

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM PROMOTION PANELS

The following are questions coachees reported that they were asked in promotion panels in professional service firms. Not all will be relevant to you and your promotion, and your colleagues who have been through promotion panels recently are an excellent source of advice and examples.

The ‘can you give me an example of a situation where you ...’ questions are scattered through the following list and are often used as part of the STAR questioning technique. I have marked them with *. The interviewers ask you this opening question below as a starter before pursuing the following line of questioning:

- Situation — can you give me an example of a situation where you
- Task — what were you trying to achieve ...
- Actions — what did you do ...
- Results — what were the outcomes ...

More guidance on preparing for such questions is given in Chapter 18.

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

The following questions are a useful additional source to widen your thinking during your preparation alongside Chapter 18.

This promotion

1. Why do you want this role?
2. What difference will it make to the firm if you have this promotion?
3. As you step up into this role who will take on the tasks you have been doing in your current role?
4. What do you think you will find hardest about doing this role?
5. What are the biggest risks to your success in your new role?

What you do and how you do it?

6. What are you most proud of at work?
7. Can you give us an example of innovative action that you have taken?*
8. Can you give an example of an unexpected change on a client project (e.g., team, deliverables, objectives, timeline) and how you dealt with it?*
9. Can you give us an example of a project where you performed well/badly?*

10. Can you give us an example of how you flex your leadership style depending on the situation?*
11. Can you give us an example of how you flex your communication style?*
12. What are your strengths?
13. What are your weaknesses?
14. What is your role in relation to risk management?
How will this change with promotion?

Your reaction to challenges

15. What is the most difficult thing you have to deal with on a day to day basis?*
16. What has been your biggest challenge with regard to managing staff?*
17. What is the most difficult thing you have had to deal with in the past?*
18. What is the biggest mistake you have ever made at work?*
19. What is the biggest mistake that someone working for you has made – what did you do?*

Influence and interaction with others

20. Can you give me an example of you influencing a client's decision making?*
21. What has been your biggest challenge with regard to managing staff?*
22. Who are your most important stakeholders and why?

23. Can you give us a situation where you have had to bring someone round to your way of thinking?*
24. Can you give us an example of a disagreement you had with a colleague at work?*
25. Can you give us an example of a situation where you had to stand up to peer pressure/to disagree with someone more senior than yourself at work?*
26. Tell me about a time when you have had to give difficult feedback — to a junior, to a senior, to a peer?*
27. Can you give us an example of how you coach junior staff on the job?*
28. Tell us about a time when you have acted to resolve conflict in your team.*
29. Can you talk to us about a time when you have made a poor decision at work, and how did it impact your team?*

The firm

30. What are the biggest challenges facing the firm?
31. If you were the senior partner of this firm/office/ service line what would you worry about?
32. How do you assess the firm's competitors?
33. If someone asked you why should they use this firm, what would you tell them?

Your own development

34. What kind of leader do you aspire to be?
35. Can you give us an example of where you have been successful in developing yourself?*
36. What is the most insightful feedback you have ever been given?
37. Tell me about a time when you received difficult feedback?*
38. How do you manage your work/life balance? How will this job affect that?
39. How have you worked on your weaknesses?

Your clients

40. What are your clients worried about?
41. Why do your clients come to the firm?
42. What do we offer your clients that others do not?
43. What is the major threat to our work with your clients?
44. What are the biggest opportunities for new growth for your team in the next year?
45. What is your most important client relationship, why?