

# **Customer Service Focused Interview & Selection Process Managers' Guide**



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## **CUSTOMER SERVICE FOCUSED INTERVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS MANAGERS' GUIDE**

This Managers' Guide gives detailed information about the interview process and is designed to supplement the DCBS Hiring Guide. One of the most important parts of the process of hiring is determining what technical and customer service focused competencies are required for the job, and developing interview questions that will help the hiring manager determine if the candidates have these competencies. The Guide includes sample interview questions and recommended forms to use during the interview process.

Competency or Behavioral-based interviewing is based upon the following:

**The single best predictor of future behavior is a person's recent past behavior.**

The evaluation of a candidate should be based on the specific examples of technical and personal/interpersonal competencies provided by the candidate during the course of the interview. Success for most jobs requires a combination of technical and personal/interpersonal competencies. For example, a financial auditor needs both technical accounting skills and customer service focused skills such as attention to detail, thoroughness, and self-discipline.

### **FIVE STEPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWING**

There are five steps for the hiring manager to follow to be most successful in behavior-based interviewing. They are listed here and described in more detail in the following pages:

1. Analyze the technical aspects of the job.
2. Determine the personal/interpersonal competencies of the job.
3. Develop interview questions to assess both aspects.
4. Conduct the interview.
5. Conduct the reference checks.

#### **Step 1. Analyze the Technical Aspects of the Job**

Technical competencies are the knowledge and skills that are necessary for satisfactory performance of a given job. Studying the position description, observing the job being performed, and interviewing the previous and current holders of the job and the immediate supervisor will be helpful in determining the competencies required and the performance standard.

Asking a series of questions will help you in establishing the technical competencies. Ask questions such as:

- ◆ What would the "perfect" candidate's competencies and skills look like;
- ◆ What will a person in this job have to do on a regular basis to succeed;
- ◆ What are the necessary competencies and skills the person will need in order to achieve the desired results of the position;

- ◆ How will a person hired for this job know he or she is succeeding, and
- ◆ Why have people left this job in the past.

After you have analyzed the job and developed several technical competencies, list the top five most important technical competencies the candidate **MUST** have to succeed in the job.

Remember when developing your interview questions to keep the questions open-ended, simple, direct and specific. Base all the questions on the job description and the top five technical competencies. Avoid questions that require specific division knowledge.

The Technical Competency Assessment Guide form on the next page can be used to help you in determining the technical competencies and developing relevant interview questions.

## Technical Competency Assessment Guide

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

A: Analyze Technical Aspects of Job. (Answer questions and list competencies in the space.)

What would the “perfect” candidate’s competencies and skills look like?	
What will a person in this job have to do on a regular basis to succeed?	
What are the necessary competencies and skills the person will need in order to achieve the desired results of the position?	
How will a person hired for this job know he or she is succeeding?	
Why have people left this job in the past?	

B: List the **top five** most important technical competencies the candidate **MUST** have to succeed in the job.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

C: Develop a Technical Question for Each of the Five Required Technical Competencies.

- ◆ Base all your questions on the job description and the technical competencies you listed above.
- ◆ Keep the questions open-ended, simple, direct and specific.
- ◆ Avoid questions that require a specific knowledge of your division.
- ◆ Ask for assistance developing technical questions if you are not the technical expert.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Step 2. Determine the Customer Service Focused Competencies of the Job**

A large percentage of employees who did not succeed in a position had the technical skills but did not have the customer service focused skills required for the job. Identifying the customer service focused competencies needed to successfully perform the job and determining if the candidate possesses those competencies is critical. For example, an individual working in a receptionist position will need to be flexible and unflappable in order to handle the pressure of multiple phone calls and simultaneous visitors. They also need some degree of friendliness for welcoming the public and some degree of extroversion, since most people calling an organization would like to be met by someone with enthusiasm.

Assessing customer service focused competencies during the interview process is something we may not be typically used to doing as managers. We are experienced in determining if the candidate has the technical skills and abilities to perform the job. But in order to get the BEST candidate for the position, customer service focused competencies need to be determined and assessed also.

