

# Interview Practice Questions

In order to successfully prepare for a phone or in-person interview, to include the panel interview, an applicant must be fully prepared to answer behavioral and hypothetical questions as well as give a brief description of their skills, background and experiences. The key to a successful interview is preparation and rehearsing what you will say. In order to best represent yourself and the California National Guard professionally you need to dress for success and rehearse prior to your interview!

These are sample questions but widely used by most civilian businesses...

**1) Briefly describe your background and professional work experience**

*(Here is where you provide a "snapshot" of your background such as where you are from, your past work experience in both the military and civilian workforce. This should be 1-2 minutes and be chronological in order leading you into your current assignment/job)*

**2) Give us an example of a stressful challenge or problem you have faced in your past and explain how you handled it and resolved the situation**

*(This is where you can use any work example from your military or civilian past work experience. The key here is to clearly state what the issue is, so provide a brief background)*

**3) Briefly describe why you are the ideal candidate for this position**

*(Here is where you tailor your past experience to the job you are applying for)*

**4) What is your greatest strength? What is your greatest weakness?**

*(This is something any self-reflective professional should already know about themselves. Do not say "you don't have any" or "don't know" because this will clearly show the interviewer you do not know your own strengths and weaknesses. The best way to respond is to describe the skills and experience that directly correlate with the job you are applying for. As for your weakness, be honest about it but also explain what you are doing to counter it and improve in this area.)*

**5) Describe a difficult project you were in charge of and how you worked with others to complete it on time and to standard**

*(There will be several variants of this question, so have a couple of examples of a time you worked with a team to complete a work/school project on time and possibly dealt with a deadline or other problematic issues throughout the project)*

**6) Why should we hire you?**

*(This is where you need to give concrete examples of why your skills and accomplishments make you qualified for the job. Be positive and reiterate your interest in the company and position you are applying for. This is where you can state how you are not the normal candidate because you are California National Guardsmen)*

**7) Describe a time when you were faced with a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills**

**8) Give me a specific example of a time when you used good judgment and logic to solve a problem**

**9) Provide an example when you were over tasked and had to many things to do at once. How did you prioritize your tasks and time?**

- 10) Tell me an example of a time when you had to make a split second decision. How did you react?
- 11) What is the most difficult decision you have made this past year?
- 12) Give an example of when you motivated others to get the job done
- 13) Describe a past situation when you showed initiative and took the lead on a project or mission
- 14) Provide an example when you anticipated a potential problem and developed preventive measures
- 15) Tell me about a situation when you had to deal with a very upset customer, employee or coworker. How did you handle this situation?

The “STAR” interview technique is when you break down the interviewer’s question and answer in a logical and sequential order. First, describe the situation or background of the issue/task. Remember, these civilian employers will not understand military jargon or know about your MOS or military experience so take a minute to paint the picture so they understand the situation. Next, describe the action you took and why you did it. Lastly, describe what happened and what you learned from the situation.

<p><b>S</b>ituation Or <b>T</b>ask</p>	<p>Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from volunteer experience, or any relevant event.</p>
<p><b>A</b>ction you took</p>	<p>Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did -- not the efforts of the team. Don't tell what you might do, tell what you did.</p>
<p><b>R</b>esults you achieved</p>	<p>What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?</p>