



## Zappos Examples of Core Value Interview Questions

### WELCOME / ICE BREAKER

#### Questions

How are you today? Are you enjoying your day on campus?

What has been the most surprising thing you've learned today?

Tough questions: Mac or PC, Apple or Android, Starbucks or Home Brew, Star Wars or Star Trek, Red Vines or Twizzlers?

What is your favorite go to restaurant here in Las Vegas?

So why are you sitting here today, why do you want to work for Zappos?



#### Behaviors we're looking for:

- Helps even when it "isn't their job"
- Wows everyone, everywhere
- Actually makes me say "wow"
- Delivers wow to customers while keeping in mind Zappos' best interests
- Creates personal connections
- Unconventional thinking, find ways to say YES

#### Interview Guide Questions

- What was the worst customer service experience you've had? How did you deal with it? Did it change your view of the company?
- What was the best customer service experience you've ever had? What made it so special?
- Give me an example of a time when you weren't able to give great service because of company policy. What would you have done differently if you didn't have to follow the rules?
- What do you do differently than other employees in your current/last job?
- What's the best work-related compliment you've ever received? How did you feel about the compliment?

#### Extra Questions

- In this role, how will you contribute to Zappos' wow service philosophy?
- Tell me about a time when your actions actually caused someone to say "WOW."
- What's the best gift you've ever given someone?
- Give an example of a time when you had to address an angry customer or coworker. What was the problem and what was the outcome? How would you assess your role in diffusing the situation?



**Behaviors we're looking for:**

- Drives original thinking
- Challenges the status quo or common wisdom
- Is comfortable with chaos and uncertainty
- Experiments with new ideas
- Executes purposeful change in alignment with their role, circle and company purpose
- Senses the need for purposeful change that is in alignment with their role, circle and company purpose

**Interview Guide Questions**

- Tell me about a time that you disagreed with the majority view point at work? What was the outcome?
- Describe a major change that occurred in a job that you held. How did you adapt to this change?
- Tell me about a time you invested a lot of time and energy on a project or task that was scrapped. What happened next?
- What has been the hardest thing for you professionally? What changes would you have done to make it better?
- How do you know when it's time for change? What criteria do you use?

**Extra Questions**

- Tell me about the last time you presented an idea to your team. What was the response?
- Tell me about a time you had to really stretch yourself at work? What happened?
- Tell me about a time you recognized a problem/area to improve that was outside of your job duties? What did you do about it?



#### Behaviors we're looking for:

- Turns the ordinary into something extraordinary
- Has an authentic sense of self
- Doesn't take life too seriously
- Lets their inner quirkiness come out
- Looks for fun and humor in their daily work
- Embraces others point of view, respects our diversity

#### Interview Guide Questions

- What are you passionate about? (What are your hobbies?)
- If you to plan an activity or event to promote team spirit with your coworkers, what would you do?
- In your current or previous work environment, what did you do to improve it or make it better/more fun?
- What's the most fun you ever had in the course of your day to day work? And we don't mean finishing a project or creating a spreadsheet.
- Describe what you view as the pros and cons of a work hard / play hard work environment or organization.

#### Extra Questions

- What is something weird that makes you happy?
- What's something you secretly love but wouldn't be the first, or second thing you'd share with someone?
- If we asked your manager what are the unique things you bring to the team, what would he/she say?



**Behaviors we're looking for:**

- Takes risks that are in alignment with their role, circle and company purpose
- Thinks even bigger
- Willing to fail (and learn from failure)
- Acts as an entrepreneur
- Makes decisions with the company's purpose in mind
- Believes in a “yes, and” way of thinking
- Comfortable with uncertainty
- Is open minded

**Interview Guide Questions**

- Tell me about a time you ran into a roadblock at work. What was the roadblock and what was the ultimate outcome?
- What is the riskiest decision you have made? What was the situation? What happened?
- Tell me about the last time you didn't understand how to do something at work. Walk me through how you figured it out.
- Describe the most creative project you have worked on? What was your contribution? How was the project received?
- Tell me about a time that you did what you thought was right to get the job done though it may have been against policy or against popular opinion?

**Extra Questions**

- Tell me about a time that you used something (an object, a philosophy) outside of its intended purpose.
- In your prior job, what decision made you hesitate and why?
- If you had to plan a parade in the office with other employees to celebrate a team milestone, what would your parade be like?



**Behaviors we're looking for:**

- Is curious about how things work
- Insatiable appetite for improvement
- Is their own teacher (self-evaluative)
- Takes steps into uncharted territory
- Open to learning from anyone
- Shares knowledge and experience with others
- Eager to take on and drive initiatives with little or no direction

**Interview Guide Questions**

- Can you give me an example of a recent project you worked on with little or no direction? How did you feel about it?
- What were some areas of development in your last feedback session? What did you think of that and what did you do to improve?
- How would this job fit in with your long-range career plans?
- Can you tell me about a goal you have set for yourself? What is the last thing you've done to work towards it?
- Does your current company offer training classes? What was the last one you attended? What did you learn? (If they answer, "no offered training classes," ask what they would like to be offered)

**Extra Questions**

- How do you keep current with what is going on in your field/industry? What is trending or on the forefront of \_\_\_\_\_ (insert specific position details: technology, finance, merchandising, etc.)?
- Tell me about the last complicated thing you had to learn? How did you get the knowledge/what steps did you take? ex: putting together a shelf, new process – to assess how they handle training/learning new tasks
- Tell me about the last book, blog, whitepaper you read? How was it, would you recommend it?
- What was the last thing you researched online?
- What is the last thing you taught someone?
- Of your current or previous positions, which were you most/least successful in and why?



