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## **Interviewing 101-**

Studying this packet can become the foundation for a successful transition from the military to leadership in Corporate America. My advice to you is simple - **print this packet out** and **read it cover to cover**. Practicing and taking to heart the tips included in Interviewing 101 can take the mystery out of interviewing and put YOU in the driver seat.



**Whether you are a Marine Corps Helicopter Mechanic, an Army Logistics Specialist, or work in the Engineering Spaces of Nuclear Powered Aircraft Carrier... this packet can be the first step leading to a successful career with a great Company!**



# INTERVIEWING 101

## OVERVIEW:

This packet will cover the following issues:

- General interviewing principles
- How to answer questions effectively
- A Note on Closing (Informal vs. Formal)
- Sample Questions ( Ways of approaching answering questions )
- Some thoughts on the "The Initial Interview" and the "Bottom Line"
- Guidance on specific types of interviews (Management vs. Sales)
- Good questions to ask in an interview
- More Guidance on key questions (Excel Worksheet)

## I. GENERAL INTERVIEWING PRINCIPLES:

1. Interviewing is all about being able to quantify and benchmark your achievements in such a manner that someone who has never served in the military can understand them.
2. You must develop rapport in an interview within the first five minutes. (first names / company name)
3. Never boast or exaggerate- this will come back to haunt you in the long run.
4. Never answer questions with questions.
5. Never say, "That is a great question".
6. Be able to state the thought process behind the decisions you make. (creating the plan)
7. Be able to state the process you went through to execute a plan. (executing the Plan)
8. Have tangible strengths. (Not values)
9. Be able to speak honestly (not like you would in confession) about a weakness. (Remember, you are interviewing, not seeking the guidance of a psychotherapist or religious figure)
10. Be able to talk about 3 specific strengths (These must be quantifiable)
11. Be ready to talk about 3 specific accomplishments in your **professional** life. Benchmarking is very key here.
12. Be able to articulate, without showing weakness, a time that you made a mistake and what you learned from it.
13. You must demonstrate the ability to LISTEN effectively, not just tell the person that you do it well.
14. Never be negative about your service, the military, or any of your supervisors.
15. Know your audience and tailor your answers to the person/type of interview.
16. Body language must be positive- No crossing of arms; smile; maintain eye contact.
17. ABC! Always be closing.
18. You must demonstrate/give examples of being a team player.

## II. HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS EFFECTIVELY (GENERAL POINTS):

- A. Use action verbs. Talk in the first person at all times.
- B. Think before you speak. There is nothing wrong with a deliberate pause before answering. (A good time to smile)
- C. Remember to state why what you did is important. (Speak about this in terms of mission accomplishment and combat readiness)
- D. When you are explaining jobs that you have held - State the duty position, the number of people you managed, and the dollar value of the associated equipment. Also address the scope of responsibility- I.E., the difference between what an XO/2IC, Platoon Leader, or Logistics Officer does.
- E. Speak in terms of the bottom line- Just like in Corporate America- If a solution/process doesn't affect the bottom line (profitability in Corporate America and Combat Readiness in the Army), it doesn't count.
- F. Concisely state the thought process you used to analyze and solve problems. (Identify the problem, consider constraints and limitations, seek out constructive guidance/criticism, and build consensus/create ownership and support on your team through implementing others ideas/plans)
- G. Explain what actions you took to put your plan into motion. (Gave specific guidance/expectations, set a timetable that was realistic, played to peoples strengths / coached them on their weaknesses, put contingency plans in place, built in natural flexibility.)
- H. Show that each solution/process that you create corrects root causes of problems and is not a Band-Aid approach.
- I. Always answer questions in terms of your ability and desire to do the job. Don't talk about feelings or sound abstract- answer the question that is being addressed head on.
- J. *Never* be negative about a boss. This communicates negativity and gives the impression that you are someone who easily becomes disgruntled or bitter.
- K. *KNOW* your audience and tailor your answers to the person and the position you are looking for.

