



## CMU Leadership Standards

### *Interview Questions*

Listed below are a series of interview questions that are connected to CMU's Leadership Standards. For all positions that have supervisory responsibility, hiring managers are required to ask the following interview question along with at least one question from each Leadership Standard category. The questions were developed to assist hiring managers in identifying the candidate that best aligns with our standards of expected behavior.

**Required:** *You had the chance to review the CMU Leadership Standards when you applied for this position. Which one do you believe most closely aligns with your strengths?*

#### **TEAM BUILDING**

1. Tell me about someone who is better than you in an area that really matters to you.
2. Tell me about a time you had to collaborate with someone who had a very different style from yours. What types of problems, if any, did you encounter?
3. Explain your understanding of shared governance. Do you perceive this to be an important practice that most organizations should follow? Why or why not?
4. How do you acknowledge the efforts of those on the team and make them feel that their contributions matter?
5. Describe a time you had to work collaboratively with staff at a different level.
6. Tell me about a time that you had to lead a project that involved many other people across your organization. What did you do to make the project successful?
7. Tell me about a time you had to build a team in a time of low morale.
8. Tell me about a time you may have taken a differing viewpoint of a team member personally.
9. Describe a time when you may have been accused of showing favoritism to a team member.
10. Tell me about a time you supported professional development for a team member to help them grow professionally.
11. How do you acknowledge the team when you are given positive or negative feedback?
12. What would your current supervisor say makes you most valuable to them?
13. How often do you typically meet with your team? How do you ensure that the meetings are meaningful?
14. Describe a time when you had less sympathy or patience with an individual than you should have.
15. Describe how you as a leader within your current organization cultivate a work environment that encourages people of diverse backgrounds to share diverse viewpoints on important issues impacting your organization.
16. How would you define leadership?
17. Even though the use of authority in a leadership role is not popular, it is necessary in some situations. Describe a situation when you had to use your authority to influence another individual.
18. Describe a time you had to manage a team that was not up to the task. What did you do to strengthen them?
19. Tell me about a time your team did not agree with your ideas and how you handled the situation.

#### **THOUGHTFUL/OPEN COMMUNICATORS**

1. How would you describe your personality?
2. Share an example of a time you had to communicate bad news in the workplace.
3. How do you keep your employees informed and up to date?
4. Tell me about a time you had to be assertive in order to get your point across.
5. How do you solicit information and input from others in making a decision? Who do you get that input from?
6. Do you feel more comfortable with written or verbal communication and why?

7. Tell me about a time it was important to clearly articulate a decision.
8. Tell me about a time you had to use written communication to get an important point across.
9. How do you ensure that meaningful discussions take place with your team regarding their performance?
10. Tell me about a time you felt uncomfortable giving a formal presentation.
11. How do you keep your supervisor informed of issues and projects?
12. How do you go about getting other's feedback and opinions about your performance?
13. How do you typically communicate with your employees when results are unacceptable?
14. How often do you meet with your team to provide formal and meaningful conversations about their performance?
15. Communication as a whole is important; what would you say is the *most* important part of good communication?
16. Tell us about a time you made an unpopular decision and what was the outcome?
17. How do you determine when to communicate decisions with those outside your department?

### **SERVICE-ORIENTED**

1. Describe a specific situation when you had to deal with an irate customer.
2. Share some examples of how you have sought input from your frontline staff or customers to improve service.
3. What is your definition of service?
4. How do you evaluate customer service?
5. Share a couple of examples that show your willingness to work hard.
6. Share an example of a time you went above and beyond to provide excellent service.
7. When you receive a question/issue that is not your responsibility how do you handle it?
8. How do you define your customers?
9. Tell me about a time you had to build rapport with a difficult customer.
10. Do you relate best with your supervisor, peers, or your employees?
11. Explain how you handled a specific situation related to diversity that you were faced with in the workplace.

### **PROACTIVE, RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE**

1. How do you define integrity?
2. How do you handle apologies, either giving or accepting them?
3. Describe a time when a team member was not contributing to a project and was not engaged. How did you handle the situation?
4. Tell me about a time your supervisor asked you to do something you didn't agree with.
5. Describe a time you questioned someone's integrity in the workplace.
6. Describe a time when you encountered a workplace rule or policy that you considered ineffective, inappropriate, or just plain silly, and describe what you did to bring about a change in such policy or rule.
7. What do you do when your team isn't meeting expectations?
8. Tell me about a time you stopped a problem before it arose.
9. What do you do when you are faced with problems you can't solve?
10. Describe a time you suggested a new idea that was implemented.
11. Tell me about a time you had to come up with a cost cutting idea.
12. Tell us about your last performance appraisal. In what area were you most disappointed?
13. How do you motivate or encourage the employees that report to you?
14. Share an example of a time at work when you had to deal with an unreasonable expectation.
15. How do you know whether it's better to lay out specifics versus allowing employees to use their own initiative and creativity?
16. Describe a situation when you were faced with some sort of roadblock and how you handled it.

## **COURAGEOUS AND EFFECTIVE**

1. Tell us about a time you made an unpopular decision and describe the outcome.
2. What do you consider one of the biggest failures in your career? How did you handle the failure?
3. Tell me about the most important accomplishments of your career.
4. What do you do to motivate your team during difficult times?
5. Describe a time you treated someone with respect even though you didn't feel they deserved it.
6. Describe a time there was conflict among your staff and how you dealt with it.
7. What kind of people frustrate you the most, and how do you deal with them?
8. Describe a time you had to gain support for an unpopular decision and what strategy you used.
9. Tell me about a time at work you had to handle a crisis and what you did to mitigate it.
10. Crisis situations usually require us to act quickly. Tell me about a time you would have handled a situation differently if you had more time to think before acting.
11. Describe a time you disagreed with your supervisor's evaluation of your performance and how you handled it?
12. Describe a time an employee disagreed with how you rated their performance and how you handled it?
13. Describe a situation where you believe it would be appropriate to take an issue to a level above your supervisor.
14. Describe your most demanding supervisor.
15. What has been the most difficult ethical decision you have ever had to make in your career?
16. What are the top three factors that you would attribute to your success?
17. Share an example of your ability to facilitate progressive change within your current or past organization(s).
18. Tell us about the riskiest professional decision you have made.
19. What would be the best example of your ability to be flexible and adaptable in the workplace?
20. Tell us about a team member from whom it was tough to get cooperation. How did you handle the situation?

## **FOCUSED ON STUDENTS AND PASSIONATE ABOUT CMU**

1. Why are you interested in working for CMU?
2. Tell us about a time when you had to lay aside your own wants or even what might be best for your team for the good of the organization as a whole.
3. What does being a member of the CMU community mean to you?
4. Tell me why you would have pride in working for CMU.
5. What do you know about CMU's vision/mission and how it relates to the position?
6. How would you make time to engage with students and understand their experience?
7. Describe a time when you may have engaged in negative discussions about your employer.
8. Describe how you might show your support for CMU?
9. How do you see this position directly or indirectly impacting students?
10. Do you have to fully believe in the mission and vision of an organization to do your best?
11. "I have a job." "I have a career." "I'm on a mission." Which one applies to you?