To determine what customer service focused competencies are needed for the position, questions similar to those asked to determine the technical competencies should be answered:

- ◆ What would the “perfect” candidate’s customer service focused competencies look like;
- ◆ What will a person in this job have to do on a regular basis to succeed;
- ◆ What are the necessary customer service focused competencies the person will need in order to achieve the desired results of the position;
- ◆ How will a person hired for this job know he or she is meeting the customer service focused expectations; and
- ◆ Related to customer service reasons, why have people left this job in the past.

As you think about the job vacancy you need to fill, focus on the customer service focused competencies or behaviors that an individual needs to exhibit in order to succeed in this job. Depending on the specific job under consideration, customer service focused characteristics, such as paying attention to detail, being self-motivated, getting along with others, having leadership qualities, and being tolerant of stressful events, are examples of the skills critical to success on the job.

To assist you in determining customer service focused competencies we are using five descriptive elements of personality, which are listed and defined below. We have included a list of descriptive words that will give you ideas and help you determine what behaviors are required for the position. There is a corresponding list of questions for each personality factor that can be used in the recruitment announcement, as part of the exam, during the interview to ask behavioral-based customer service focused interview questions.

The Customer Service Focused Behaviors Assessment Guide form on page 7 can be used to help you in determining the customer service focused competencies and developing relevant interview questions.

The five descriptive elements of personality are Responsible, Likeable, Believable, Outgoing and Unflappable. The definitions of each one follow.

Responsible. The ability to organize or schedule people, tasks, and self; to develop realistic action plans while remaining sensitive to time constraints and resource availability; and having a well developed sense of ethics and integrity. Characterized by high levels of responsibility and behaviors these employees are controlled, disciplined, precise, persistent, and businesslike. Their behavior is consistent, scrupulous, and reliable, and their work is purposeful, highly systematic, and well organized. They approach life as a series of tasks to be accomplished and goals to be reached.

List of words: detail-oriented; quality-focused; high-integrity; responsible; trustworthy; dependable; cost-conscious; exact; disciplined; committed; cautious; casual; easygoing.

Likeable. Describes a person's ability to modify their behavioral style to respond to the needs of others while maintaining one's own objectives and sense of dignity. In the moderate to high range of likeability, we find sympathetic, helpful, and understanding individuals. They are agreeable, compassionate, thoughtful, and kind. They appear to accept things as they are, nurture others, and are obviously friendly and caring people.

List of words: amicable; accommodating; supportive; helpful; compromising; collaborative; friendly; empathetic; empowering; congenial; easygoing.

Believable. Capable of eliciting belief or trust. In the middle to low range of believable thinking, we find people who are open, willing to reexamine tenets and consider new ideas. They are capable of reasonable levels of professional and personal risk taking and are willing to work outside their "comfort zone." Highly believable people can be described as practical, predictable and conventional, willing to follow procedures without question. They often form the emotional "back bone" of an organization.

List of words: creative; original; flexible; spontaneous; open-to-new-ideas; independent; curious; untraditional; venturesome; uninhibited; conventional; down-to-earth; concrete; traditional; practical; methodical; systematic.

Outgoing. Describes the ability to work with people in such a manner as to build high morale and group commitments to goals and objectives. Individuals in the moderately high range of extroversion are upbeat, positive, and energetic. They tend to be enterprising, cheerful, and appropriately assertive. They demonstrate leadership, team-building capability, and are able to coach or facilitate a work team's progress. Individuals who are moderately introverted are often viewed as self-contained, generally well balanced, and able to work well either alone or in small groups.

List of words: active; outgoing; dominant; forceful; enthusiastic; assertive; persuasive; energizing; entrepreneurial; ambitious; risk-taking; self-contained; task-oriented; quiet; restrained; formal; unassuming; reserved; thoughtful.