## III. A NOTE ON CLOSING:

A good rule of thumb is - "**ALWAYS BE CLOSING**". You need to communicate how your experience and skills, as demonstrated by your track record of performance, unequivocally relate to your ability to do a job... specifically the one you are interviewing for. You need to let the interviewer know that you are genuinely interested in their company and in the opportunity.

**Types of closing: Informal and Formal (\*)**

A). **Informal:** Consistently delivered during the course of the interview itself.

The "Informal Close" allows you to make points of connection throughout the entire interview as proof and evidence in your interest in that company and your ability to **DO THE JOB**. An example would be-

*"This position (whatever you are interviewing for) reminds me of a job "PL, CO, XO" that I really enjoyed and where I was successful."*

B). **Formal:** Delivered at the end of the interview- Passion is the key!

The "Formal Close" in the knockout punch! Don't be shy! An example would be-

*Andrew (name of the interviewer), I really appreciated the opportunity to talk with you about (the POSITION)- I am extremely interested because.... **\*Of the product line\* / \*(company name) has a reputation that I would love to be associated with\* / I love to solve complex problems and that seems to be a big part of this job\***.... and I could see myself as somebody who can contribute to the success/etc. in your organization. I hope I have the opportunity to learn more about your company and to follow up with you soon. Thanks-*

**IV. SAMPLE QUESTIONS:** This section gives you a feel for the way to go about answering questions. You should first consider the manner in which you are approaching the question, relate this to what you think the company is looking for, develop talking points and examples, and then answer with conviction. The questions listed below give you an example for how to approach different questions.

**A NOTE** - Talking points include key words, ideas, catch phrases, and key elements of answering a question the effectively.

**1. How do you solve complex problems?** \* Approach this question in terms of articulating the thought process involved.

**Talking points:** Identify the problem, consider constraints and limitations, seek out constructive guidance/criticism, build consensus/create ownership and support on your team through implementing others ideas/plans, seek to understand then be understood... etc....)

**2. Why are you interested in a business career?** \* Approach this question in terms of your qualifications to be a leader in CA based off of your experience as an officer and your enthusiasm/interest in applying what you have learned professionally towards a successful career with a great company. Focus on being very positive- nothing negative about the military.

**Talking points:** You are a proven leader that is willing/excited about learning and ready to make a difference. Talking about wanting to be a go-to guy/gal. Answer this question in terms of what you can do for them!

**3. Describe a creative idea you produced that had a significant impact at work.** \* Approach this in terms of thinking "OUTSIDE THE BOX"

**Talking points:** Maybe an article or a book you read gave you an idea and you put it to work.... Show the ability to take an idea and put it into practice and create a lasting process improvement. A good time to talk about instituting best practices.

**4. Tell me about a time you took the initiative to get others involved in an important task or issue (i.e. were it not for you, it would never have happened.)** \* Approach this question with confidence and humility. i.e., start your answer with "I" and then finish with "WE".

**Talking points:** What you are talking here is changing the organization / going outside of the norm / above and beyond. Mention seeking out senior folks with great experience that normally get ignored and putting their viewpoints and ideas to work for- enlist their experience on your side.

**5. What three words best describe you and why?** \* Approach this questions from the standpoint of 3 words that describe you and someone who would be good at the job you are interviewing for!

**Talking points:** Stay away from coming off as "holier than thou". Words like integrity and honor are SUBJECTIVE - so make sure you can back them up with practical ways they relate to your ability to do the JOB you are interviewing for. If you are interviewing for Sales, maybe passionate/aggressive/competitive, etc. Management would be more along the lines of analytical, curious, etc.

**6. Give me an example of a time you used facts to change the opinion of a boss?** \* Approach this question in terms of the thought process/plan you put into place for changing this person's mind!

**Talking points:** Maybe you can tie this into significant accomplishment- Talk about/show strong interpersonal skills that I used to connect with my boss, demonstrate an appreciation for his/her viewpoint, integrate/my process with his/hers.

