



YOUR SEARCH STARTS HERE

Interview Guidelines



Before Your Interview

Do your research

Spend time researching the company, and learn as much as you can about it

Visit the **company website** as well as **news sites to get up-to-date information and recent news about the company**

Read the job spec thoroughly, familiarising yourself with the main objectives of the role.

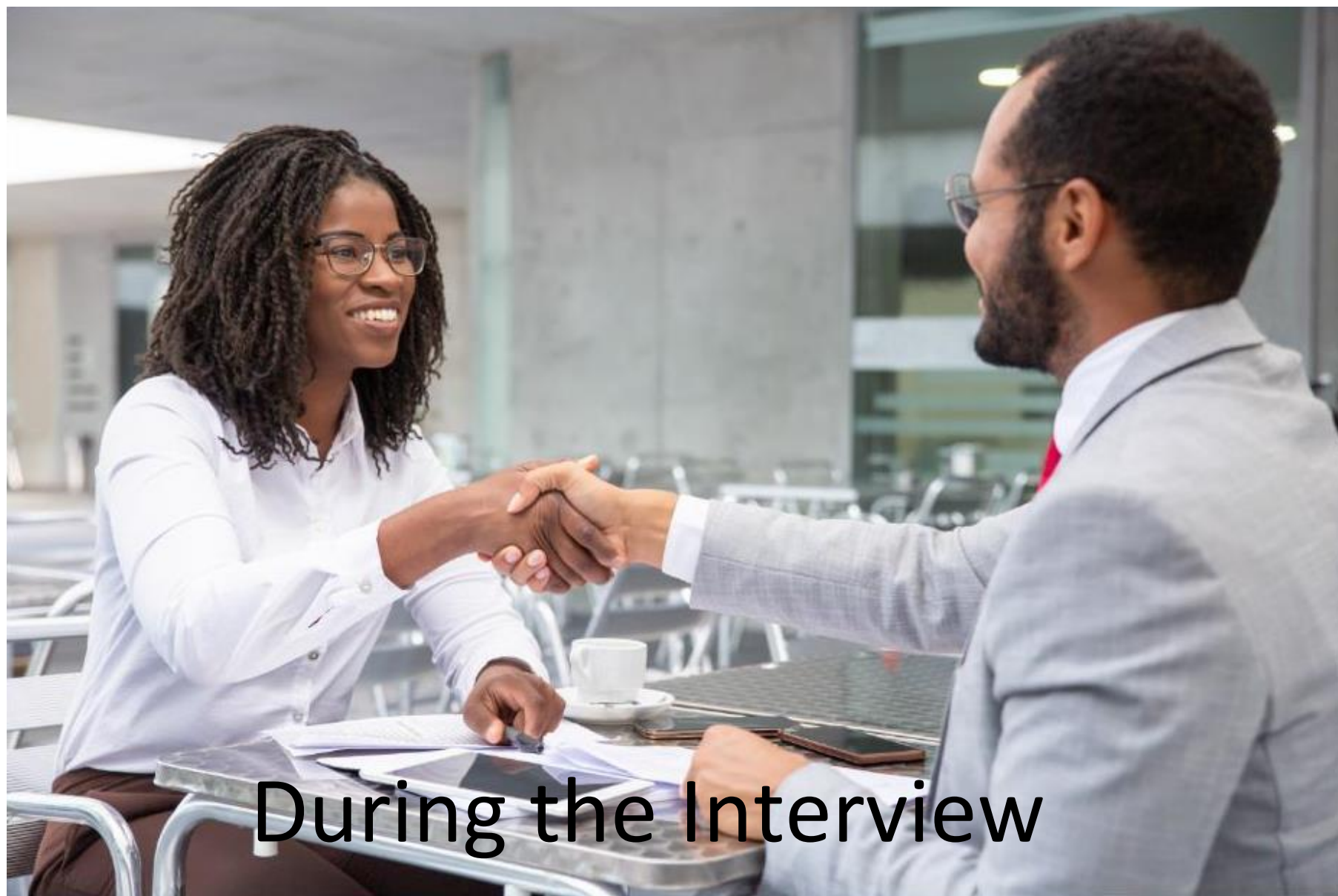
Prepare relevant examples of your work and how these relate to the requirements before the interview. Practice relating these examples as stories (see the article, *Telling Stories in the Interview*). You can also use stories to demonstrate personal character traits, in addition to skills and experience. To turn your examples into organised stories, use the **problem-action-result (PAR) formula** or the **S.T.A.R. system**, Situation, Task, Action, and Result. Begin by explaining the problem or situation you faced. Next, describe the actions you took to solve the problem. Finally, outline the successful results.

Make a note of five things you would like to tell the interviewer about yourself and five things you would like to ask about the position, company or culture

It is worth thinking about how you would answer questions before arriving for the interview. Most questions are open-ended and will give you the opportunity to expand and explain yourself in detail

Know where you are going – ensure you have the exact business address of the company and plan your route before the day

Know who you are meeting with – ensure you have the names of all the people who will be present in the interview. Search for them on LinkedIn to gain an understanding of their position within the company and their background



During the Interview

Having the right education and skills might get you an interview, but it's what happens during the interview process that gets you hired.

Here are some examples of key traits most interviewers look for – make sure you portray them at your next interview.

