me today. Here at Manager Tools we use a behavioral interviewing style. I'll be asking a series of questions about experiences you've had and how you handled them. I've got a series of between 10 and 15 questions, and this might take us an hour, perhaps a little more time. Don't be surprised if others here ask you the same questions in other interviews - that's normal. We want to be sure that every person we hire has the same qualities that have made us so successful.

There will be times when I will ask you for more information, and don't worry, that's normal. I will be taking notes - please don't let it distract you. The way we'll do it is, first, I'll ask you some questions, and then I'll answer any questions you might have of me. When you're done with your questions, we'll finish up. I'm excited you're here - let's get started.



Tell me about yourself.

What behaviors to look for: Can they tell a coherent story of their experience? Does it make sense with their resume? Can they articulate why they made certain decisions? How did those decisions turn out?

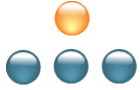
WEAK

No coherent story.
Experience not articulated or not relevant.
Unable to describe why they made decisions.

STRONG

A clear story, showing a path to this job.
Experience described, and attention drawn to the links to this job.
Reasoning is clear, even if the decision turned out poorly.

NOTES:



Question 1: Sometimes we have to be creative to maintain strong relationships. Tell me about the solution you found to a difficult disagreement.

What behaviors to look for: Did they make sure to understand the situation by questioning and communicating? Did they validate with others that they understood? Were they willing to step back and re-address an issue they may have missed? How did they inform and persuade without forcing the issue?

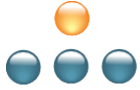
WEAK

Did not clearly understand conflict
Did not ask questions
Outcome was positive by coincidence
Did not tailor communication

STRONG

Took time to understand conflict
Proposed innovative solution
Sold benefit to parties
Positive outcome

NOTES:



Question 2: You're going to be communicating with customers virtually every day here. Tell me about a time when you continued a customer relationship after a difficult situation. How did you ensure the relationship remained strong?

What behaviors to look for: Did they start with a strong relationship? How did the relationship help in the resolution? What did they do or say to take responsibility? Were threats or brinksmanship used tactically? What methods of apologies were offered? Was the relationship stronger afterwards, or just "saved?"

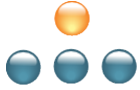
WEAK

Not able to describe relationship well
Did not apologize
Blamed others
Does not describe efforts to build relationship

STRONG

Describes strength of relationship well
Took responsibility for situation
Apologized
Continued to communicate & build relationship during & after

NOTES:



Question 3: This role requires satisfying many different stakeholders with competing interests. Tell me about a time when there have been multiple sides in a conflict and you have been able to see different points of view and communicate effectively between the parties.

What behaviors to look for: Did they work hard to make sure they understood the factors in the points of view? Did they communicate throughout the exercise? Did they present both sides effectively to the other side? What did they do differently with each side to be more effective?

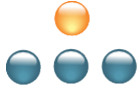
WEAK

Didn't recognize sides of conflict
Couldn't understand/articulate both sides well
Didn't communicate clearly
Worsened conflict through poor communication

STRONG

Willing to ask questions repeatedly
Showed respect at all times for both sides
Saw and stated opposing sides to the others satisfaction
Communicated effectively with all individuals

NOTES:



Question 4: We pride ourselves on strong customer relationships. Tell me about a time when you've been particularly proud of the service you delivered to a customer.

What behaviors to look for: Did they have a strategy or an approach they can articulate? Did they follow a playbook or just improvise? What did they do that the customer commented on? What was the outcome of the effort?

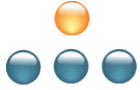
WEAK

No plan all efforts off the cuff
Customers barely accepted outcome
Failed to communicate broadly
Reacted to problems vs. proactively solving them

STRONG

Had a plan for their service approach
Communicated frequently w/ different media
Leveraged relationships internally effectively
Noted for candor and concern
Over-communicated with customer

NOTES:



Question 5: Customer service has to be more than an attitude - it has to be put into action with behaviors. Tell me about methods you've used to demonstrate respect for your customers.