**7. What three characteristics describe a good boss or employee?** \* Approach this question in terms of what type of leader you are- you want to describe a boss that sounds like the type of leader you have been describing yourself as during the course of the interview.

**Talking points:** Talk about a leader that listens promotes teamwork, success driven, and that is a coach/mentor- etc. Describe someone who adheres to or practices your leadership style.

**8. What are your short and long-range goals?** \* Approach this in terms of how your personal goals relate to accomplishing something for/doing something positive in terms of what the company is looking for.

**Talking points:** Talk about finding a company that you can build a lasting relationship with, talk about becoming a go-to person in that organization, or mention something related to making an immediate impact, learning the culture/business model/competition etc. Tie your goals to their goals.

**9. Tell me about a failure and what you learned from it.** \* Approach this question in terms of something in past, preferably earlier in your career, be very honest, state what you learned, and how you are better for it. Be honest and forthright- BUT REMEMBER.... An interview is not a therapy session or a religious confession.

**Talking points:** Never use leadership failures if you can avoid them, or if you have to, a 2LT story would be great. Don't talk in terms of "One of my failures...". Stay with something you were solely responsible for if possible. Don't justify or explain the mistake away.

**10. Do you micro-manage?** \* Approach this directly. There is only one right answer here as well.

Talking points: The answer here is **YES**, by the way! I.E., only as a last resort and you tell your team up front why you are straying away from your normal leadership style.

**11. Tell me about yourself.** \* Approach in terms of somebody getting to know you, not in terms of your key/core beliefs.

Talking points: Start with HS, then College, then a chronological summary of your experience in the Army. Think of a way to frame something here in a manner that sets you apart.

**12. Why are you leaving the military? (NEVER be negative) \* There is only one right answer here, and that is to be positive and talk in terms of what you have learned and how it will benefit you in your service.**

Talking points: This is not a time to bitch about the "Army of One" slogan or the Black Beret. You want to sound like someone who is enthusiastic about taking the next step into Corporate America and more importantly, like someone who has something to add.

**13. What are your strengths and weaknesses?** \* Approach this question in terms of the job you are interviewing for. Strengths you mention in a sales interview might be different than in a management interview.

Talking points: Some good one's here are- Communication, Problem solving, Decision Making, Team Building, Initiative These need to be hard/tangible and not subjective. Weakness(s) needs to be addressed honestly but not in terms of "One of my weaknesses is...". Find something small, not leadership related, and talk about it in terms of self-awareness and addressing it/getting better.

**14. What is your management philosophy and how do you motivate others?** \* Approach this question in terms of how your leadership style will affect your ability to do the job you are interviewing for.

Talking points: Delegate authority (NOT ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY), address empowerment and ownership, training of team/ coaching-mentoring, incentives/rewards, giving clear guidance/expectations/milestones, etc...

**15. Tell me a goal you set and struggled to achieve.** \* Approach this in terms of your ability to handle adversity, plan and organize yourself/team toward a goal, etc.

Talking points: Have a plan of attack for your goal- talk about why the goal was significant army/industry-wise.

**16. Why should a company hire you?** \* Approach this in terms of what you can do for them from day one.

Talking points: Focus on objective examples/reasons and quality of fit (how well you match the company's needs). Enthusiasm is key.

**17. Why did you choose your major?** \* What was your thought process & reasoning? Include your GPA and other performance measures..

Talking points: Handling a non-related major or low GPA well demonstrates confidence.

**18. Tell me about a time when you had to implement unpopular policy and how did you handle that?** \* Approach this trying to communicate a tough but fair leader who can make hard decisions but not like a dictator.

Talking points: Talk about telling people the why behind your decision, soliciting their input, and getting them on board.

**19. How would your boss describe you?** \* Approach this knowing that you need to address loyalty, ability to operate independently, and being a go-to person.

Talking point: The key here is describing an employee who can do the job you are interviewing for.

**20. How would the people who worked for you describe you?** \* Approach this directly addressing the potential misconceptions that hiring managers in CA have about JMOs.

