
Leadership interview questions and answers

Here's a sample of great leadership [interview questions to ask candidates](#). With these questions, you'll learn about leadership experience, skills and leadership styles.

Why ask candidates leadership interview questions

When you're hiring for a senior level position (e.g. team leaders), look for [soft skills](#) in candidates that may reflect their leadership styles. These can include:

- Motivation: How they use feedback and acknowledgment to inspire productivity
- Delegation: How they identify employees' strengths and weaknesses to assign duties
- Communication: How they encourage team members to express concerns and ideas
- Integrity: How they handle confidential information, manage work relationships and follow company policies to set a good example for their team

Good leaders add value to the company by fostering a collaborative environment and welcoming new ideas. Leadership interview questions help recruiters get greater insight into a candidate's way of working. Use job-related examples to understand how candidates:

- manage (or collaborate in) a team to achieve goals
- motivate their subordinates/co-workers
- approach challenges and conflicts in a team
- reach decisions

These interview questions can also reveal the leadership potential of candidates, even if they're interviewing for entry-level roles. Employees with leadership skills and experience tend to show commitment to their job and overcome obstacles in a timely manner.

These sample leadership interview questions will help you identify if your candidates have what it takes to be a good leader.

Example leadership interview questions to ask candidates

- Tell me about a time you struggled with work-life balance. Did you manage to solve the problem? How did you do it?
- Tell me about a time you took the lead in a team project. What was the outcome of the project?
- Tell me about a time your idea improved the company in some way. How did you make sure it was implemented?

- Two employees left from your team just before the deadline on a big project. How would you change your leadership style to meet the deadline?
- How do you monitor the performance of individual team members?
- In what specific ways do you motivate your team?
- How do you make decisions about the compensation of team members?
- How would you describe your leadership style?

Tips to assess leadership skills in interviews

- All candidates will claim to have communication and motivational skills. [Behavioral](#) and [situational](#) interview questions will help you identify how they use these skills in work-related scenarios.
- Leadership is not (only) about knowledge. A good leader shares the company's values and contributes to its long-term growth. Opt for candidates who aspire to grow and are interested in developing their careers.
- Team leaders get involved with hiring and training new members. Ask interview questions to gauge their familiarity with these procedures.
- A good leader is tenacious during hard times. Use work-related leadership examples to identify how candidates react to challenges and approach difficult decisions.
- Ask leadership questions that reveal candidates' creativity. Employees who can make quick decisions when things don't go as planned can prove vital for your company.

Red flags

- **Negativity.** It's important that those in leadership positions nourish positive team environments. Candidates who focus on the negative or lack energy will struggle to motivate their team members.
- **Dishonest answers.** If you spot inaccuracies in candidates' answers, that indicates they lack professionalism. Leaders usually play a strategic role in a company, so look for employees who are honest, ethical and don't hesitate to admit their mistakes.
- **Inflexibility.** Experienced leadership candidates might be used to a specific way of working. To be good leaders, candidates should be eager to adjust to different circumstances.
- **Signs of arrogance.** Being a team leader doesn't give you license to be bossy or order people around. Effective leaders know when to follow other people's suggestions and value contributions from others.
- **Blaming others or making excuses.** Employees in leadership positions who don't take accountability for their actions (or failures) risk ruining the team's balance. Look for trustworthy candidates who focus on finding solutions instead of complaining about problems.