Enthusiasm: Everyone loves a candidate full of good energy – enthusiasm is contagious and will leave the interviewer energised

Manners matter: Remember to dress the part and show positive body language by sitting up straight, making eye contact and smiling

Be mature: Mature employees know how to focus and concentrate on delivering results, something all employers love

Good judgment: An employer tests your judgment by asking you questions that start with “tell me about a situation or a time when...” Make sure you arrive prepared

Are you loyal? Prospective employers will like you if you show you're loyal to something, whether it's a cause, company or sport

Positive and vibrant. A positive employee is always more welcome than one who always feels down. Positive employees are also more approachable and easier to get along with. So ensure you are positive and vibrant during the interview process

Do you do more than required? If you can demonstrate to the interviewer that you can and want to do more than is expected of you, you're on the right track

Can you graciously handle criticism? The typical question that tests this is, “What are your weaknesses?” As a professional, you have to be able to recognise the areas that need work and identify what you could do to turn your weaknesses into strengths

Are you a team player? Interviewers want to know that you're the right fit for the team and a good team player

How smart are you? A successful candidate answers questions clearly, in full sentences and with good grammar and pronunciation

Time is important. Are you punctual? If not, you should polish this skill; punctuality matters in the working world

Resilience. Do you break down or persevere through tough times? Interviewers ask questions to test if you can work under pressure, so think of a few examples before the big day

During the interview, be mindful of the following:

Take your time describing the problem. This shows you understand the bigger picture and realise your actions can affect the company's goals and strategies

When talking about your actions, **explain why the situation was challenging** – this makes your accomplishments more significant. Be sure to include your most important contributions

Actions speak louder than words. Instead of simply saying you know how to handle a challenging situation, tell a story to illustrate how you successfully dealt with one

Your delivery is as important as the subject matter of your story, so be comfortable telling the story. This shows you're also comfortable with the actions you're conveying. You want to portray yourself as confident about your abilities and actions

Naturally, **use only examples that had successful outcomes** and show you in a positive light

Ensure the interviewer recognises the results of your actions so that he/she can understand and appreciate your value to an employer

Make sure you give the interviewers the information they are looking for. Ask for feedback. Ask whether your example addressed their question or whether they would like another one

Why behavioural interview questions matter

Great businesses are built on people. People who not only have the right skills and experience, but who have the potential to do great things in the role, the team and in the company.

During a behaviour-based interview, the interviewer tries to assess your past performances to get an indication of your future success.

The interviewer seeks specific examples that demonstrate if you have the skills needed for this job. It's important to be prepared for these types of questions. An interviewer can usually easily tell if you're not — and assume you haven't done your homework. To best prepare for behaviour-based questions, you need to think about your experiences that most closely match the skills you'll need to succeed at this job. It helps to understand exactly what the interviewer is looking for in this position.

This is a proven way to reveal a person's potential, specifically their ability to adapt, grow, collaborate, prioritise, lead and strengthen the company culture. By discussing your past behaviour as well as your skills and experience, the interviewer will instinctively know if you have all the qualities needed in their next hire.

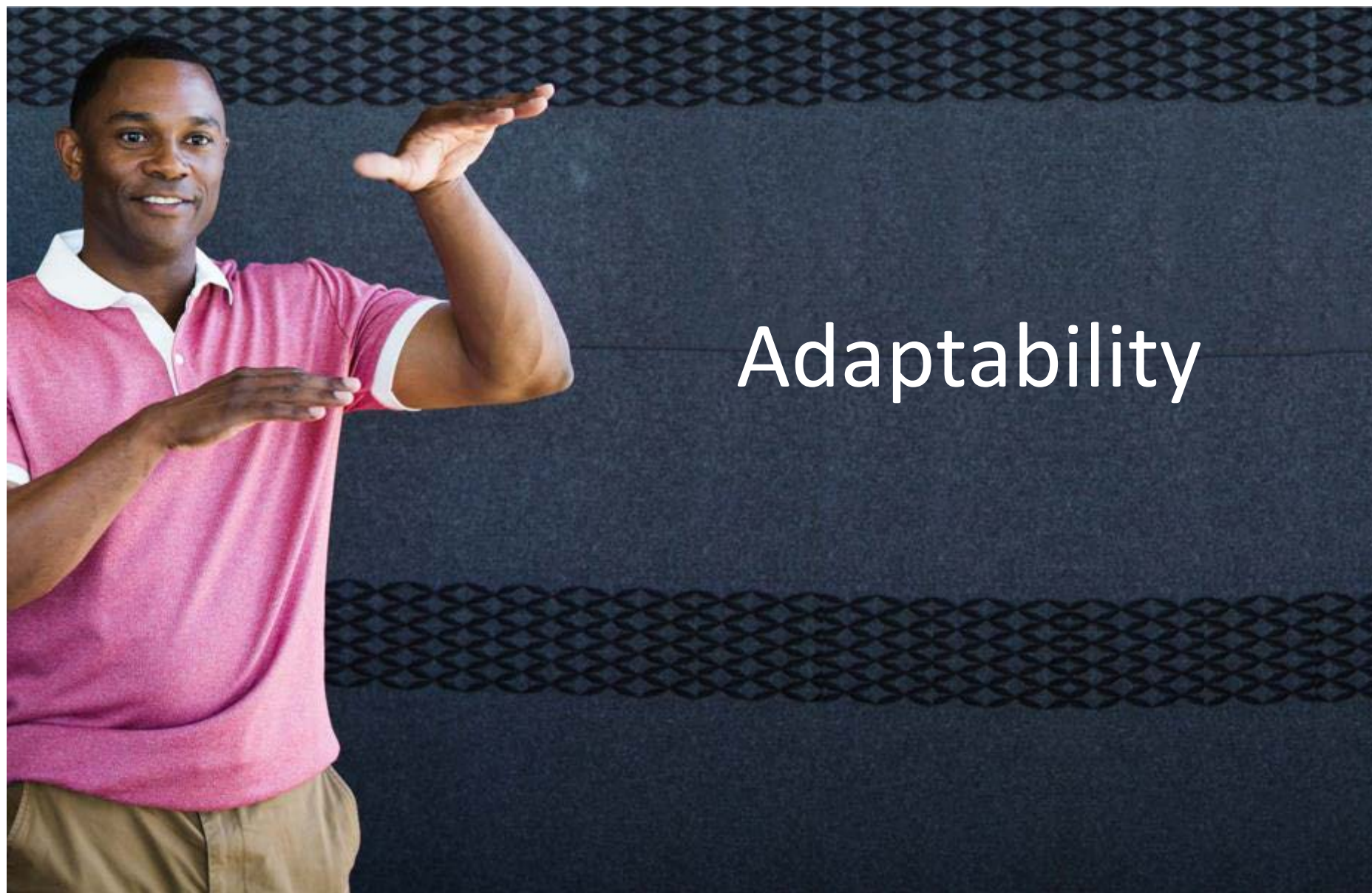
Of course, it's impossible to anticipate every imaginable interview question. But if you spend enough time thinking about relevant examples and rehearsing your delivery, it will make it much easier for you. You'll be able to think on your feet, adapt your examples to whatever questions the interviewer throws at you and sound confident in your story-telling.