Talking points: The key here is describing yourself as the kind of boss they want/need, and is consistent with what you have spoken about up to this point in the interview.

**21. How would your peers describe you?** \* Approach this knowing you need to communicate being a TEAM PLAYER.

Talking points: Be the kind of person people go to talk to, approach with questions, younger folks approach to be their mentor.

**22. Describe a particular problem employee you had and how you handled them.** \* Approach this knowing you need to talk about how you took emotion out of the equation, listened to both sides of story, and tried to coach/mentor the problem/person to success before taking more drastic steps.

Talking points: A good time to talk about a PSG senior NCO who was tired/bitter or disconnected, etc. Maybe the troubled soldier who needed to reach out to or who was struggling because of problems at home.

**23. Do you consider yourself to be a good listener?** \* Approach this knowing you need to actively demonstrate this during the course of the interview and that it is a GLASS BALL.

Talking points: Talk about wanting to understand before being understood. Seeking other's viewpoints are key in demonstrating listening skills.

## **V. THE MANAGEMENT / LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW**

1. The **BE/KNOW/DO** of a Leadership interview:

- A. You must **KNOW** how you lead, manage, and motivate people. (Examples)
- B. You must **BE** a leader in the way you present yourself (confident and self-aware.)
- C. **Do** the things that leaders do (Answer honestly, candidly, and with conviction)

2. The **MUSTS** in a Leadership interview:
  - A. Smile- Interviews are not typically followed by public executions.
  - B. Be personable and sincere- People hire that they like and trust.
  - C. Demonstrate an interest and general knowledge of the product/company.
  - D. You must be able to give **examples** of your leadership background
  - E. Be able to talk about making "**hard decisions**". (*How do you do this?*)
  - F. Be able to discuss how you handle/tell people "**bad news**"
  - G. Have **strengths** related to leadership (*Give examples*)
  - H. **Demonstrate** (*Through actively listening*) and talk about being a good listener.
  - I. Communicate a **PASSION** for leadership.
  
2. Remember that **Effective Leaders** are:
  - Trustworthy (This is earned everyday)
  - Continually Learning (Constantly in the process of professional development)
  - Service Oriented (Leaders are in service to the people they lead)
  - Leaders by example (Show people what RIGHT looks like)
  - Believe-in and empower others (Play to their strengths, coach them on their weaknesses)
  - Balanced people (Have goals/interests outside work)
  - Proactive (Address problems at the earliest opportunity)
  - Problem Solvers (How do you do this, what process do you follow? )
  - Approachable (In Corporate America, there is NO UCMJ- Don't laugh)
  
3. Your **Leadership Philosophy**: ( Are you the kind of leader that- )
  - Begin with the end in mind ( *Planning and Organizational skills* )
  - Prioritize(s) effectively ( *Figure out what the glass balls are* )
  - Thinks " Win – Win " ( *Why is this important* )
  - Seeks first to Understand, then be Understood ( *Be a listener* )
  - Empowers ( *Put people in a position to be successful* )
  - Is Pro-active ( *Be able to act with minimal guidance and do things right the first time* )
  - Is a Team Builder ( *How do you do this* )
  - Coach and Mentor ( *Play to people strengths, access and improve upon their weaknesses* )
  - Find out what motivates people ( *Be a listener- Care* )
  - Process improvement ( *How do you put systems in place to become more efficient and effective? )*
  
4. **Don't be afraid to talk about what it means to be a combat leader- Remember....**  
 Everything you do in the military as an officer is based on the ability to motivate people to accomplish tasks under adverse circumstances that they ordinarily would never consider doing. State this matter of factly without sounding like Colonel Jessup from a " Few Good Men ".

