

Counseling Interview Questions

GENERAL COUNSELING QUESTIONS

1. Is counseling an art or a science?
2. What attracted you to this institution and/or position?
3. How do you address a colleague/supervisor who exhibits unethical behavior or does not follow professional guidelines/code of conduct?
4. How do you deal with conflict?
5. Describe a crisis situation that you've faced and how you handled it.
6. What has been the most difficult decision that you've had to make?
7. How would you respond to the question posed by clients who have suffered much in their lives: "If God is love, why did He allow [X] to happen to me?"
8. What 2-3 things are most important to you in a job? Why?
9. What transition issues do you think you will face if you are offered and accept this position?
10. What plans/goals do you have for your professional development?
11. What would your previous supervisor(s)/staff members say about you?
12. What is your greatest accomplishment or achievement?
13. How would you describe yourself?
14. Describe your experience in working with clients who are culturally and linguistically diverse.
15. How will you maintain your own emotional well-being and balance in your life as a counselor?
16. Discuss your philosophy of counseling.
17. What preconceptions do you have of our school/institution/agency?
18. What do you know about our school/institution/agency/organization that you would consider a strength? A weakness?
19. What experiences have you had that makes you feel capable of being a counselor?
20. When considering ethical standards and policies, how would you handle a conflict between the two?
21. How do you handle conflict with a colleague, a parent, and/or a supervisor?
22. What do you consider as your greatest strengths/areas in need of improvement?

SCHOOL COUNSELING QUESTIONS

1. How did you get into school counseling? What has been your career path to your present position?
2. Describe the role of the school counselor in the learning process, and in providing leadership to improve outcomes for low achieving and/or at-risk students.
3. Discuss types of training and experiences you have in designing and implementing groups (SAP, grief, divorce, etc).
4. Describe how you collaborate with teachers, students, and parents to support high achievement for all students.
5. Describe your beliefs about career education at the middle and junior high levels.
6. How would you divide your time between meeting the immediate needs of the students and keeping up with the paperwork?
7. How do you see yourself fitting in with counselors who have had many years experience as veteran teachers?
8. What experiences have you had in working with students with special needs?
9. What can you provide that is different from a social worker, school psychologist, or mental health counselor?
10. What do the most recent state standardized test results indicate about this school district and this school; what is your role regarding standardized testing?
11. Describe how you would implement small group guidance lessons.
12. Because time is a scarce resource in schools today, and because of a strong push for improved standardized test scores, best educational practices suggest that in-class guidance lessons not take away from classroom instructional minutes. How will you address the limited time and financial resources and be successful in this position?
13. PDE informs us that they have had a complaint filed from a parent of a student with an IEP. What could the school counselor's role be in helping to investigate or resolve the issue?
14. Describe a curriculum you created and/or implemented during your field experience. Discuss strengths of the unit; how learning outcomes were measured; any adaptations made to the lesson to meet the needs of all students; items you would change if presenting the information again.

COMMUNITY/MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING QUESTIONS

1. What is the most important aspect of working with mentally ill sufferers?
2. Please describe your understanding of motivational interviewing and stages of change.
3. Describe a great idea you have seen recently in the mental health field. Discuss why you think it is a great idea or unique.
4. Why did you choose to enter the mental health profession?
5. What types of clients are you most comfortable working with and why?
6. What types of clients are you most uncomfortable working with and why?
7. What experiences have you had in providing services to a correctional population?
8. What experience do you have with depressed subjects, with character disorders, with hypochondriacs, with children, with adolescents?
9. Which, if any, populations or mental health issues would be challenging for you?
10. What is your opinion of the relationship between mental illness and substance abuse?
11. What sorts of questions do you ask clients to screen for psychiatric problems/disorders?
12. How familiar are you with the main substances of abuse, their classifications, and their effects?
13. What are your views on mandatory counseling as part of a client's sentence/sanction?
14. What are your views on distance counseling/technology assisted services?
15. How do you identify when a situation is beyond your capabilities? How do you address it?
16. What does informed consent mean to you?

COLLEGE STUDENT PERSONNEL/COLLEGE COUNSELING QUESTIONS

1. What human/student development theories do you use in your daily professional life?
2. What is your approach/philosophy toward student discipline? Counseling? Programming?
3. Give us some examples of programs/activities you have planned and/or presented.
4. Have you had previous experience in supervising staff or other individuals?
5. How would you respond to an accusation that one of your actions was racist, sexist, or homophobic?
6. What experiences do you have advising student groups or organizations?
7. What do you see as the major challenges/issues facing college students today?
8. What professional associations would be beneficial to join for the individual serving in this position?
9. What do you feel are the special issues facing males/females/athletes/students of color/international students/gays/lesbians/bi-sexual/transgender students?
10. How would you deal with the transition of a staff who was supervised by your predecessor?
11. Mass emails are prohibited on this campus. How do you accomplish informing students, staff, and faculty about upcoming events?
12. You have a very limited budget and staff to work with. How do you create a great program/initiative that students will take advantage of?
13. What are some of the challenges/issues facing new professionals?
14. What is the best way to establish collaborative relationships with faculty/staff/students across campus?

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Can you tell me more about the staff structure in your program?
2. How/why is this position available (department expanding, someone leaving, etc)?
3. What challenges are currently facing your department/institution/agency?
4. What qualities are you looking for in a candidate?
5. What are the things you like most about working here? What are some things you would change?
6. What attracted you to this institution/agency? What keeps you here?
7. Are there any opportunities for assessment of programs (research opportunities)?
8. How does XYZ department/institution/agency support/promote professional development?
9. What is the next step in the selection process?
10. When do you expect to make a final decision?
11. Once hired, how do I receive feedback on how I'm doing? Is there a mentoring program/orientation for new staff?
12. What are the departmental/institutional priorities over the next few years and the next decade?
13. What do you see for the future for the counselors working here?
14. Are classes offered in the summer? How do work responsibilities shift during the summer?