6 Soft Skills That Reflect Potential

Potential can be interpreted many ways, but there are common soft skills and characteristics found among successful hires and high-potential people. Here are the most important soft skills hiring managers look for during interviews (ranked in order of importance):

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- A person with blonde hair is seen from the back, holding a tablet. The tablet screen is dark, and a list of five soft skills is overlaid on the left side of the image in white text. The background is a blurred indoor setting.
1. Adaptability
 2. Culture Add
 3. Leadership
 4. Growth Potential
 5. Prioritisation



Adaptability

How to screen for adaptability

69%

of hiring managers say adaptability is the most important soft skill they screen for. It makes sense - to stay competitive today, companies need to be able to adapt to a changing economy and business needs. That means they need employees who can adapt as well, and high-potential people often have this ability.

Here are some of the most popular questions asked:

1

Describe a situation in which you embraced a new system, process, technology, or idea at work that was a major departure from the old way of doing things.

2

Tell me about a time when you were asked to do something you had never done before. How did you react? What did you learn?

3

Recall a time when you were assigned a task outside of your job description. How did you handle the situation? What was the outcome?

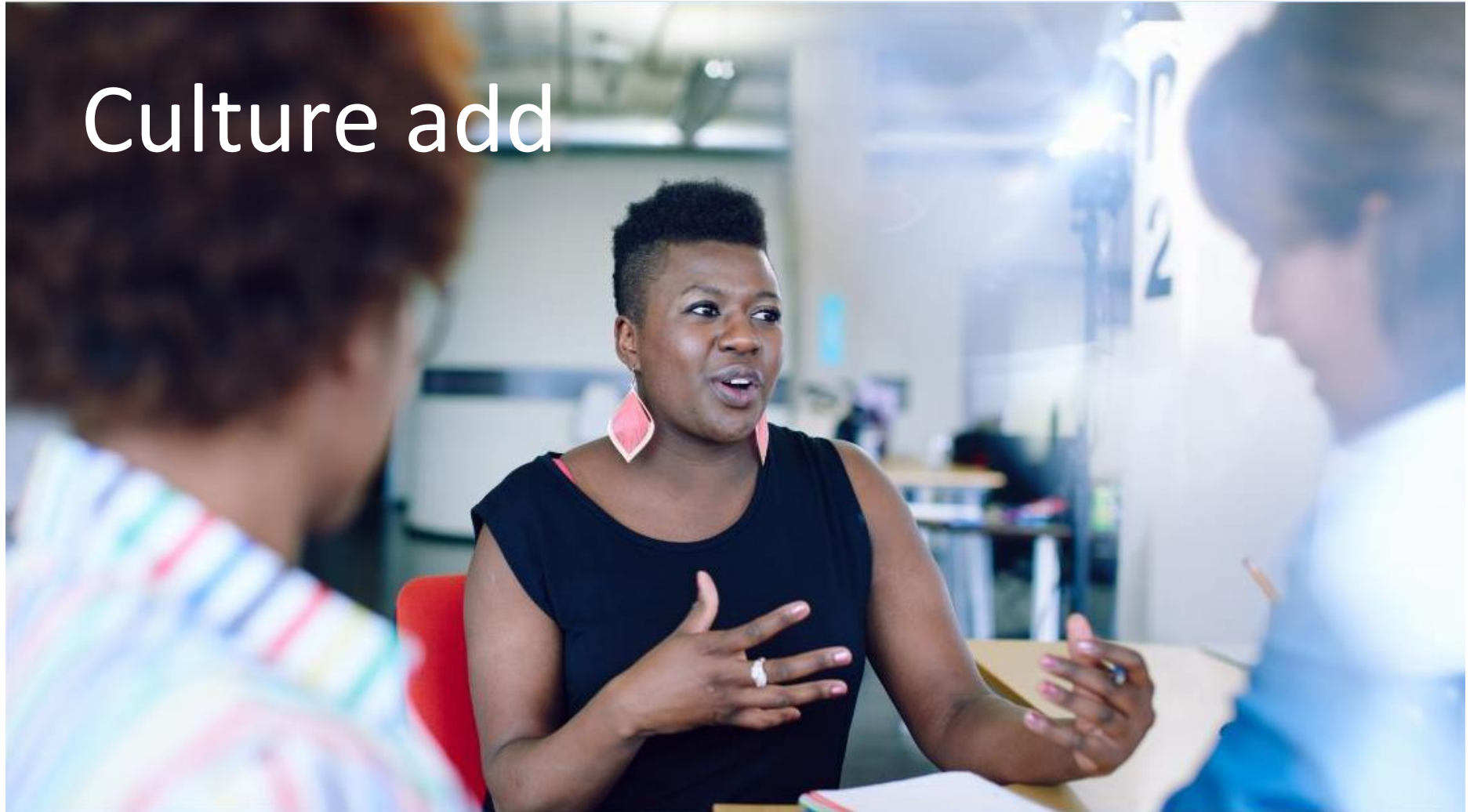
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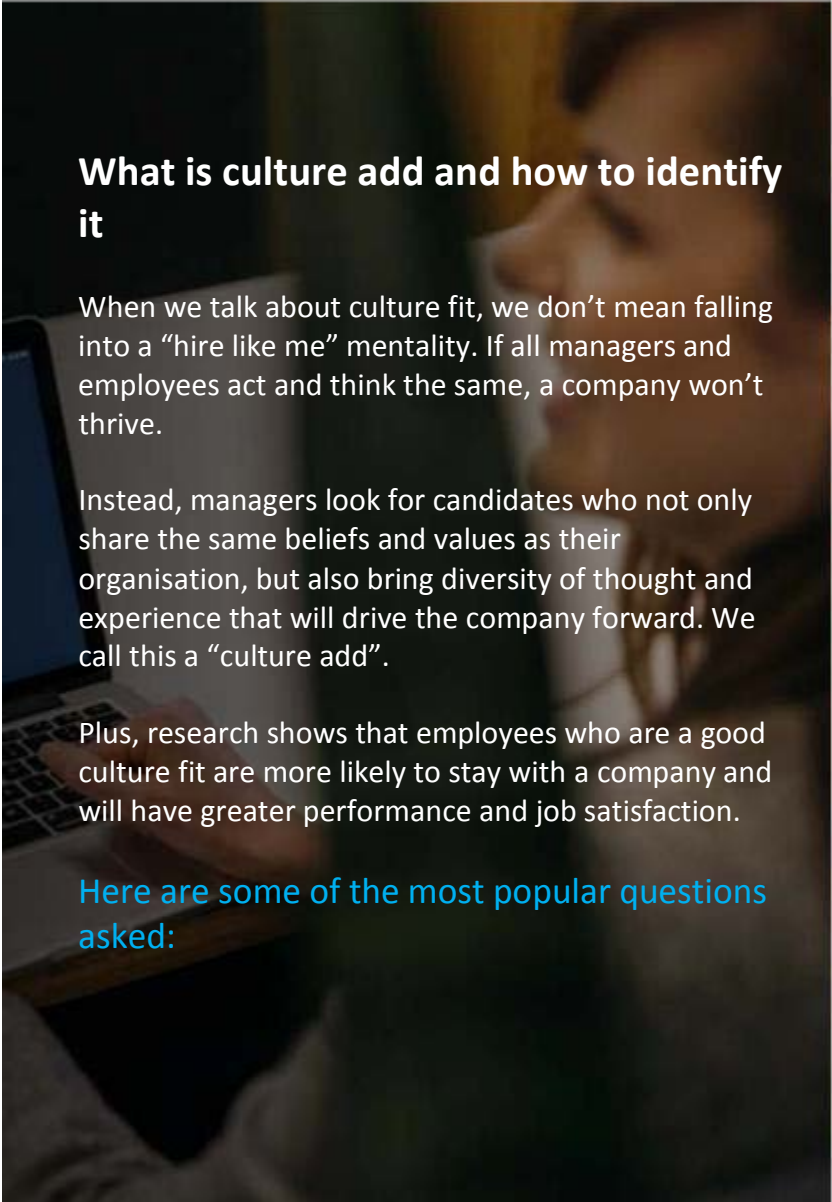
Tell me about the biggest change that you have had to deal with. How did you adapt to that change?

5

Tell me about a time when you had to adjust to a colleague's working style in order to complete a project or achieve your objectives.

Culture add



A woman with dark hair is sitting at a desk, looking down at a laptop. The background is slightly blurred, showing a warm, indoor setting.

What is culture add and how to identify it

When we talk about culture fit, we don't mean falling into a "hire like me" mentality. If all managers and employees act and think the same, a company won't thrive.

Instead, managers look for candidates who not only share the same beliefs and values as their organisation, but also bring diversity of thought and experience that will drive the company forward. We call this a "culture add".

Plus, research shows that employees who are a good culture fit are more likely to stay with a company and will have greater performance and job satisfaction.

Here are some of the most popular questions asked:

1

Tell me about a time in the last week when you've been satisfied, energized, and productive at work. What were you doing?

2

What are the three things that are most important to you in a job?