Unflappable. The ability to maintain a mature, problem-solving attitude while dealing with a range of stressful conditions, such as interpersonal conflict, hazardous conditions, personal rejection, hostility,

or time demands. At moderately high levels of stress tolerance we find relaxed, secure, and hardy individuals who are poised and adaptive in a wide range of situations. They are steady, realistic, self-reliant, and able to cope effectively across a wide range of situations and circumstances. They demonstrate maturity that is not necessarily related to age, but to the ability to maintain a clear perspective under stressful conditions as well as those that elicit little or no stress.

List of words: calm; well adjusted; secure; even-tempered; self-assured; unflappable; resilient; poised; composed; self-confident; optimistic.



## Customer Service Focused Behaviors Assessment Guide

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

A: List the most typical **Customer Service Focused** behaviors required on this job on a daily basis. Use the five factors of personality and list of words with each factor starting on page 5 and summarized below to help you.

Responsible – detail-oriented; quality-focused; high-integrity; responsible; trustworthy; dependable; cost-conscious; exact; disciplined; committed; cautious; casual; easygoing.

Likeable – amicable; accommodating; supportive; helpful; compromising; collaborative; friendly; empathetic; empowering; congenial; easygoing.

Believable – creative; original; flexible; spontaneous; open-to-new-ideas; independent; curious; untraditional; venturesome; uninhibited; conventional; down-to-earth; concrete; traditional; practical; methodical; systematic.

Outgoing – active; outgoing; dominant; forceful; enthusiastic; assertive; persuasive; energizing; entrepreneurial; ambitious; risk-taking; self-contained; task-oriented; quiet; restrained; formal; unassuming; reserved; thoughtful.

Unflappable – calm; well-adjusted; secure; even-tempered; self-assured; unflappable; resilient; poised; composed; self-confident; optimistic.

B: List of **Customer Service Focused** Behaviors

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

C: Develop a Question for Each of the **Customer Service Focused** Behaviors

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Step 3. Develop Interview Questions to Assess Both Technical and Customer Service Focused Competencies**

Decide how long the interviews will be and select a reasonable number of questions to ask. In a half-hour interview, only about 5 behavioral-based questions can comfortably be asked. If five questions are asked, two or three of them should be customer service-type questions, depending upon the type of job.

Always ask open-ended questions. Ask, *“This job involves dealing with difficult customers. Think of a time when you had to deal with a difficult customer and tell us what you did.”* Don’t ask, *“Have you ever dealt with difficult customers?”* You probably will get an answer like, “Yes, I work with difficult customers all the time.” But it won’t tell you HOW the individual works with difficult customers. If you feel the candidate is making up an answer, or is giving you a “canned” answer, ask a probing question or two to get more detail. *“What exactly did you say to the customer to get them to stop yelling.”* Generally, if they have read a book on “most commonly asked interview questions” and memorized an answer, or are making up the situation, a probing question will generally fluster them and they will not be as confident in giving an answer. You can ask for the candidate to think of another example to use in answering the question.

Using the list of most important tasks you developed during the review of the Position Description, develop open-ended questions to determine if the candidate has the technical skills necessary for the job. Only ask technical questions that relate to that particular job. Don’t ask a question about using equipment if they don’t use that equipment to do their job.

Using the list of customer service focused skills you identified from the position description are needed to do the job, develop open-ended questions to determine the candidate’s customer service focused competencies. There is a list of sample interview questions at the end of this document to help you. They are arranged in the five personality factors as previously described above.

### **Step 4. Conducting The Interview**

Have an interview panel of at least two managers/supervisors; some managers may also wish to include a non-management employee with special knowledge of the position duties as part of a panel. If you choose to include a non-management employee on your interview panel, be sure to discuss interviewing procedures and confidentiality of candidate information with the employee prior to the interviews. It is encouraged that all interview panels be as diverse as possible.

Before the interview starts, establish the criteria used for scoring and then meet with the interview panel to discuss the process and review the questions and criteria used for scoring.