**Behaviors we're looking for:**

- Asks for ideas/input from others
- Listens to understand
- Transparent about both positive AND negative information
- Uses conflict resolution to sort out differences
- Creates strong relationships with emotional connections
- Embraces diversity in thoughts, opinions and backgrounds
- Is trustworthy
- Is open and honest while being respectful, preserving relationships
- Communicates effectively

**Interview Guide Questions**

- Tell me about your last coworker conflict. How did you resolve it?
- Tell me about a time you had to adapt your behavior/communication style at work.
- When was the last time you asked for help at your job? Describe the situation, how did you feel about asking for help?
- Tell me about a time you felt you were misunderstood at work in trying to convey something? What happened? How did you handle it?
- In your previous jobs, how did you build relationships with other coworkers?

**Extra Questions**

- Tell me who was your best/worst leader and why?
- When was the last time you demonstrated integrity (the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness) in the workplace?
- At your previous job, who did you have the most difficult time communicating with and why? What did you do to improve the relationship?
- Tell me about a time you were given less than favorable feedback. How did you handle it?
- What's a job you've had that wasn't very satisfying? Why wasn't it?
- What kinds of communication situations cause you difficulty? Give an example.



**Behaviors we're looking for:**

- Is more than just a coworker, puts efforts into relationships
- Connects people for meaningful relationships
- When I think of the team, I think of them
- Is visible and accessible to their team/circle(s)
- Participates in Zappos events (target is 20% of the time/events)
- Leads and serves
- Watches out, cares for and goes above and beyond for each other

**Interview Guide Questions**

- When was a time you “stepped up and helped out” even though it wasn’t your responsibility?
- Give me an example of a time you were working with a team/group and one member was not participating/pulling their weight. What did you do?
- What’s the biggest challenge you faced working in a team environment? How did you handle it?
- Describe a team activity that you found rewarding.
- What co-worker behaviors drive you crazy? How do you handle it when someone is doing it?

**Extra Questions**

- How do you motivate others to do their best work?
- What makes you lose your cool/sets you off? Tell me about the last time it happened.
- What has been your most favorite team project you’ve worked on?



#### Behaviors we're looking for:

- Has a basic understanding of the financial health of our business
- Works smarter not harder
- Has a “Just do it” attitude, believes in hard work and extra effort
- Continuously looks to innovate, improve and raise the bar
- Never settles for “good enough” (because good is the enemy of great)
- Learns from mistakes

#### Interview Guide Questions

- Tell me about a time you were given a task to do but did not have the tools necessary to complete the task. What did you do?
- Under what conditions do you do your very best work?
- What is a current task that you would like to make more efficient or eliminate? How are you working on that change?
- How have you improved yourself in the past year?
- What has been the best mistake you've made on the job? Why?

#### Extra Questions

- How do you handle interruptions throughout the work day? How do you stay on track?
- Give me an example of a time you took on more than what was required to improve a process.
- What was your best “McGuyver moment?” (professional or personal is fine)
- Tell me about a time you were given work that you weren't prepared for. What was the situation? How did you feel about it?
- What limits your ability to manage your time?
- Give an example of how you worked smarter, not harder.



**Behaviors we're looking for:**

- Asks for forgiveness, not for permission
- Never believes the statement, "It can't be done," (dreams big, goes bold)
- Fights the fight if it's the right thing for our company purpose
- Makes informed decisions based on our culture (includes: Core Values and our purpose)
- Value and protects the Zappos Culture, above all
- Demonstrates a positive and optimistic (but realistic) attitude
- Gets shit done
- Passionate about the work you do and how it aligns with the company purpose

**Interview Guide Questions**

- What would you do if you felt you were assigned an impossible task?
- Tell me about a time you had to stand up/fight for something you believed in at your last job? What happened?
- What "turns off" your motivation in a job?
- What professional accomplishment are you most proud of?
- Not all parts of a job are fun or challenging. What tasks fall into this category for you and how do you motivate yourself to complete these tasks?

**Extra Questions**

- As Zappos evolves, what challenges might we face in protecting our culture?
- What did you most enjoy about your last job? What did you least enjoy?
- How did you end up in your current line of work?
- If all jobs paid the same, what would you be doing?
- Thinking about your last job, did you fully believe in the mission of the company? What did you connect with the most?
- When was the last time you bent the rule because it was the right thing to do?
- What are your thoughts on the statement "ask for forgiveness, not for permission?"
- When was the last time someone told you "it can't be done?"



**Behaviors we're looking for:**

- Accepts and adapts to challenges ahead, we're never done
- Displays a quiet confidence for their achievements and Zappos' achievements, knowing that character speaks for itself
- Delivers a wow experience no matter who are you interacting with
- Takes responsibility and admits mistakes
- Listens before being heard
- Is grateful for the rewards that come from hard work and dedication
- Finds inspiration and ideas in unconventional places and spaces

**Interview Guide Questions**

- When was the last time you did something to help others or the community?
- What is your greatest strength? How would this strength help you in this position?
- What are the top 3 most important things to you in your next job? What is the least important?
- If someone were to write your biography, what might they title it and why?
- Is there anything you wished we would have talked about during our conversation today?

**Extra Questions**

- What has been the worst idea you've had at work and why? What did you take away from that?
- What has been the best mistake you've made on the job?
- What do you think is in the future for online retailers?
- What has been an unusual place you've found inspiration from?
- What is an area you need to improve upon? What are you doing to improve it?
- What would set you apart from someone who had the exact same qualifications and experience as you, for this role?
- What was the most useful feedback you have ever received? What feedback have you received that you didn't agree with?