3

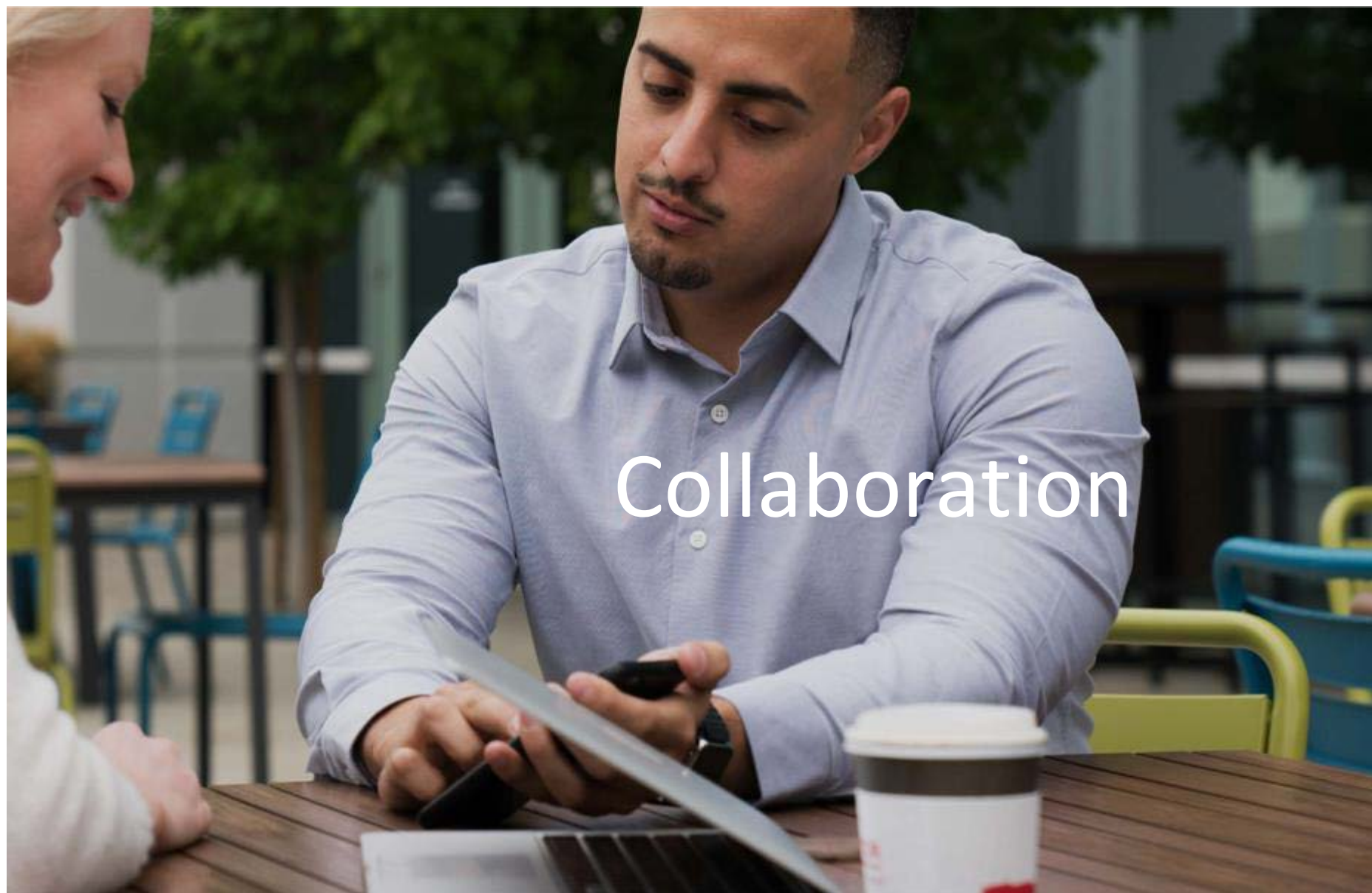
What's the most interesting thing about you that's not on your resume?

4

What would make you chose our company over others?

5

What's the biggest misconception your co-workers have about you and why do they think that?



Collaboration



How to screen for collaboration

Done right, collaboration keeps the business moving at a fast pace. Done wrong, employees find it extremely distracting. When we look at an organization's top collaborative contributors, and look at employees who are recognized as top performers, there is about a

50%*

overlap. So hiring people who can collaborate effectively and work well with others is essential to success.

Here are some of the most popular questions asked:

* Collaboration Overload

1

Give an example of when you had to work with someone who was difficult to get along with. How did you handle interactions with that person?

2

Tell me about a time when you were communicating with someone and they did not understand you. What did you do?

3

Tell me about one of your favourite experiences working with a team and your contribution.

4

Describe the best partner or supervisor with whom you've worked. What part of their managing style appealed to you?

5

Can you share an experience where a project dramatically shifted directions at the last minute? What did you do?



Leadership

How to screen for leadership

Research shows that organizations with high quality leaders are

13x

more likely to outperform their competition.* During the interview, you will be assessed to see if you can inspire, motivate, and unleash potential in others.

Here are some of the most popular questions asked:

* 10 Ways to Grow Leaders in Your Business

1

Tell me about the last time something significant didn't go according to plan at work. What was your role? What was the outcome?

2

Describe a situation where you needed to persuade someone to see things your way. What steps did you take? What were the results?

3

Give me an example of a time when you felt you led by example. What did you do and how did others react?