Welcome the candidate and establish rapport by introducing them to the members of the interview panel. Ask easy questions such as “Did you have any difficulty finding the office?” or “Would you like a glass of water before we begin?” Give a brief explanation of the agency or section and show the organization chart so they understand how this position fits within the organization. If you have handed the position description and organization chart out while they waited for the interview to start,

ask if they have any questions about the position or organization. Explaining the interview process can also help ease a candidate's nervousness and also gives them information about the process, including, approximate length of the interview, the interview will be a series of prepared questions asked by the interview panel designed to get to know the candidate, and the panel will be taking notes during the interview.

Transition into the main purpose of the interview by saying, "Let's get a bit more focused and start asking the interview questions." Even though the interview process is accomplished through a panel, one person should act as "facilitator" and make sure the interview stays focused. Some candidates tend to wander, give "canned" speeches, or simply try to deliver a monologue. In such cases, you need to diplomatically interrupt and redirect the candidate to the question at hand. You might simply say, "I think we've gotten a little off target here. Let me restate my question." To clarify a response or to get a candidate to give specific examples you can ask, "Please give me a specific example about when you..."

Because behavior-based questions require specific examples to answer them successfully, sometimes a candidate will need to think for a few seconds to come up with an appropriate example. You may have to wait 30, 60, or even 90 seconds for the candidate to start answering the question. Resist the temptation to talk during this silence! It takes time to recall specific behavioral examples that clearly answer your questions and you want the candidate to do their best during the interview. An option available to the hiring manager is to hand out the list of questions to the candidates a few minutes before the interview starts, so the candidate can start thinking of specific examples ahead of time and organizing their thoughts.

If an answer does not give you the information you need to rate the candidate's answer, use open-ended probes such as:

"Could you review your role in..."

"Please describe how you..."

"What happened after..."

If after the first or second try to get an answer more relevant to the question move on to the next question.

After each interview take a few minutes for the panel members to summarize their thoughts and score the questions, or complete the rating process.

### Affirmative Action

DCBS has an Affirmative Action Plan and policy and values diversity in the workplace. Every effort will be made to reach out to the broadest possible labor market. All employment decisions will be based on the most suitable candidate relative to a position, while taking into consideration Affirmative Action goals.

## Step 5. Conduct Reference Checks

Part of the interview process is the reference check. As the hiring manager, you have information given to you by the candidate during the interview, about his/her technical and customer service focused competencies. Now it is time to verify that information by contacting former and current supervisors, persons listed by the candidate as references, and others who are thought to be able to provide information about the competencies of a candidate. The hiring manager or another manager who was on the interview panel should do the reference checks. Resist the temptation to delegate this task to an administrative assistant! During a reference check, HOW something is said, or what is NOT said is just as important as WHAT is said. Subtle innuendoes may not be picked up by the administrative assistant, and they weren't in the interview, so they are not aware of things the candidate said.

If there are long pauses after the question, or the individual giving the reference sounds like he/she is struggling to carefully select each word, there may be a problem with this candidate and more specific probing questions should be asked. For example, if you ask an individual about the candidate's relationships with co-workers, customers, and managers and he/she quickly says, "Oh, relationships were fine," and doesn't add anything else, or says, "Relationships? ...*pause*... I think they were fine," you might want to ask some probing questions to try and get at the real story.

Conducting reference checks is time consuming, but is one of the most important steps of the interview process. If the candidate is a state employee in another agency, the Office of Personnel Services (OPS) can assist in the reference check process by talking with the personnel office of the other agency to see if there is any recent or current disciplinary action in the candidate's file.

Many employers are reluctant to provide a reference because of fears that it might be a violation of federal or state privacy laws. However, there ORS 330.178 protects a reference giver from legal exposure when the reference information is accurate but negative. If you are having difficulty in contacting references that will give you information on the candidate's work performance, contact the candidate and have him sign a release form that you can send to the former employer and complete your reference check.

If a finalist has indicated that they do not wish you to contact their current employer, call the finalist and explain you will need to contact this employer to assist with your decision and that we don't hire anyone without completing a reference check with the current employer.

