



Interview Questions for a Mid-Level Manager

A successful mid-level manager is charged with balancing the organization and department's objectives and goals. He/She will be responsible for implementing initiatives, providing input into the overall direction, as well as managing daily operations for the entire unit. It is imperative to invest the time in selecting a mid-level manager that has the necessary skills, experiences, and motivations to be successful. The competencies and questions below have been developed to assist you in hiring the most qualified, best fit candidate.

Building a Successful Team – Using appropriate methods and a flexible interpersonal style to help build a cohesive team; facilitating the completion of team goals.

1. Tell me about a time when you were faced with a problem or opportunity that you knew would be best handled by a team. What did you do to select and guide the team?
2. Describe how you've worked with a team to set specific and measurable goals. Tell me about a time when you were successful in meeting those goals and a time when you experienced challenges along the way.
3. Describe the most effective techniques you've used to encourage team members to contribute their talents to the team's function or goal. Give me a specific example of a time when you used one of these techniques.
4. Sometimes teams get off track when working toward a specific project or goal. Describe a time when this happened and you were able to help your team get back on track.
5. [Reference Check] Can you describe <candidate's name> approach to developing a team? Please give me a specific example when you observed them using this approach.

Coaching and Developing Others – Providing feedback, instruction, and development guidance to help others excel in their current job or future job responsibilities; planning and supporting the development of individual skills and abilities.

1. Describe a recent coaching discussion you conducted. How, if at all, did you involve the other person in the discussion (e.g., offer suggestions, listen to concerns, etc.)?
2. Describe what you've done to link organizational objectives to your direct reports' objectives.
3. Tell me what you have done to identify and retain high performing employees.
4. Tell me about someone whom you found difficult to coach. Describe a specific situation. How did you handle this?
5. [Reference Check] Give me a specific example when <candidate's name> coached someone who had a performance issue. How did they approach the person? What was the outcome?

Leadership Disposition – Demonstrating the traits, inclinations, and dispositions that characterize successful leaders; exhibiting behavior styles that meet the demands of the leader role.

1. Tell me about a time when you were especially proactive about pursuing an opportunity.
2. Describe a time when you had to gain the trust of others in order to succeed.
3. How have you influenced employees to follow your strategic vision for the department/organization?

4. Sometimes we are asked to do something that we don't think is right. Tell me when this happened to you.
5. [*Reference Check*] Tell me about a time when you observed <candidate's name> take on a leadership role. What did they do? What was the outcome?

Leading Change – Identifying and driving organizational and cultural changes needed to adapt strategically to changing market demands, technology, and internal initiative; implementing new approaches to improve results by transforming organizational culture, systems, or products/services.

1. Tell me about a time when you were responsible for helping a group of people think about approaching a problem and/or an opportunity in a new way.
2. Describe the most significant change initiative you have led. Describe the steps you took to prepare for and execute the change.
3. People often feel threatened by change. Tell me about a specific situation and the actions you took to smooth the process of change for others. Which actions were successful and which were not?
4. Describe a time when change caused a problem for your department, business unit, or organization.
5. [*Reference Check*] This position requires someone who can effectively implement and facilitate change. Can you tell me about a time when you observed <candidate's name> successfully demonstrating these skills? What was the situation? What was the outcome?

Strategic Decision Making – Obtaining information and identifying key issues and relationships relevant to achieving a long-range goal or vision; committing to a course of action to accomplish a long-range goal or vision after developing alternatives based on logical assumptions, facts, available resources, constraints, and organizational values.

1. How do you decide when and how to communicate a new directive from senior management? Describe a situation when you applied this strategy.
2. What strategies have you employed to make sure a major new directive from senior management was carried out? Which strategies worked, and which did not? Give me a specific example.
3. Tell me about one of the most innovative strategies or methods you have used in implementing strategic directives created by senior management.
4. Describe a time when you recommended a plan of action in response to business/market trends. How did you come up with this plan?
5. [*Reference Check*] Describe a time when <candidate's name> had to make a difficult decision that others disagreed with. What strategies did he/she use? How did he/she gain other's acceptance?

Motivational Fit – The extent to which activities and responsibilities available in the job, the organization's mode of operation and values, and the geographic location provide personal satisfaction.

1. [*Developing Others*] Tell me about a time when you had many or few opportunities to develop others in your work area. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with that, and why?
2. [*Interdepartmental Cooperation*] Tell me about a time when the organization in which you worked supported collaboration among departments. How satisfied were you with that?
3. When were you most satisfied or dissatisfied working in a company or organization? What was it about that company or organization that made it satisfying or dissatisfying?