Building Strategic Working Relationships

Developing and using collaborative relationships to facilitate the accomplishment of work goals.

Key Actions

- **Seeks opportunities**—Proactively tries to build effective working relationships with other people.

- **Clarifies the current situation**—Probes for and provides information to clarify situations.

- **Develops others' and own ideas**—Seeks and expands on original ideas, enhances others' ideas, and contributes own ideas about the issues at hand.

- **Subordinates personal goals**—Places higher priority on team or organization goals than on own goals.

- **Facilitates agreement**—Gains agreement from partners to support ideas or take partnership-oriented action; uses sound rationale to explain value of actions.

- **Uses Key Principles**—Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).

Questions

1. Describe a situation in which you needed to brainstorm differing/conflicting ideas with others in order to help accomplish work goals.

2. Describe a time when your goals or preferences were not included in a final team/group decision. How did you respond?

3. Give me an example of a time when you worked with a group/team to determine project responsibilities. What was your role? What process did the group/team use? What difficulties or issues came up?

4. Sometimes it can be difficult and frustrating to obtain information from other people in order to solve a problem or achieve goals. Please describe a situation you've had like this. What did you do?

5. Occasionally other people's work priorities conflict with ours. Tell me about a time when this happened to you. What did you do?

6. Working with others usually involves some give-and-take. Describe a time when you worked out an agreement with a peer or team member. What did you do?

7. Describe a time when you wished you'd been more collaborative with others at work. What did you do?

8. Interacting with others can be challenging at times. Tell me about the greatest difficulty you faced when trying to get along with peers, team members, or others at work. How did you handle the situation?

9. Leaders often have opportunities to foster positive relationships at work. Give me an example of a time when you did this.

10. Tell me about one of the toughest teams/groups that you've had to work with. What made it difficult? What did you do?

11. Have you ever helped a peer or team member develop an idea? Tell me about one of those times.

12. Tell me about a time you worked with someone who wasn't as cooperative as you needed him or her to be. What did you do?

13. Have you ever spent a significant amount of your own time and effort into helping a team/group complete a task? Give me an example. What happened?

14. Have you ever been on a team/group with an unproductive person? What did you do?

15. Can you describe a situation in which you dealt with a very sensitive person? What did you do? What happened?

Questions for people who are applying for sales positions

16. Salespeople certainly can benefit from fostering positive relationships with others. Give me an example of a time when you developed a positive relationship with someone. What did you do? What happened?

Questions for people with little work experience

17. Interacting with others can be challenging at times. Describe a situation in which you wished you'd acted differently with someone at school.

18. Can you describe a situation in which you had difficulty getting along with someone at school? How did you handle it?

19. Tell me about a time when a classmate asked to brainstorm an idea with you. What did you do?