4

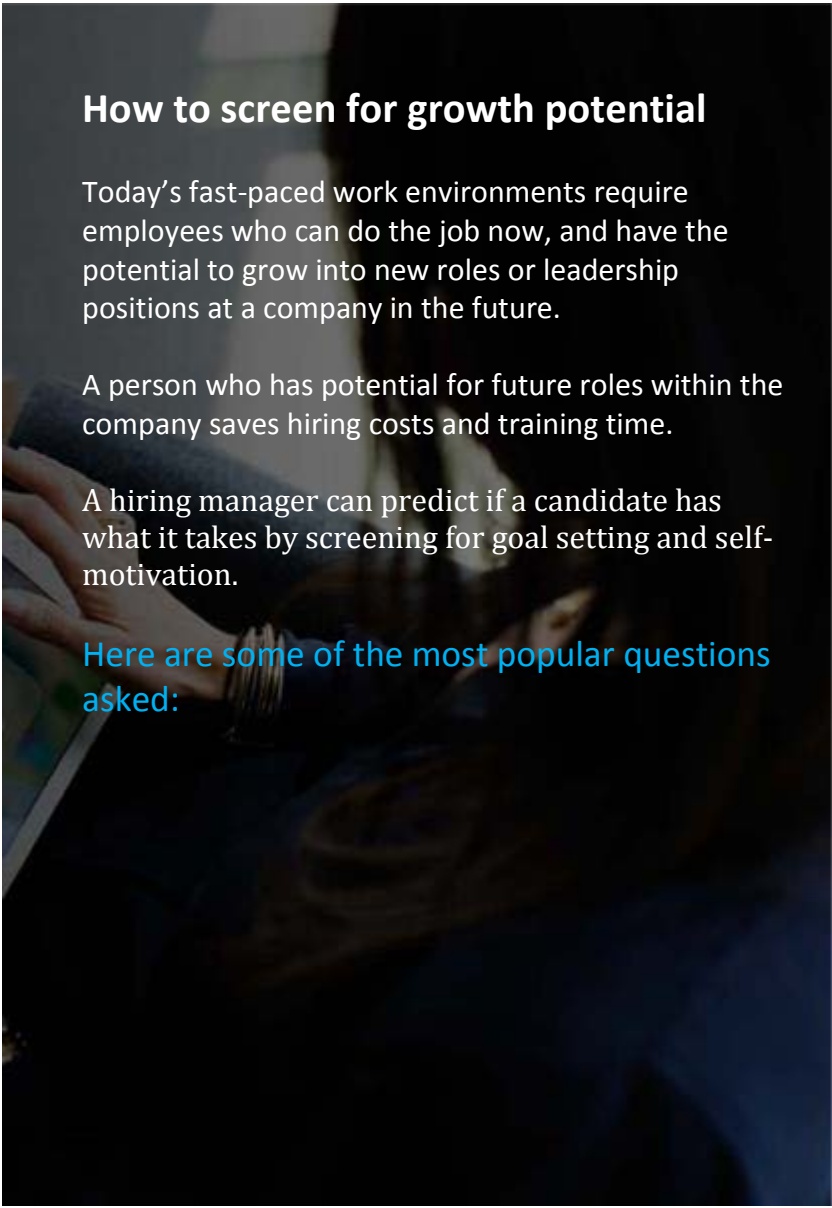
Tell me about the toughest decision you had to make in the last six months.

5

Have you ever had to "sell" an idea to your co-workers or group? How did you do it? What were the results?



Growth potential



How to screen for growth potential

Today's fast-paced work environments require employees who can do the job now, and have the potential to grow into new roles or leadership positions at a company in the future.

A person who has potential for future roles within the company saves hiring costs and training time.

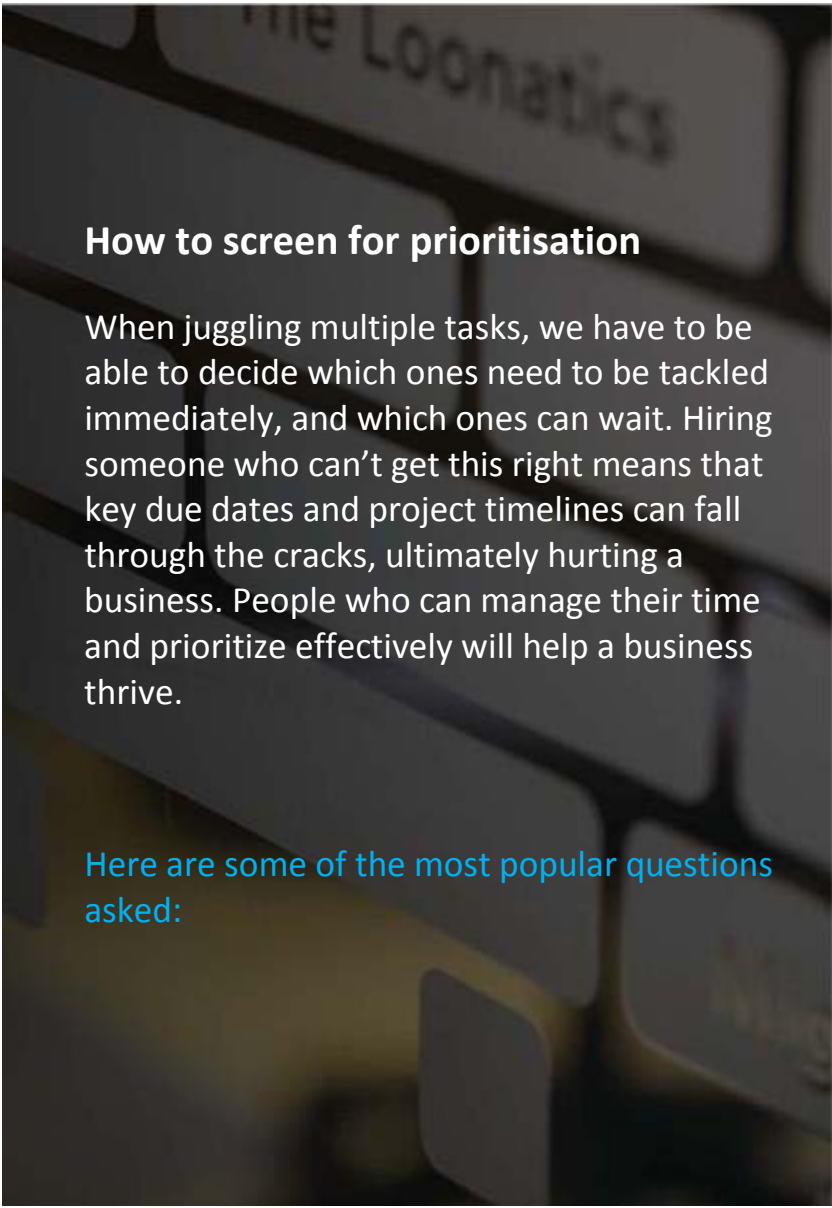
A hiring manager can predict if a candidate has what it takes by screening for goal setting and self-motivation.