What behaviors to look for: Do they have specific approaches and ways of doing things? Do they simply 'try hard' or treat 'everyone' with respect/the same? What did they specifically say or do that the customer noticed and appreciated?

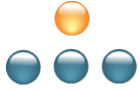
WEAK

Doesn't differentiate customers
Treats all customers in a standard way
Doesn't keep detailed information to allow customer focus
Relies on one size fits all approach

STRONG

Knows customers exceptionally well
Modifies approach and solutions based on relationships
Delivers effective outcomes based on detailed knowledge

NOTES:



Question 6: If the customer is always right, sometimes we have to be wrong. Describe a situation when you put a customer's needs first, to your detriment. What was the outcome?

What behaviors to look for: What did they specifically do which caused customer satisfaction? How was that detrimental? What did they do to put the customer first? What was done afterwards to reduce such situations in the future?

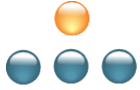
WEAK

Had to be told customer's needs
Didn't proactively seek customer input
Avoided communicating with customer
Customer had to intervene to ensure outcome

STRONG

Proactively discovered customer's needs
Developed effective plan to meet customer needs
Made choices for customers at their significant expense
Customer expressed delight with outcome

NOTES:



Question 7: Communication is at the heart of what makes for great teamwork. Tell me about a time when you have had new information and you have had to help others to understand it.

What behaviors to look for: Did they consider the source in creating their communication with others? How did they, if at all, consider the audience in their comms? What did they add and why in terms of "what this information means for you"?

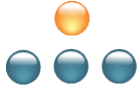
WEAK

Communicates the same to everyone
Does not tailor communication to recipients
Communicates narrowly, reducing impact
Does not communicate the why message

STRONG

Tailors communication to recipient
Communicates with urgency without sacrificing quality
Prepares for questions
Adds value with what this means for you/us metadata

NOTES:



Question 8: Things move fast here and follow up is essential. What tools do you use to ensure your communication is effective? Can you tell me about a time when one of them worked particularly well?

What behaviors to look for: What was their thought process for communicating? Do they communicate differently depending upon the content and the recipient? What did they do to customize their message for different people or situations?

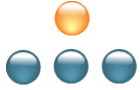
WEAK

Only one or limited ways of communicating
No tailoring for audience
Lack of message planning
Singular delivery not flexible
Did not achieve planned objective

STRONG

Planned delivery carefully
Considered audience thoroughly
Rehearsed based on planning, message, and audience
Planning led to excellent outcome
Answers to questions tailored to audience member asking

NOTES:



Question 9: Persuasion is especially important on a team with strong performers. Describe a situation when you have persuaded others to your point of view successfully.

What behaviors to look for: Did they consider not just features of their idea but rather the benefits of that idea to others? Did they communicate with different people differently? Did they simply re-present the same idea the same way every time? Did they rely on role power, or leverage relationships?

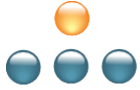
WEAK

Group/person was unlikely to object to point of view
Did not tailor communication for different people
Unable to clearly describe benefits vs. features
Used role power (theirs or others) rather than persuasion

STRONG

Planned communication ahead of time
Tailored communication to the needs of individuals
Included others' ideas/concerns in response and plans
Achieved desired outcome

NOTES:



Question 10: Communication is what the listener does. Tell me about a time when you have had to tailor a presentation to an audience.

What behaviors to look for: Did they study the audience in advance to learn their needs? Did they consider the wants, needs, and backgrounds of the audience? Did they tailor their answers to individuals who asked questions? How was this presentation different from one they might have given to a different audience?

WEAK

Did not have a clear outcome for the presentation
Did not consider the needs of the audience
Is not able to describe how the presentation was tailored
Did not effectively persuade the audience

STRONG

Describes required outcome clearly
Describes audience characteristics which required tailoring
Describes how presentation was tailored
Achieved desired outcome

NOTES: