



CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROFESSIONALS

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introductory Questions:

1. What are some of the accomplishments in your educational background and professional experience that have best prepared you to be the (Senior Administrative Position) of Anywhere Community College? In other words, what strengths do you bring to the position, or, please tell us why we should select you?

Follow-up: It has been said that we learn more from our failures than from our successes. Can you give us an example of a failure and what you've learned from that experience?

Future Activities:

1. Based on what you now know about Anywhere Community College, what will be your priorities during your first six months in the position of (Senior Administrative Position)?

Follow-up: As the new (Senior Administrative Position), everyone will know your name. How will you get to know the students, the faculty, and other employees?

2. As (Senior Administrative Position), your time will have an inward focus (college operations) and an outward focus (having to do with community involvement, workforce development, and working with local businesses). How would you balance these activities?

Fiscal Management:

1. Please give us some examples of your experience in fiscal management. Specifically, how have you dealt with budgetary constraints?

Follow-up: How have your administrators, faculty and staff been involved in establishing financial priorities and when are they brought into the process?

2. Please describe your financial management background. Specifically, what is the largest budget for which you have been responsible? When you were faced with a budget shortfall, what steps did you take to address the problem?

Follow-up: Community and technical colleges are known for our “entrepreneurial spirit.” What specific examples can you offer from your own background that demonstrates such a spirit?

Business Partnerships:

1. Please give us an example of a successful collaborative effort between your current college and businesses, community organizations, other educational institutions or local government.

Follow-up: What are some ways that Anywhere Community College can work with businesses to enhance existing and develop more partnerships?

2. What do you think is the most significant thing a college (Senior Administrative Position) can do to enhance the community’s perception of the community or technical college and the college ‘system’?

Follow-up: Can you give us some examples of your experience in enhancing your current or previous institution’s perception in the local community?

Communication:

1. Communication within the college and with external constituencies is a significant issue. Please give us some examples of communication strategies you have employed that have been successful.

Follow-up: How do you keep informed of situations within your organization?

2. As a leader, how have you created a “collegial” environment at your current institution?

Follow-up: Can you give us an example of how you have used different styles of communication with various internal constituent groups?

Internal Leadership/Management:

1. As (Senior Administrative Position) of Anywhere Community College, how will you make shared governance work? Please give us an example of action(s) you have taken in your current or past positions to create unity and build teams among and across staff lines?

Follow-up: What have you done in your previous positions that have helped to improve relationships among diverse groups, either internal college groups or community groups?

2. Please describe for us an administrative initiative you developed that empowered others, encouraged innovation, improved morale, or promoted a climate of inclusiveness?

Follow-up: What obstacles did you have to overcome in implementing the initiative(s)? Was the initiative(s) successful? If not, how might you change your own behavior to change that outcome?

Conflict Management:

1. Many colleges have conflicting constituency groups. What methods have you used to meet the demands of these groups in the past?

Follow-up: Have your methods been successful? Why or why not?

2. As our student body, college constituencies, and communities are culturally diverse, how would you manage to satisfy or balance the demands of all these various groups?

Follow-up: Can you describe one or two instances where you found staff input highly successful in initiating change and/or problem solving?

Faculty Leadership/Relations:

1. Your faculties will have a wide variation in total number of years of experience with some long-term faculty members and a number of new “hires.” What strengths and weaknesses do you see in this setting?

Follow-up: How would you deal with the weaknesses you’ve identified?

2. What was the most successful experience or incident you have had in working with teaching faculty, and what has been your biggest failure?

Follow-up: In hindsight, how might you change your own behavior to change that negative experience?

Classified/Support Staff Relations:

1. Would you please describe a situation that you felt demonstrated successful employee participation in decision-making?

Follow-up: As our (Senior Administrative Position), how would you ensure that the administrative processes in place at the college actually serve the needs of the students?

2. What types of problems have you encountered in working with a large number of hourly, part-time employees?

Follow-up: How have you resolved those concerns? What have you done to eliminate concerns and problems with part-time employees?

Students/Student Success/Enrollment Management:

1. Please describe your interactions with students at your current institution. What would you see as your role as (Senior Administrative Position) with regard to our students?

Follow-up: Have you developed or implemented any programs that specifically address improving student success?

2. Can you give us a specific example of an issue that was supported by students but opposed by faculty and/or administrators? How was it resolved?

Follow-up: What was your role?

3. What methods have you used to ensure that administration, faculty, and staff are receptive and responsive to student needs? How might you begin that process at our college?

Follow-up: How would you deal with employees who are not responsive to student needs?

Shared Governance/Collective Bargaining:

1. Please describe your experience working with collective bargaining agreements. If you have not had this experience, what do you expect might be some of the issues associated with such agreements and how would you deal with them?

- Follow-up: Please give us some examples of issues from an existing contract environment that were easy to adhere to and some that were difficult to adhere to.
2. Please provide a detailed example of a problem you resolved using a participatory process.

Faculty/Staff Development:

1. What methods have you used to bring innovative faculty and staff development programs to your campus?

Follow-up: Were your methods successful? Why or why not?

2. In the past, how have you gotten faculty and staff involved in development programs?

Follow-up: How would you change your methods in the future?

Technology:

1. Distance learning is the newest educational frontier. What has been your experience with distance learning? What was your annual budget? How many students were enrolled and how many programs did you have?

Follow-up: What, in your view, are the educational and institutional advantages and disadvantages of these programs?

2. How do you think distance learning will change community or technical college education in the future?

Curriculum/Program Development:

1. Please tell us about an innovative, new program with which you have been involved in developing.
2. What methods have you used to bring faculty along with a new curriculum design?

Diversity/Affirmative Action:

1. What evidence can you cite, from your professional record, of your commitment to affirmative action and equal opportunity? How would you carry out this commitment as (Senior Administrative Position) of Anywhere Community College?

Follow-up: What might you suggest that we could do to celebrate diversity?

2. We would like to see Anywhere Community College become more involved in communicating with and recruiting from the minority community. How would you undertake such a task?

Follow-up: What has been your record of accomplishment in equal opportunity and affirmative action? How could Anywhere Community College demonstrate its commitment to diversity?

Team Building:

1. Please describe a situation in which you were instrumental in getting a team to work together to accomplish an identified task.

Follow-up: Can you share an example of an unsuccessful team building situation? What would you do differently to change that outcome?

2. Can you share with us an example of when you served as a facilitator or mediator between two internal constituent groups? How successful were you and, if you were not successful, what would you do differently?

Ethics:

1. Please share with us an instance when your own ethical sensibilities were in serious conflict with how you were expected to function in your professional role? If you would, also please tell us how the conflict was resolved.

Follow-up: Is there anything that you would do differently in the future?

2. What mechanisms have you established (or will you establish) in your institution to ensure that ethical conflicts are resolved in an ethical manner?

Closing Question:

1. Do you have any questions for us, or would you like to make a closing statement?
2. Is there anything else about yourself that you would like to share with us? Do you have any questions that we can answer for you about Anywhere Community College?