Here are some of the most popular questions asked:

- 1 Recall a time when your manager was unavailable when a problem arose. How did you handle the situation? With whom did you consult?
- 2 Describe a time when you volunteered to expand your knowledge at work, as opposed to being directed to do so.
- 3 What would motivate you to make a move from your current role?
- 4 When was the last occasion you asked for direct feedback from a superior? Why?
- 5 What's the biggest career goal you've ever achieved?

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt and a necklace with a small pendant, is looking down at a smartphone held in both hands. She is standing against a light grey concrete wall. To her left, there is a dark planter box containing several green plants. The word "Prioritisation" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image, partially overlapping the woman's torso and the phone.

Prioritisation



How to screen for prioritisation

When juggling multiple tasks, we have to be able to decide which ones need to be tackled immediately, and which ones can wait. Hiring someone who can't get this right means that key due dates and project timelines can fall through the cracks, ultimately hurting a business. People who can manage their time and prioritize effectively will help a business thrive.

Here are some of the most popular questions asked:

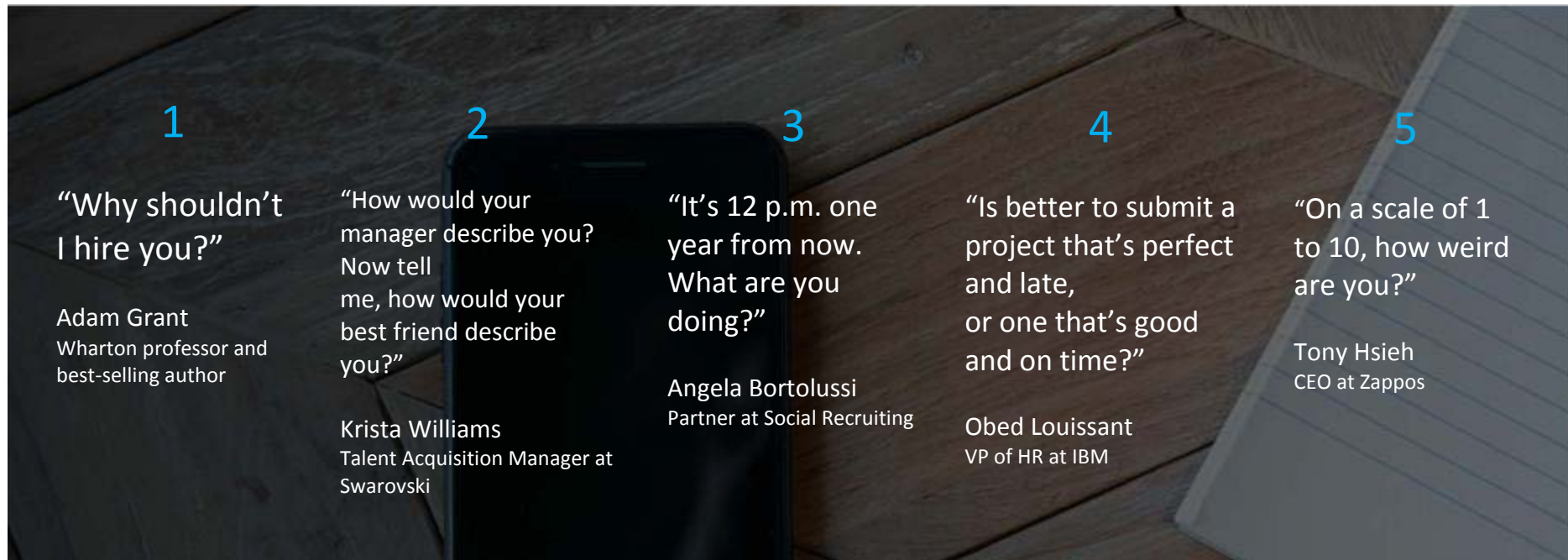
- 1 Tell me about a project that you planned. How did you organize and schedule the tasks?
- 2 Describe a time when you felt stressed or overwhelmed. How did you handle it?
- 3 Tell me about a time when you had to juggle several projects at the same time. How did you organize your time? What was the result?
- 4 Give an example of a time when you delegated an important task successfully.
- 5 How do you determine what amount of time is reasonable for a task?