### Driving Record Checks

If the position for which you are hiring requires a driver's license and a satisfactory driving record, the hiring manager must request a driving record check for job finalists **prior to making the job offer**. The hiring manager will send an e-mail to the OPS Safety/Risk Support Specialist requesting a driving record check. The request will include the individual's name, social security number, and driver's license number and state. The Safety/Risk Support Specialist will request the driving record for out-of-state candidates, and the Personnel Specialist will provide driving record checks for Oregon-resident candidates. OPS uses the services of an outside vendor to access this information from all states, and processing time of this request, in most cases, is approximately two days. Driving record

checks for Oregon are completed in OPS and have a very quick turnaround time. The driving record check will be forwarded to the Safety and Risk Manager who will review the record(s) and notify the division of the results of the Driving Record Review. The division may then continue the interview process with those candidates having an acceptable driving record or make the job offer to the finalist.

### Criminal Background Checks

A few positions in DCBS require that a criminal record check be conducted for finalists prior to selection. If the position for which you are hiring is in this category, you must obtain a signed release form from the candidate(s).

## **AFTER THE INTERVIEWS, THEN WHAT?**

### **Making a Job Offer**

When you have identified the candidate to whom you would like to make a job offer based on the information you have gathered through the application, examination, interview, and references, you may contact that candidate and offer him/her the position.

You may wish to check with your Personnel Officer before making a job offer. There are several items that need to be discussed and clarified before a job offer is made. These are listed below with a brief description.

Pay. If you want to pay an employee new to State service at a step above step 2, you will need to discuss this with your Personnel Officer and get **prior** written approval from the OPS Manager or Assistant Manager.

Vacation Accrual Transfer. For state agency transfer or promotional hires, employees may transfer some of their vacation accrual. Talk with your Personnel Officer about how to do this.

Lateral Transfer. For a lateral transfer, an employee's salary generally will remain the same.

Trial Service. Consult your Personnel Office prior to making a job offer to confirm the trial service period. An employee new to State service will not receive an increase at the end of trial service, but will be eligible for the State-paid contribution of 6% of salary into PERS.

Confirming Letter of Hire. After the candidate accepts your verbal job offer, it is good business practice, and strongly recommended by Personnel Services, to follow up the conversation with a letter. Items that might be covered include identifying the starting date, salary, vacation accruals being transferred, classification, reporting location and supervisor, and any other details that were negotiated during the job offer. It is important that all information in this letter of hire be correctly stated, as it is an implied employment contract. There is a sample letter (Attachments 16, a, b, c) in the Hiring Guide.

## **Informing Unsuccessful Candidates**

After the selected candidate accepts your job offer, call or write each of the other candidates to notify them that the hiring decision has been made. No details need to be given, simply state that the most suitable candidate for the position was hired. Sometimes a candidate contacts us for information about what they could do better next time in an interview, or they want to know why they didn't get the job. The best thing to tell them is that we hired the most suitable candidate for the position. If they continue to ask for information, contact your Personnel Services staff for guidance in how to answer the candidate's questions. Some collective bargaining agreements have specific provisions pertaining to this. See OPEU Contract Article 45.5QV, Section 4.

## **Retention of Interview Materials**

Interview materials must be retained in a secure area in your division for two years from the date of hire. The items to be kept in these files include the PD100 application (copy), interview questions, interview rating criteria, list of panel members, completed references, and any other documentation used to determine the hiring decision. At the end of the two-year period, these materials are destroyed. OPS maintains the original recruitment files for 10 years and the original application files for two years.

