

Interview Questions for Emotional Intelligence

Want to really get to know your candidates? Using behavior-based interview questions to identify a candidate's emotional intelligence is one strategy to understand others' emotions. The single best predictor of future behavior and performance is past behavior and performance. When asking behavioral interview questions, listen for responses that include specifics on the circumstances, the action and the result, and ask follow-up questions if necessary. Here are some questions you may wish to consider.

Self-awareness (can show an individual's ability to be coached and accept feedback)

1. Think of a time when you received feedback from someone else that surprised you.
2. Tell me about a time when you were unfairly criticized, and provide details.

Empathy (a response that may indicate a higher emotional intelligence)

1. Tell me about a time when you had to deliver the same bad news to more than one person. How did you do it?

Self-control (can show insight on impulse control)

1. Tell me about a situation when something was better left unsaid.
2. Tell me about a time when you said something you immediately regretted.

Stress Tolerance (helps reveal how an individual may react to demanding deadlines or fast-paced work environments)

1. Describe your busiest work-week in the last six months.

Flexibility (can show how flexible he or she is to change and ability to grow with the organization)

1. Tell me about a stretch assignment in your last role that really challenged you. Did you volunteer, or was it delegated to you? How did you learn how to do this task? Was there training, or did you seek training on your own?

Optimism (those with high optimism can outsell those with low optimism; pessimists are often good lawyers)

1. Think of a time when you had an unexpected setback at work. Tell me about the details.