

# Alumni Interview Preparation



**UNIVERSITY OF  
GEORGIA**

**Career Center**

As an alumni, your job interviews often only become more stressful. The best way to mitigate that pressure is careful preparation. This pamphlet serves as your guide to preparing for different types of interview questions, questions you can ask employers, and how you can frame your answers to speak powerfully.

## Education/Academic Achievement



- Why did you choose your major?
- Why did you choose UGA?
- Describe a recent leadership experience.
- Which courses did you enjoy the most/least? Why?
- What is your GPA?
- If you could do so, how would you plan your education differently?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- Describe your most challenging college experience.
- Describe a project you have completed and the steps you used to complete it.
- Describe a specific time when you were very busy and how you prioritized your schedule.
- Tell me about a time when your professor or supervisor was not available to clarify an assignment. How did you proceed? What was the outcome? Was there anything you would do differently?

## The Job

- What motivated you to apply for this position?
- What interests you most about this job? Least?
- Why do you want to work for our company?
- What do you know about our company/organization?
- What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- If you were hiring a graduate for this position, what successful characteristics would you look for in a candidate?
- Describe three key skills or qualities you would bring to this position.
- What is your philosophy of work?
- How do you like to be supervised?
- Why should we hire you?



## Personal



- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
- If you could change one thing about yourself what would it be?
- Describe a time you failed at something and how you handled it.
- What three key words would your peers use to describe you and why?
- Give me an example of something complex that you needed to effectively communicate. What made it complex? Why was it difficult to communicate?
- Tell me about an important goal that you set in the past. Were you successful? Why?
- Tell me about a situation where you had to speak up (be assertive) in order to get a point across that was important to you.
- Describe the most significant written document, report, or presentation you have completed.
- Tell me about something you have done that is very creative.
- Describe a time when you were faced with problems or stress that tested your coping skills. What did you do?



## Experience

- Describe your job-related skills and experience and how they would relate to this position.
- What have you learned most from some of the jobs you have held?
- What did you enjoy most about your last job? Least?
- How would a former supervisor describe your work?
- Describe a workplace challenge you faced and how you handled it.
- Tell me about a time you went above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Give an example of your ability to manage or supervise others.
- Describe a situation in which you had to deal with a very upset customer or co-worker. How did you handle the situation? What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time when you wish you had done more planning. What happened?

## Accomplishments

- Tell me about a time you went above and beyond the call of duty in order to complete a task.
- Describe the most significant or creative presentation or idea that you developed or implemented.
- What have you done in your present or previous job that goes beyond what was required?
- Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to approach things your way.
- What are three effective leadership qualities you think are important? How have you demonstrated these qualities in your past or current position?

## Career Goals

- What are your long-range career goals? How are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
- What are your short-range career goals?
- What characteristics do you possess that will make you successful in your career?
- Who or what influenced you most with regard to your career objectives?

## Overcoming Challenges

- Tell me about a time when you had to resolve a difference of opinion with a co-worker, customer, or supervisor. How do you feel you showed respect?
- Describe the way you handled a specific problem involving a person with differing values, ideas, and beliefs in your current/previous job.
- Give me an example of a time when you did not meet a deadline. How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a tough decision you made. What steps, thought processes, and considerations did you take to make that decision?
- Tell me about a course, work experience, or extracurricular activity in which you had to work closely with others. How did it go? How did you overcome any difficulties?
- Give me a specific example of a time when you had to address an angry customer? What was the problem and what was the outcome? How would you assess your role in defusing the situation?



## Ask: Diversity/Inclusion Questions

- How does your company define Diversity?
- What are the actions taken to foster your definition of diversity into the company culture?
- What are some strategies you've learned that can help women achieve a more prominent role in their organizations?
- How much do you value diversity? What action steps demonstrate this commitment?
- Can you share data on the organization's diversity?
- How diverse is the leadership? Is the leadership team committed to diversity?
- How do you ensure that everyone feels included and is looked at as a whole?
- Do you hold people accountable for fostering a diverse and inclusive culture?
- What qualities do you look for in your leaders?
- Can you talk a little bit about some of the specific ways that you have advocated for change and the success and challenges you've faced?
- How are your company's recruiting efforts supporting a diverse culture?
- What diversity, inclusion, and cultural competence training has my superior had?
- Do you have an office of diversity, affinity groups, or diversity management roles?
- Who holds my supervisor accountable to diversity and inclusion measures?

## Ask: General Questions

- Do you have a detailed description of the position for which I am being considered?
- What is a typical day like?
- Why do you like working for this company/organization?
- What are some of the challenges you think a new person in this position would face?
- What are your department goals for the next two to three years? What are the long-term goals?
- What outside influences affect your company's growth?
- What are some common characteristics of successful employees within your company?
- What is the greatest challenge facing your staff (department) now?
- What types of assignments may I expect the first six months on the job?
- What type of training is available?
- What has been your career path within this company?
- Is relocation likely or required?
- What are your expectations for new hires?
- How is one evaluated for this position?
- When can I expect to hear from you?
- Prepare specific questions for each position/company (i.e. "I'm interested in knowing more about the new product line your company just launched").

*Good Luck!*



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# Interview with Powerful Stories

Every employer wants to hear your professional stories—what makes you a fit for the position based on how you've accomplished goals in the past and how you've overcome obstacles. These are called BEHAVIORAL interview questions. (i.e. Tell me about a time when...) The recommendation is that you prepare for your interview by having at least 5 stories you can share from each of these categories. As you work through each story, be sure to use the STAR method to fully and clearly explain the situation, task, action, and result that took place.

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## S.T.A.R. Method

- ★ S - Describe the SITUATION. For instance, if using a class project, what class was it for? How many people were in your group? When did it happen?
  - ★ T - What TASK were you assigned/assumed or what problem did you face? What was your role? To use the class project example, what was your role in the group? What was the assignment?
  - ★ A - What ACTION did you take to complete the assignment or solve the problem? Focus on your own actions, not those of your group.
  - ★ R - What was the RESULT? This is a very important part of the answer! Describe the results in a way to show that you were successful; consider quantifying the results if possible and significant.
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## Example Behavioral Questions Focused on Accomplishments

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  - Give me an example of a time when you did not meet a deadline. How did you handle it?
  - Tell me about a tough decision you made. What steps, thought processes, and considerations did you take to make that decision?
  - Tell me about a course, work experience, or extracurricular activity in which you had to work closely with others. How did it go? How did you overcome any difficulties?
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# Use the Worksheet Provided to Start Brainstorming What Relevant Stories You Would Like to Share During Your Interview

## Accomplishments

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# Overcoming Challenges

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