## **SAMPLE CUSTOMER SERVICE FOCUSED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **Responsible**

1. Tell us about a time when the details of something you were doing were especially important. How did you attend to them?
2. Describe a time when you had to make a difficult decision on the job. What facts did you consider? How long did it take you to make a decision?
3. Jobs differ in the extent to which people work independently or as part of a team. Tell us about a time when you worked independently.
4. It is often easy to blur the distinction between confidential information and public knowledge. Have you ever been faced with this dilemma? What did you do?
5. Tell us about a time when you put in some extra effort to help move a particular project forward. How did you do it and what happened?
6. Tell us about a demanding situation in which you managed to remain calm and composed. What did you do and what was the outcome?
7. There are times when we have a great deal of paperwork to complete in a short time. How do you do to ensure your accuracy?
8. Give an example of a time you noticed a process or task that was not being done correctly. How did you discover or come to notice it, and what did you do?
9. We often have to push ourselves harder to reach a target. Give us a specific example of when you had to give yourself that extra push.
10. Tell us about a time when you achieved success through your willingness to react quickly.
11. Tell us about a time when you disagreed with a procedure or policy instituted by management. What was your reaction and how did you implement the procedure or policy?
12. What kinds of measures have you taken to make sure all of the small details of a project or assignment were done? Please give a specific example.
13. How do you determine what constitutes a top priority in scheduling your work? Give a specific example.
14. If I call your references, what will they say about you?

15. What are two or three examples of tasks that you do not particularly enjoy doing? Tell us how you remain motivated to complete those tasks.
16. What has been your greatest success, personally or professionally?
17. What can you tell us about yourself that you feel is unique and makes you the best candidate for this position?
18. What strengths do you have that we haven't talked about?
19. Tell us about a time when you had to review detailed reports or documents to identify a problem. How did you go about it? What did you do when you discovered a problem?
20. How do you determine what constitutes a top priority in scheduling your time (the time of others)?
21. Do you have a system for organizing your own work area? Tell us how that system helped you on the job.
22. Have you planned any conferences, workshops or retreats? What steps did you take to plan the event?

### **Likeable**

1. Tell us about a time when you were able to build a successful relationship with a difficult person.
2. Give us an example of how you have been able to develop a close, positive relationship with one of your customers.
3. Give us an example of how you establish an atmosphere at work where others feel comfortable in communicating their ideas, feelings and concerns.
4. Describe a particularly trying customer complaint or resistance you had to handle. How did you react and what was the outcome?
5. How would you describe your management style? How do you think your subordinates perceive you?
6. Some people are difficult to work with. Tell us about a time when you encountered such a person. How did you handle it?
7. In working with people, we find that what works with one person does not work with another. Therefore, we have to be flexible in our style of relating to others. Give us a specific example of when you had to vary your work style with a particular individual. How did it work out?



8. It is important to remain composed at work and to maintain a positive outlook. Give us a specific example of when you were able to do this.
9. Having an understanding of the other person's perspective is crucial in dealing with customers. Give us an example of a time when you achieved success through attaining insight into the other person's perspective.
10. Have you ever had difficulty getting along with a co-worker? How did you handle the situation and what was the outcome?
11. Tell us about a time when you needed someone's cooperation to complete a task and the person was uncooperative. What did you do? What was the outcome?
12. There are times when people need extra assistance with difficult projects. Give us an example of when you offered assistance to someone with whom you worked.
13. Tell us about a situation in which you became frustrated or impatient when dealing with a co-worker. What did you do? What was the outcome?
14. Many jobs are team-oriented where a work group is the key to success. Give us an example of a time when you worked on a team to complete a project. How did it work? What was the outcome?
15. Tell us about a job where the atmosphere was the easiest for you to get along and function well. Describe the qualities of that work environment.
16. On occasion we may be faced with a situation that has escalated to become a confrontation. If you have had such an experience, tell me how you handled it. What was the outcome? Would you do anything differently today?
17. Describe a time when you weren't sure what a customer wanted. How did you handle the situation?
18. We don't always make decisions that everyone agrees with. Give us an example of an unpopular decision you have made. How did you communicate the decision and what was the outcome?

### **Believable**

1. Describe your ideal supervisor.
2. What were some of the most important things you accomplished on your last job?
3. What is your management style? How do you think your subordinates perceive you?