## VI. THE SALES INTERVIEW

1. The **BE/KNOW/DO** in a Sales interview:
  - A. Building and establishing " Long Term " relationships (*KNOW the value of this*)
  - B. Earning repeat business (*How do you DO this?*)
  - C. Getting good referrals regardless of success/failure. (*KNOW the importance*)
  - D. "Win-Win" strategy (*Why you must DO this?*)
  - E. Strong close (*You must DO this*)
  - F. Capable of/Enjoy independent operation (*You must BE this person*)
  - G. Become someone who sells from a CONSULTATIVE perspective (*Become a consultant to your customer*)
  
2. Thee **MUSTS** in a Sales interview:
  - A. Smile- Interviews are not typically followed by public executions.
  - B. Be personable and sincere- People hire that they like and trust.
  - C. Demonstrate an interest and general knowledge of the product/company.
  - D. Sell yourself- If you can't do this, why would they think that you will be able to sell their product?
  - E. Have a strong close- Tell the person why you want to be her " pointman ".
  - F. Talk about how you plan to use your skills to achieve success/results for their company.
  - G. Clearly articulate/how you work under pressure/without supervision- Leave no room for doubt that you can handle working independently and that you are not the kind of person that needs someone looking over their shoulder to get the job done.
  
3. Questions/Situations you must be ready to answer/handle in a Sales interview:
  - What do you do when the customer says " NO "?
  - What do you do when the customer becomes " Angry/Unreasonable ".
  - Sell me this pen (insert inanimate object of your choice)
  - Why should I hire you?
  - What motivates you?
  - How do you feel about travel/commission?

- Tell me about time when you got your boss to follow a course of action you decided on.
- How do you handle failure?
- How do you work with no one looking over your shoulder?

#### 4. THE GREAT MISCONCEPTION - "Sales people are slick con artists":

Great sales people are consultants- **PERIOD**. They earn the trust of their customer through consistency of action, not “smooth-talking”. Don’t try to “tap-dance” or “schmooze” your way through a Sales interview. Demonstrate to the interviewer you that you are worthy of their trust and they will then consider trusting you with **THEIR** customer.

#### **VII. QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS:** *The most important thing to remember here is to address the company and the position you are interviewing for VERY directly and as OFTEN as possible.*

- Do you have a detailed description of the position for which I am being considered? Please describe the ideal candidate for this position.
- What is the skill set that you are looking for in this position? What skills have people demonstrated in the past to be successful?
- Why is this position available? What factors do you feel are the most important for success in this position?
- What are your expectations for new hires? What would a new hire need to do to exceed your expectations?
- What are the earnings of successful employees in their third and fifth years with your company?
- How will the person who accepts this position be evaluated? By whom? What could be done to improve the performance in this position?
- What are your company’s growth plans? What books are on your company’s recommended reading lists right now.
- What are the opportunities for personal and professional growth in this company? What key departments I would be working closely with in this position. If you could change something about the way this position has been done in the past, what would it be?
- How much time and money are devoted to research and development? Are new areas of technology being explored?
- What are ways in which this position contributes to the long-term goals of the company?
- To what extent is travel involved with this position? What are some barriers I could face in this position and how could I best address them.
- Why do you enjoy working for this company? Why did you choose to join the company?
- What opportunities exist for international assignments? (IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS)
- What is the next step in the interview process? I am available to meet with you again on X, Y and Z (dates). Which works best for you?

#### **VIII. THE INITIAL INTERVIEW**

### **“Companies hire people they like, not necessarily the most qualified person for the job.”**

It is an undeniable truth. Time and time again, we have seen sharp, squared-away military personnel beat out highly qualified internal or other civilian candidates with industry experience. Why does this happen?

Consider this: as you begin your career search, you will probably try to narrow down the types of industries and positions that interest you. You will go into your initial interviews with these criteria in mind. At the completion of your initial interviews, you will be surprised when you rank order the companies. Even though you may have interviewed with several companies in industries that interest you, it is very likely that you will have several other opportunities that were outside your original parameters ranked above them. There are two primary explanations for this phenomenon: (1) you learned something in the interview process that caused you to change your criteria; or (2) you made a personal connection with the interviewer.

