

# 65 interview questions for nurses

If you're about to face a job interview, consider these questions.

**N**o matter where you are in your career, at some point you'll face a job interview. You'll be asked many questions—some predictable, some challenging. Consider the ones listed below and think about how you'd answer them. Take time to review the questions that surprise you; they'll help you clarify your thinking and prepare you for whatever questions you're asked.

1. Where do you see yourself in 3 years?
2. What do you bring to this position?  
How do you stand out from the other applicants?
3. What attracts you to this facility? To this position? What do you hope to get out of the experience?
4. How would you describe your ideal job? Your ideal work environment?
5. Why are you leaving your current position?
6. What did you particularly like about your last position?
7. What's your most important professional achievement?
8. Who are your career role models and why?
9. How do you set priorities in your work?
10. Do you have any time-management tricks other nurses could benefit from?
11. What are the most important lessons you've learned in your career?
12. How much supervision do you want or need?
13. What professional organizations do you belong to?
14. How have you participated in the professional organizations you belong to?
15. What nursing publications do you subscribe to?
16. Have you attended any national conferences? If so, how did you benefit from the experience?
17. Have you ever done any volunteer work? If so, what was it like?
18. How do you keep up with the latest information in your field?
19. What are your goals in terms of going back to school, becoming certified,

taking on management responsibilities?

20. Can you give an example of a time you were a leader?

21. Can you give some examples of your problem-solving skills?

22. What do you think are the most challenging aspects of meeting patients' needs?

23. How do you handle a request you disagree with?

24. What happened the last time you put your foot in your mouth?

25. What actions would you take in your first month on the job?

26. Can you give some examples of your creativity?

27. Who is the most difficult person you've ever worked with and why?

28. What type of management style do you work with best?

29. Can you describe a time when you had to intervene for a patient, what you did, and why? What was the outcome?

30. How would you rate yourself in communicating with patients—and with families?

31. Can you describe a situation in which you dealt with a difficult family member?

32. How do you motivate patients?

33. Can you describe a time you went beyond the call of duty?

34. Can you describe a situation in which you thought that you were right and others were wrong—and what you did about it?

35. Can you describe a situation in which you were supposed to work with a person you didn't like and how you handled it?

36. Have you ever been in a situation in which a co-worker put a patient in jeopardy? If so, what did you do about it?

37. What would you do if you were asked to float to a specialty area you weren't familiar with?

38. Can you describe a time your work was criticized and how you handled it?

39. How do you handle delegation issues with unlicensed assistive personnel?

40. How would your co-workers describe you?

41. How would you describe your role

in a recent code?

42. How do you handle stress?

43. Have you ever been fired or asked to resign?

44. What would a background check on you show?

45. Would your previous employer recommend you?

46. What would you do if you were caring for an alert patient who suddenly got acutely confused and disoriented?

47. What would you do if you found an elderly patient on the floor in his room? How would you document it?

48. Have you worked with many foreign nurses? If so, what did you do to help them?

49. How would you handle a situation in which you couldn't read a prescriber's orders?

50. If you were offered your last job again today, would you take it?

**If you're returning to nursing after not working in the profession for a while:**

51. How long has it been since you worked as a nurse?

52. What have you been doing since you've been out of nursing?

53. How have you prepared to return to nursing?

54. Did you take a refresher course? How did it help?

55. How have you kept up with changes in the profession?

**If you're a student applying for your first position:**

56. What's your most important achievement as a student?

57. When do you plan to take your NCLEX? Have you taken a course to prepare for it?

58. Where did you get your clinical experience? What units?

59. Did your clinical experience include putting in a urinary drainage catheter or starting an intravenous line access? Inserting or removing a nasogastric tube, or caring for a patient with one?


60. What was your favorite clinical experience? Least favorite? Why?

61. What types of charting systems have you used? What do you like about them? What do you dislike?

62. What do you think is a reasonable orientation time?

63. Have you worked with an electronic medication administration record? Bar coding?

64. What new technology have you used in school, such as personal digital assistants (PDAs)?

65. Are you on-line often? What are your favorite sites for reliable health care information? 

---

SUTTER