



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK MAJORS

Preparation:

Research your employer thoroughly, refine your resume, select appropriate attire, create a list of questions to ask the employer, and get a good night's sleep. Also be sure to familiarize yourself with the interview's location.

Practice:

Set up a mock interview with Career Collaborative, a friend, family member, or colleague. Rehearsing your responses is a great way to boost your confidence and craft how you communicate your experiences. Remember to research the company and tailor your responses to show how your talents and personality match the position. Practice avoiding words such as "uh," "um," "you know," and "like," and bad body language habits of twirling hair, tapping a foot, or drumming fingers.

Presentation:

When answering questions, remember the "3 P's":

- **Ponder:** take a moment to reflect on why the employer has asked a question. This will help you frame your response and speak to the skill set, value, or ability being measured.
- **Prove:** if you say that you have developed excellent organizational skills, give specific examples of situations where you demonstrated a high level of organization.
- **Project:** always be genuine and confident in responding to questions, asking questions, and meeting new people during the interview.

Post-Interview:

Collect your interviewers' business cards so you can follow up with a thank-you card or email. After you leave the premises, take notes on everything you can remember and use the experience to further develop your interview techniques. Check back two weeks afterward unless you hear back sooner or are given different instructions.

Common Interview Questions to Expect

- Tell us a little about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this position?
- What do you know about this organization?
- What do you consider your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you anticipate using the skills/knowledge you've acquired in your internship(s) and classes?
- Talk about a time when you were not able to build a successful relationship with a difficult person.
- Describe how your position in a group project contributed to your team's goals.
- Are you a "big-picture" person or a "detail-oriented" person? Give an example.
- Describe a time when you had to take a risk at work. What was the outcome?



- What would former coworkers/professors/supervisors say about you if we called them?
- Describe the work environment that you thrive in.
- How did you get along with your last supervisor?
- What's your preferred style of management?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Why are you excited about this job?
- What motivates you?

Interview Questions Specific to Social Work

- Why are you interested in this agency?
- How does the work in this organization fit your professional mission or experience?
- Why do you want this job? Why do you want to work for this organization?
- What are your experiences with the target population? Why do you want to work with this population?
- What are your qualifications?
- What kind of supervision do you expect?
- How has your education/work experience prepared you for this position?
- What do you hope to accomplish at this agency?
- What would you like to learn here?
- What issues might you have with [adoption, for example]?
- What are your career goals? For the next 3 years? The next 5 years? The next 10 years?
- How do you define success for yourself?
- How do you plan?
- How do you work with others?
- Talk about a time when you had to juggle your regular responsibilities with a sudden priority.
- Are you a leader or a follower?
- Describe the process you go through in developing a [case plan, budget, workshop, contract, or marketing plan, for example].
- What is your understanding of service delivery in [a particular field or region]?
- Talk about a time you were in a disagreement over a treatment plan.
- What has been your experience with agency paperwork and how do you feel about it?
- How will you deal with the dual-relationship issues of working in a small community?
- What type of research skills/computer skills do you have?
- What specific policy issues are you interested in?
- How do you handle shifting priorities and working in a fast-paced, pressured environment?
- What is your experience with writing quickly, under pressure?
- What do you do to keep track of a lot of information at once?
- How would you go about locating community resources in a new neighborhood?

*Provided by the [Social Work Career Center](#)

Asking Questions



So many people are concerned with making a good impression during a job interview that they forget it's a two-way street. You're there not only to market yourself, but to find out if the job and company are right for you. At the end of your interview, the interviewer will expect you to ask questions. Here are some options:

- What's an average day like?
- How would you describe the culture here?
- What qualities are you looking for in the person who fills this position?
- What is the next step in the hiring process? Or, when might you make a hiring decision?
- What tools/applications/languages do you use?
- What are the biggest opportunities and challenges facing the company or department right now?
- What typical projects or tasks do employees/student interns work on?
- What makes an employee/student intern successful? What traits are best suited for your company?
- How do the various members of the team work together? Who is the team leader?
- How would successful performance in this position be measured?
- Is there much turn-over in your company?
- What's your preferred management style?

Asking Questions as a Social Work Intern

- What do you think would be the most challenging experiences for a social work intern in your agency?
- What do you think would be the most rewarding experiences for a social work intern in your agency?
- How are expectations for students different from those for agency staff?
- To what extent do students have an opportunity to offer input into administration and planning?

Top Traits Employers Seek

Every employer is looking for specific characteristics and the winning candidate will have the right combination of them. These are the top traits that employers want. In your interview, find a way to talk about the ones you have.

- Honesty/Integrity
- Dedication/Tenacity
- Loyalty
- Professionalism
- Self-Motivation
- Adaptability/Flexibility
- Reliability/Responsibility
- Positive Attitude
- Self-Confidence
- Willingness to Learn