The same thing happens to interviewers and hiring managers. They enter the process thinking they need someone with certain qualifications and experience, but wind up pursuing and hiring someone that may have some, but certainly not all of the items in their preconceived “ideal skill set.” The same reasons I mentioned above apply here: (1) the interviewer learned something about your skills and experience in the interview process that caused he/she to think that you, in fact, are qualified for the position; or, more likely, (2) the interviewer was so impressed with you on a personal level that he/she is willing to overlook your lack of industry experience in lieu of the intangibles you bring to the “party.” Given the above facts, the question is obvious: “How do I get the interviewer to like me?”

#### **The BASICS**

The initial impression you make sets the tone for the entire interview. A firm handshake, smile and a confident, direct look in the eye will start you on the right foot. Once you are seated for the interview, the rapport building begins. The interviewer will usually start out by asking you to talk about yourself. The common pitfall here is to ramble on about your experiences without attempting to relate them to the opportunity and company with whom you are interviewing. If you are prepared for the interview by reviewing the company brief and literature, you should be well-armed to deliver an effective, focused presentation. Do not be oblivious to the interviewer’s body language. Address areas they are interested in the most.

#### **The “60/40” Rule**

The “60/40” rule is a practical interpretation of the old saying: “...it is impossible to put your foot into a closed mouth.” If things are going well in the interview, you will normally do 40% of the talking. After you finish your answer to the interviewer’s question, try to ask them a question. This will accomplish several things: (1) you will get critical information from the interviewer about them, the company and the opportunity that you can use in formulating your answers to future questions; (2) the interviewer cannot help but get the impression that you are interested in them, the company and the opportunity; and (3) you decrease your chances of talking yourself out of contention for the position.

Dale Carnegie, author of “How to Win Friends and Influence People,” once said: “We are interested in people that are interested in us.” Think about that for a minute. Think about people you really enjoy hanging out with, or people you admire. Chances are, you like being around these people

because you feel that they are interested in you and in what you have to say. The same holds true in the interview process. It is easy for the interviewer to visualize you performing well on the manufacturing floor or on one of their project teams if they feel you possess the interpersonal skills to get along well with others on the team. Listening skills are critical in Corporate America. The interview is your first opportunity to showcase yours.

**The CLOSE**

No essay on interviewing would be complete without addressing the dreaded “close.” This is a sales term which refers to the point in the presentation where you “ask for the order.” In this case, you are asking for a follow-up interview [pursuit]. The standard close can be broken down into three [3] parts: (1) **Gratitude**: Thank the interviewer for the time to meet with you; (2) **Expression of Interest**: Let the interviewer know that you are interested in the opportunity, and reiterate some of the key issues that came up during the interview that would tend to make the interviewer agree that you are a good fit; and (3) **Ask for the Follow-up Interview**: This will remove any lingering doubts the interviewer may have about your interest in the opportunity. If the company is located within driving distance of your home, or you will be staying in the local area for a while following a hiring conference, tell them about it! If you do not ask for the follow-up interview, the interviewer may not be sure if you are interested.

**After The Interview**

Thank you notes are a must! If your handwriting is poor, you may wish to type your thank you notes. In order to be effective, “Thank You” notes should arrive on the interviewer’s desk no later than 48-72 hours after the interview. The format should be very similar to the close [see above].

Bookstore shelves are full of interviewing books that will go into gross detail about how to answer each and every question to ensure you are getting your point of view through to the interviewer. You need to qualify yourself for the position by giving examples from your background that directly relate.