4. Give us an example of when someone brought you a new idea, particularly one that was odd or unusual. What did you do?
5. It is important that performance and other personnel issues be addressed timely. Give examples of the type of personnel issues you've confronted and how you addressed them. Including examples of the process you used for any disciplinary action taken or grievance resolved.
6. Give us an example of how you establish an atmosphere at work where others feel comfortable in communicating their ideas, feelings and concerns.
7. Give a specific example of how you have involved subordinates in identifying performance goals and expectations.
8. All jobs have their frustrations and problems. Describe some specific tasks or conditions that have been frustrating to you. Why were they frustrating and what did you do?
9. Jobs differ in the degree to which unexpected changes can disrupt daily responsibilities. Tell what you did and us about a time when this happened.
10. What are your standards of success in your job and how do you know when you are successful?
11. Sometimes supervisors' evaluations differ from our own. What did you do about it?
12. What do you do differently from other (\_\_\_\_\_)? Why? Give examples.
13. We don't always make decisions that everyone agrees with. Give us an example of an unpopular decision you made. How did you communicate the decision and what was the outcome?
14. Describe a situation in which you received a new procedure or instructions with which you disagreed. What did you do?
15. Describe a situation in which you had to translate a broad or general directive from superiors into individual performance expectations. How did you do this and what were the results?
16. Give an example of how you monitor the progress your employees are making on projects or tasks you delegated.

### **Outgoing**

1. Describe a time when you were able to effectively communicate a difficult or unpleasant idea to a superior.

2. Tell us about a time when you had to motivate a group of people to get an important job done. What did you do, what was the outcome?
3. Tell us about a time when you delayed responding to a situation until you had time to review the facts, even though there was pressure to act quickly.
4. There are times when we need to insist on doing something a certain way. Give us the details surrounding a situation when you had to insist on doing something “your way”. What was the outcome?
5. On occasion, we have to be firm and assertive in order to achieve a desired result. Tell us about a time when you had to do that.
6. Being successful is hard work. Tell us about a specific achievement when you had to work especially hard to attain the success you desired.
7. In job situations you may be pulled in many different directions at once. Tell us about a time when you had to respond to this type of situation. How did you manage yourself?
8. Many of us have had co-workers or managers who tested our patience. Tell us about a time when you restrained yourself to avoid conflict with a co-worker or supervisor. (restrained)
9. In working with people, we find that what works with one person does not work with another. Therefore, we have to be flexible in our style of relating to others. Give us a specific example of when you had to vary your work style with a particular individual. How did it work out?
10. Describe some particularly trying customer complaints or resistance you have had to handle. How did you react? What was the outcome?
11. Have you ever had difficulty getting along with co-workers? How did you handle the situation and what was the outcome?
12. Tell us about a time when you needed someone’s cooperation to complete a task and the person was uncooperative. What did you do? What was the outcome?
13. Tell us about a situation in which you became frustrated or impatient when dealing with a co-worker. What did you do? What was the outcome?
14. Sooner or later we all have to deal with a customer who has unreasonable demands. Think of a time when you had to handle unreasonable requests. What did you do and what was the outcome?
15. Tell us about a time when you were effective in handling a customer complaint. Why were you effective? What was the outcome?
16. How do you know if your customers are satisfied?

## **Unflappable**

1. There are times when we all have to deal with deadlines and it can be stressful. Tell us about a time when you felt pressured at work and how you coped with it.
2. Give us an example of a demanding situation when you were able to maintain your composure while others got upset.
3. On occasion, we experience conflict with our superiors. Describe such a situation and tell us how you handled the conflict. What was the outcome?
4. We have to find ways to tolerate and work with difficult people. Tell us about a time when you have done this.
5. Many times, a job requires you to quickly shift your attention from one task to the next. Tell us about a time at work when you had to change focus onto another task. What was the outcome?
6. Tell us about a time when you received accurate, negative feedback by a co-worker, boss, or customer. How did you handle the evaluation? How did it affect your work?
7. Give us an example of when you felt overly sensitive to feedback or criticism. How did you handle your feelings?
8. Give us an example of when you made a presentation to an uninterested or hostile audience. How did it turn out?
9. Tell us about a time when you put in some extra effort to help move a project forward. How did you do that? What happened?
10. Describe suggestions you have made to improve work procedures. How did it turn out?