A man with short, dark hair, wearing a grey sweater over a dark collared shirt, is sitting in a large, teal-colored armchair. He is looking slightly to his right with a calm expression. His hands are clasped in his lap. The background is a modern interior with a white staircase and a glass railing visible on the right side. The text "Creative Questions" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the lower half of the image.

Creative Questions

Leaders share their most creative questions

To keep things interesting, we collected unconventional questions that top business and talent leaders like to ask. The answer can reveal a lot about your personality and the way you think.



Be prepared to reverse the interview

After being in the hot seat, now it's your time to ask the questions you have. 70% of candidates say they want more details into the role & responsibilities, followed by how they fit within the team, and information about the company mission and vision*.

Ask for more insight into the role such as “What’s the biggest opportunity for this role?” “What’s the most challenging element about this role?” and “What does success look like in this position?”

You can gain a better understanding of **the current team and their needs** “What type of person works well with this team” “What is the background of the team members” “If you could describe your team in 3 words, what would they be and why?”

Ask your own open-ended questions, such as, “Can you give me an indication of how your financial department is structured?” “Can you give me a brief overview of your current business plan?” “When do you close off your financial year?” “Why is this position vacant?”

Ask questions relevant to what the interviewer has discussed, to show that you are interested and have been listening. Possibly ask for more detail

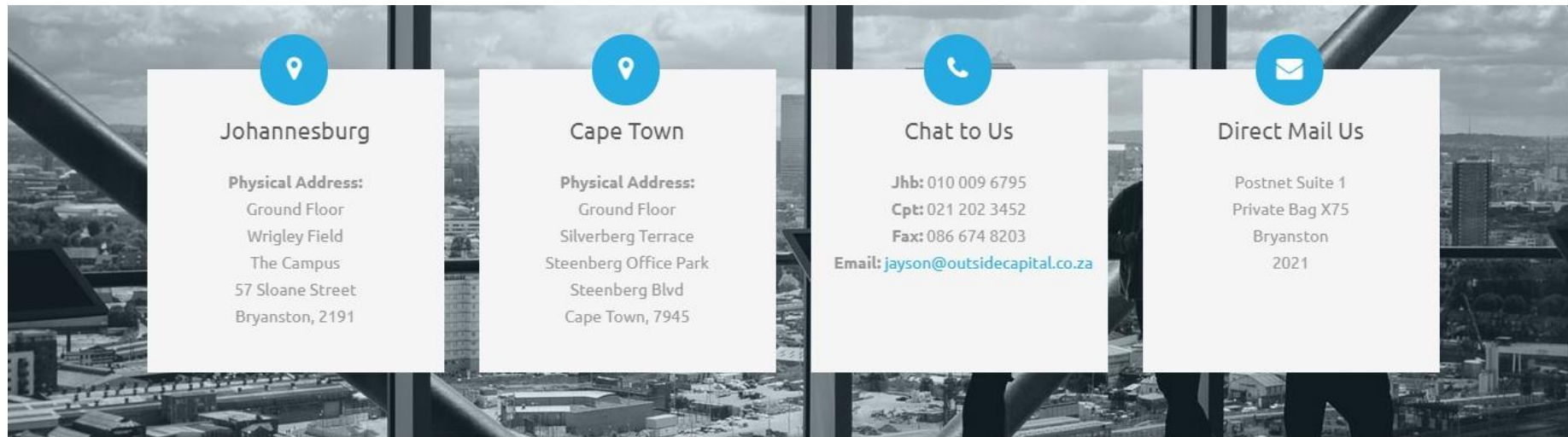
If the opportunity arises, **ask the person interviewing you about their background**, how long they have been at the company, where they were before joining, where they went to university or whether they are a CA or MBA. This serves to find mutual ground. For example, you may find you attended the same university, have mutual friends or both did articles at the same firm

Let the interviewer know if you are interested in the position and want the job. Express your interest after the interview and ask for the next step forward. Thank them for their time and say that if they offer you the position you would accept it without a second thought – show commitment and enthusiasm!

*Inside the Mind of Today's Candidate

About OutsideCapital

OutsideCapital is a level 2 BBBEE executive search and recruitment consulting house that specialises within the Financial, Legal and Compliance, IT, Creative and Engineering industries.



www.outsidecapital.co.za

**To help you be more efficient and effective in your interview, we have incorporated a LinkedIn survey of nearly 1,300 hiring managers for their top behavioural interview questions. In May 2016, LinkedIn surveyed 1,297 Hiring Managers in the US, Canada, UK, Netherlands, Australia and India. Hiring Managers are defined as those who currently manage people and either recently hired, are currently trying to hire or are planning to hire new people for their team (based on survey responses). Members were selected at random to take the LinkedIn survey and are representative of the LinkedIn sample. The LinkedIn sample (and the analysis) is influenced by how members choose to use the site, which can vary based on professional, social, and regional culture, as well as overall site availability and accessibility. These variances were not accounted for in the analysis.*