**IX. SPECIFIC GUIDANCE ON KEY QUESTIONS**

<p><b>1) What are your short and long term goals? (1-3 years &amp; 15-20 years) A company wants to know if your goals and theirs match up- Do your best to avoid sounding selfish here. What can you do for them?</b></p>
<p>Key- Tie your goals to theirs.</p>
<p>Short term goals are focused on what you can do for them.</p>
<p>Long term goals are focused on staying on board, making a difference, and earning the reputation to be a decision maker etc.</p>
<p><b>2) Tell me about yourself? (They want to get a feel for your personally- Think about what you can say to set yourself apart. Talk about what you have done in HS, College, and the military that makes you unique.</b></p>
<p>3-4 Minutes...</p>
<p>Starts with hometown, goes to high school, college, then a chronological list of positions held in the military.</p>
<p><b>3) What are your 3 biggest accomplishments in life? (Does what this guy/gal has done mean anything to my company? - CAN THEY DO THE JOB THEY ARE INTERVIEWING FOR.)</b></p>
<p>3 Phases- Significance to you, The military, and then how it relates to your ability to do a job.</p>
<p><b>4) Why are you leaving the military? ( They are feeling out your attitude here )</b></p>
<p>Positive attitude! How are you going to make a difference in a great company based on your experience in the military.</p>
<p><b>5) What are your strengths and weaknesses? ( This is a “ Can you do the job” question )</b></p>
<p>Key- Significance of the strength to your success in the military and to the job you are interviewing for.</p>
<p>Good weakness(s)- Overly detailed ( thorough, reliable ), Cautious ( careful, accurate ), Intense ( focused, Motivated) The weakness(s) here allow you hang a positive anchor on something negative.</p>
<p><b>6) What is your management philosophy and how do you motivate others? (Can you lead and manage in my company? Do you lead the way effective people we have hired in the past do? )</b></p>
<p>Address how you solve problems, plan and organize, coach and mentor, proactive and initiative, etc.</p>
<p><b>7) Tell me about a goal you set and struggled to achieve. (A company wants to see drive and ambition-hustle and persistence- THE WILL TO WIN- How does this person handle adversity.</b></p>
<p>Your plan is key here. How did you go about striving for this- Do you continue to work hard and persevere when times are tough?</p>
<p><b>8) Why sales? Why manufacturing? Why management? Why engineering? A company wants to see if you put any thought into why you want/ would be good at a job.</b></p>
<p>What about each/one of these are you passionate about.</p>

<b>9) Why should a company hire you? What are you going to do for me...? Are you confident or cocky?</b>
Passion question. Talk about the things you can control
<b>10) How do you spend your spare time? DON'T BE STIFF.</b>
Answer this like a normal human being- Don't sound like a robot.
<b>11) Tell me about summer and part time jobs?</b>
A significant experience that shaped your leadership style.
A good time to talk about the hourly job that taught you an appreciation for your soldiers or the people who do the hard job everyday that makes the world go-around.
<b>12). What are your interpersonal skills like? / How do you relate to people? This is a "culture fit" question.</b>
How do you relate to others? How do you fit in, what type of effort do you put into this. Flexibility and Adaptability. Resourcefulness. Confidence balanced with humility.
This is a personality question that might relate to their culture so you need to know your audience and understand the difference in personality type between and manager vs. sales job.
<b>15) Tell me about a time when you had to implement unpopular policy. How did you handle it?</b>
Hard decisions made by a tough but compassionate leader who listens first. Are you a dictator who might drive the more experienced folks you are leading/managing crazy?
Address the "WHY" with your team.
<b>16) How would your boss describe you?</b>
Must be consistent with strengths and weaknesses you have discussed up to this point.
Talk about your ability to work independently or with minimal supervision.
<b>17) How would the people who worked for you describe you?</b>
Approachable. Empathetic. Confident. Loyal. Honest.
<b>18) How would your peers describe you?</b>
Go-to guy/gal, trusted source for good information, trusted/respected/valued friend.
<b>19) Describe a particular problem employee you had and how you handled them.</b>
Be a coach and mentor- listen to their side. Seek to understand then be understood.
Talk about the rehab process you put in place, establish goals for the person, etc.
<b>20) Do you consider yourself to be a good listener? If so, why?</b>
Demonstrate this in the course of the interview by answering the questions being asked and by continuously giving examples of seeking out others ideas.
<b>21) Have you ever failed at anything? (can you handle tough times, recessions, challenges)</b>
We have all had failures. Give a specific example and talk about what you learned from it.
<b>22) Why did you choose you school/major? Dealing with School- Reputation of the school, Strong in your major, wanted a larger school/ smaller schools- Big Fish VS Small fish theory, money issues</b>
Major- Related to your interests, preferred major for professions you were looking at.

