

Sample Situational Interview Questions and Benchmarks

Position: Human Resource Manager

(Job-Related) Question: This position is part time, approximately 20 hours per week. Please describe what steps you would take to ensure continuity and consistency during your absence.

Acceptable response: *I would develop good channels of communication, keeping individuals up to date on events that directly or potentially might affect them. I would keep well organized and up to date files that made it easy for people to find what they needed if I were gone. I would make sure that my schedule was known to everyone. I would train someone to serve as backup on significant activities in my absence.*

Unacceptable response: *I would just do my job well, making sure that there are no loose ends. I would expect that people would recognize that my being part time does create some inconveniences and that they would be willing to work around them.*

(Job-Related) Question: There has been major turnover in upper management over the past three months. What issues do you anticipate as a result of this situation and how would you propose to handle them?

Acceptable response: *Probable issues include staff confusion and distrust, lack of management cohesion, possible unclear communication or inconsistent practices, clashes between old and new procedures and staff, probable fear, lack of clarity regarding who has responsibility for certain areas, etc. I would see my role as helping to clarify policies and practices, create systems, serve as a support and confidante for management, serve as a liaison between management and staff, and provide a third party more objective observer of problems so that I can contribute to their solutions.*

Unacceptable response: *Well, everybody is probably feeling everyone else out, to see how they feel and what they want. I would do the same and try not to step on any body's toes.*

(Shared Value) Question: Please describe a time when you were unable to meet an established deadline. What did you do?

Acceptable response: *I notified my supervisor immediately of the problem and identified another approach to handle the matter within the established deadline or mutually extended the deadline.*

Unacceptable response: *I just kept working at it and turned it in as close to the deadline as I could.*

(Shared Value) Question: Please describe a time when you had to handle constructive criticism.

Acceptable response: I considered it on its merits, conceded that there were some things I could do differently, thanked the person for caring, and made the necessary changes to accomplish the team's objective.

Unacceptable response: I considered the source and I ignored it.