
Team player interview questions

Use these sample team player interview questions to identify potential hires who demonstrate a team spirit and collaborate well with coworkers and managers.

Why assess teamwork in interviews

Teamwork skills are key in all positions. Some employees might work on their own occasionally (e.g. a developer who debugs a program), but the results of their work impact their entire team.

Good team players:

- Resolve issues before they escalate
- Nurture healthy work environments
- Understand each person's unique strengths
- Accept feedback and try to improve their work

Depending on the company and the position, teamwork might mean something different.

Teamwork is when:

- [Senior-level candidates](#) are able to handle conflicts and motivate their team members.
- [Entry-level candidates](#) work with experienced coworkers to learn their roles.
- [Remote team members](#) prioritize good verbal and written communication to work with their teams.
- [HR professionals](#) organize company activities to build team spirit.

Examples of team player interview questions

- Describe a group project you worked on. What was your role and what did you achieve?
- Describe a time you had to gather input from employees outside your team. How did you approach them and how did you ensure you'd get information on time?
- Tell me about a time you had to work with a colleague you didn't get along with.
- Has your team ever failed to reach a goal? If so, what went wrong and what did you learn from that experience?
- What would you do if your team didn't want to implement your idea?
- What's your preferred way of working on a group project: each member works on an assigned task independently or the entire team meets and works together? Why?
- How would you onboard a new team member?
- What's the best way to give credit to an employee for their good work?
- What work habits promote team spirit? (e.g. regular meetings, cross-departmental projects, team-bonding activities)

- How would you approach a disengaged employee who tanks the team's productivity?
- How would you make sure a remote team communicates well?
- What group collaboration tools have you used? (e.g. [Slack](#))

How to identify team players in interviews

- Candidates' past experiences will give you a good idea of how they behave on a team. What's their role in [group projects](#)? How do they share information and express their ideas? How do they react during conflicts?
- Look for people who own their accomplishments and also acknowledge their coworkers' contributions. Ask candidates to describe what they achieved through teamwork.
- Employees with solid communication skills are more efficient in team environments. They're likely to avoid sending multiple back-and-forth emails to explain or arrange something.
- Entry-level candidates might struggle with providing examples of teamwork skills in a professional setting. College work, internships or extracurricular activities can also show you how candidates behave on a team.
- It's a good sign if potential hires want to learn more about their future team. Questions about the structure of the department show that candidates want to picture themselves as part of the team.

Red flags

- **Using "I" a lot.** Do your candidates start every sentence with "I," even when they're describing a team project? This might be a sign that they prefer working independently, instead of a group setting.
- **Generic answers.** Most candidates will claim they're good team players. But, if they can't support their argument with real examples, they might be simply trying to say the right thing, without being honest.
- **Arrogant attitude.** Bossy behavior is a red flag for teamwork. "[Know-it-all](#)" employees don't value other people's opinions and ideas and usually don't take criticism well.
- **Putting the blame on others.** Candidates who bad-mouth prior employers and coworkers are less likely to form healthy work relationships. Good collaboration is based on compromise and mutual respect.
- **Trust issues.** People who want to double-check everyone's work tank the team's productivity, as they slow down all processes. Senior managers, in particular, who don't trust their team members and don't let them take any initiative risk damaging the team's synergy.