**Tell me about a time when you...**

<b>Worked effectively under pressure.</b>
How do you handle stress? How do you help teams you lead handle stress? Talk about your time management / organizational skills.

<p>Have a great example (military related,) for dealing with a condensed timeline, lack of funding, etc. Doing more with less is prevalent in a lot of places besides the US military ( a major reason for your marketability!)</p>
<p><b>Handled a difficult situation with a co-worker.</b></p>
<p>Take emotion out--listen first. Focus on maintaining positive relationship and the task at hand if there is a disagreement- Show an understanding that most professional relationships are not short term, but lasting</p>
<p><b>Were creative in solving a problem.</b></p>
<p>Focus on "outside of the box" cost/time cutting/saving measures, process improvements and long-term change oriented items.</p>
<p><b>Were unable to complete a project on time. ( We all deal with this- They want to see honesty in dealing with failure. How did you respond?)</b></p>
<p>Bottom line here is informing the boss early, bad news does not get better with time. Be somebody who goes to the boss not with bad news, but with alternative course of action, another way of doing business.</p>
<p><b>Persuaded team members to do things your way. ( Can you sell/motivate/build consensus among peers or people you have no authority over?)</b></p>
<p>Make their plan yours- Use their ideas. Show an appreciation for their viewpoint. Take notes when they talk. Defuse confrontational situations by focusing on common goals and expectations.</p>
<p><b>Anticipated potential problems and developed preventative measures. (Are you proactive or reactive? )</b></p>
<p>This is all about proactivity and initiative. . Long-term process change. Avoid problems by putting best practices in place that allow sharp people that report to you to act on your behalf to solve problems before they become problems.</p>
<p><b>Had to make an important decision with limited facts. Asking something to the effect of can you work in a multi-tasking environment</b></p>
<p>This is the essence of what you do as an officer- Seek out experienced people for advice- Put SOPs in place that saved time and allowed for split-second decisions to be made (by you or members of your team based upon guidance you put out.)</p>
<p><b>Were forced to make an unpopular decision. This is your opportunity to demonstrate your ability to do the hard right.</b></p>
<p>The best leaders are exemplified by their ability to build coalitions, teams, lead by consensus/example/force of personality even when the decisions they make are unpopular- Can you lead through trust/respect/perf.</p>
<p>Talk about the issue directly with team, didn't hide the facts, addressed them honestly, and then showed them what right looks like by exemplifying your expectations through actions and deeds not only your words.</p>
<p><b>Had to adapt to a difficult situation. How adaptable are you? Our culture is horizontal when it comes to leadership... can you deal with this?</b></p>
<p>Are you flexible? Can you handle and ever-changing work environment?</p>
<p><b>Had to deal with an irate subordinate. This is very important in the Union / Manufacturing environment.</b></p>
<p>Take emotion out of the equation by allowing this person to vent/get their point out first. Understand then seek to be understood.</p>
<p><b>Delegated a project effectively. Can you identify the things I need you to do without being told? Can you ask smart questions and operate independently?</b></p>
<p>You can delegate authority not ultimate responsibility- Talk about matching people with what they do well. Consider constraints and limitations, timeline, budget... etc.</p>
<p>VERY IMPORTANT WHEN YOU ARE INTERVIEWING FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT POSITIONS.</p>
<p><b>Prioritized the elements of a complicated project. Can you handle more than one thing at a time? Are you willing to ask questions to your boss? Do you think before you act?</b></p>
<p>The ability to prioritize is inherent in leadership. Good leaders don't get everything done, they get the HAVE TO's done right.</p>
<p><b>Had to fire someone. Can you make the tough decisions about nice people who no longer perform?</b></p>
<p>Compassionate and strong- try to fix them before firing. Did you try and coach and mentor them to success? Privacy and discretion are key points to emphasize here.</p>