
Values-based interview questions

During your hiring process, ask **values-based interview questions** to identify candidates who share the same values as your company and will fit in your workplace.

Why ask values-based interview questions

In business, core values reflect a company's mission and long-term objectives. They're not just theoretical beliefs. A company's values define:

- **How employees collaborate**
 - For example, a company that values innovation will encourage brainstorming sessions and creative ideas from all employees.
- **What kinds of investments the company will make**
 - For example, a company that prioritizes customer service will invest in CRM software and [training programs](#) for salespeople.
- **What types of people the company wants to hire and retain**
 - For example, a company that focuses on collaboration will recruit good team players and organize team-building activities to keep them engaged.

During your hiring process, values-based interview questions will help you understand:

- Whether [candidates' priorities](#) align with your goals
- What candidates prioritize in the workplace
- What drives their behaviors at work

Here are some examples of common corporate values at work:

- **Integrity:** Acting with honesty and professionalism, and respecting company policies.
- **Collaboration:** Working with colleagues and teams to meet joint goals.
- **Accountability:** Taking responsibility for actions and decisions both in team and individual projects.
- **Social responsibility:** Integrating social and environmental solutions to business operations.
- **Innovation:** Implementing new ideas to improve the business.
- **Customer orientation:** Maximizing and maintaining customer satisfaction.

Examples of value-based interview questions

Integrity

- Have you ever faced an ethical dilemma at work? If so, what was the issue and what did you do?
- What would you do if you saw a colleague stealing stationary from the company's stock?

Collaboration

- Describe a time your team failed to complete a project on time. What would you do differently, if you had the chance?
- What would you do if you had to work with a person you didn't get along with?

Accountability

- Describe a successful team project you worked on so far. What was your contribution?
- How would you react if your team received negative feedback about a part of the project that was entirely assigned to you?

Social responsibility

- How do you keep a balance between performing thorough quality controls on products while keeping costs low?
- What company policies would you suggest creating to make our operations more environmentally-friendly? How would you ensure employees understand and apply these guidelines?

Innovation

- Describe a situation where you were facing a technical issue and your normal troubleshooting method wasn't working. What did you do?
- Can you give me an example of a well-designed product? What features make this product unique?

Customer orientation

- Describe a time you managed to calm an irate customer. How did you manage to maintain your professionalism and address their complaint?
- How would you reply to a customer who enters the store or calls just as your shift ends?

Tips to assess candidates' answers

- First, determine the values that your company embraces. All employees, from entry-level to executives, should share these core values.
- Then, define how each value translates into work behaviors. [Behavioral](#) and [situational](#)

questions will help you understand whether candidates demonstrate desirable behaviors on the job.

- Departments or smaller teams might value additional traits. Adjust your questions to evaluate those, as well. For example, a sales team is likely to value solid customer service attitude, while an engineering team might prioritize innovation.
- It's best to combine values-based interview questions with [competency-based questions](#) that focus on analyzing skills and knowledge. That way, you'll create complete candidate profiles and reach more objective hiring decisions.

Red flags

- **They can't support their arguments.** During job interviews, most candidates will claim they are "good team players" or having a "strong work ethic." But if they can't give you examples that prove these values, they might be simply floating buzzwords to impress you.
- **Their values don't match the position's requirements.** Employees with an out-of-the-box way of thinking might be great fits for a product development or marketing team that seeks to engage new customers. But, they'll likely be hard to retain in a process-driven company or team.
- **They seem inflexible.** New hires could (try to) adjust to your way of working, as long as they're willing to do so. If, however, they have strong opinions that don't match your core values, that's a red flag for your future collaboration.
- **They show signs of arrogance.** Being negative toward criticism and/or demonstrating a bossy attitude are indicators of people who prioritize their own values over others'. These people mightn't comply with your [company policies](#) in the long run and end up creating a [toxic work environment](#).

Don't miss our latest list with [the best interview questions to ask candidates](#).