

Interview Questions for Psychology Students



Sample Practicum Interview Questions

General Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to work here? Why do you feel this site would be a good fit with your interests and background?
3. What are your strengths and/or weaknesses?
4. Where do you see yourself in three to five years?

Additional Questions

1. What brought you to this field?
2. Give me an example of a time when you needed to enforce a policy even if you didn't agree with the policy.
3. This can be a stressful and overwhelming field at times; how do you keep yourself balanced and what do you do to de-stress?
4. How have your education and previous experiences prepared you for work with clients?
5. What is your knowledge and understanding of the recovery/wellness model?
6. Tell me about your experience at XYZ.
7. What previous experience do you have in the field?
8. What involvement do you have in community service and volunteer work?
9. What do you see as the role of an MFT/Counselor/Mental Health Practitioner in today's society?
10. What theoretical orientation do you identify most with and why?
11. Tell me about your experience working with diverse or multicultural populations.
12. Tell me about a time when you used your cultural sensitivity to assist another person.

13. How would you handle an aggressive/angry client?
14. How would you handle a suicidal/homicidal client?
15. What steps would you take if you suspected child abuse/neglect with a client?
16. How would a professor or supervisor describe you?
17. Is there a specific population that appeals to you/intimidates you? Why?
18. Tell me about a time when you were part of a team. What was your role and how did you interact with others?

Questions To Ask The Employer

1. What type of training will I obtain in this position?
2. What is the supervision style here?
3. What are typical projects or cases I will be working with?
4. How often are performance reviews/evaluations given?
5. What is your organization's view of the ideal candidate for this position?
6. How is professional development supported?
7. What challenges currently face this position?
8. When do you anticipate making a decision regarding this position?
9. What skills and knowledge do you like to teach practicum students?
10. What objectives do you require of your students to meet as part of their practicum?
11. Is there an opportunity to continue with the agency post-graduation?

Sample Doctoral Interview Questions

General Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your career goals? How will this program help you achieve your goals?
3. In what ways have your previous experiences prepared you for graduate study in our program?
4. What do you know about our program?
5. Who is your favorite personality theorist and why?
6. What is the role of a psychologist?
7. What distinguishes you from the other candidates for this program?
8. How will you contribute to the new PsyD cohort?
9. What are your specific areas of interest – populations, disorders, etc.?
10. You have a Master's, why do you want to pursue a doctoral degree?
11. What do you plan to do once you've graduated with your doctoral degree?
12. What are your greatest clinical strengths? What are some areas where you would benefit from additional development?
13. Does your partner/family/friends support your decision to pursue a doctoral degree and the additional rigors of the program?
14. I see on your resume that you worked at XYZ, Inc. Tell me about your experience there.
15. Why do you want to pursue a PhD/PsyD? Why are you pursuing one instead of the other?
16. What goes into a dissertation?
17. Why did you choose this career path?
18. What questions do you have for me?

Time Management and Organization

1. How do you think you will handle the workload? What strategies do you use to prevent yourself from getting overwhelmed?
2. How do you cope with pressure and deadlines?
3. The doctoral program is very demanding on one's time. How do you work with stress and managing multiple responsibilities?

Clinical Experience

1. What kind of psychological testing experience have you had?
2. Tell me about your clinical experience.
3. What have you found most challenging in your clinical work?
4. How do you utilize supervision?
5. If you have a problem or disagree with your supervisor, how do you handle it?
6. What is the most surprising insight you've gained through your clinical practice?
7. Tell me about a challenging client with whom you've worked.
8. How do you establish relationships with clients from a different background than your own and with problems you've never experienced yourself?
9. Tell me your about experiences with social justice issues and your work with diverse clients.

Research Experience

1. Describe a research project on which you've worked. What was the purpose of this project?
2. What were the hypotheses and results of the research you conducted? What role did you play?
3. How will you cope with inevitable setbacks during your research?
4. In thinking about your dissertation, do you have any general topics in mind?

Sample MFT Internship and Post-Doc Interviews

General Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to work here?
3. What are your plans for future areas of work?
4. Where do you see yourself in 3 to 5 years?
5. What brought you to this field?
6. What can you bring to our organization?
7. Working here can be overwhelming; how do you handle stress? How do you handle criticism?
8. What do you think makes an effective therapist?
9. How has your personal background affected your personal psychology?
10. How do you manage counter-transference issues which may interfere when working with a client?

Clinical Experience

1. Tell me about a specific case that you have conceptualized using a therapeutic model and how you've applied it in treatment planning.
2. Discuss the steps you took to create a clinically relevant and culturally sensitive treatment plan to help a client meet his or her goals.
3. Give an example of a client session that evoked strong feelings, which made you particularly aware of your personal position with regard to class/gender/race/disability etc.?
4. Talk about a disagreement/conflict with a supervisor and how you handled it?
5. How do you handle conflict with a client?
6. What theories have you used in clinical practice?
7. Describe a clinical/ethical dilemma that you have faced in your clinical work.
8. Tell me what you perceive as your biggest blunder or failure in your work with a client.

Field Specific Questions

1. What is your theoretical orientation?
2. What do you think should change therapeutically in order to meet the needs of a multi-cultural society?

3. Tell us about the role of a Marriage and Family Therapist/Psychologist.
4. What population do you find particularly difficult to work with and why?
5. What are your views on working with clients from different cultures? What issues do you need to be aware of?
6. What would you do if a client came to you saying that s/he were going to commit suicide when s/he left your office?
7. How would you deal with a client who you did not enjoy working with?
8. What are the advantages and disadvantages of (*a particular theoretical orientation*)? What part does emotion play?
9. What do you think about the DSM?
10. What is your view on spanking in relation to child abuse? Is there a cultural aspect to assessment?
11. What procedures are in place for child and elder abuse?
12. What procedures are in place for a homicidal client?
13. Are you familiar with DMH Paperwork?
14. How important are evidence-based practices? Empirically-based theories and treatments?
15. What assessments have you administered?
16. How do you deal with angry/irritable/aggressive clients?
17. Name your three greatest strengths/weaknesses as a clinician?
18. How has your education prepared you for work here (with this population)?
19. What has been the most surprising thing you have learned about yourself as a clinician in training?
20. Tell me about the most challenging client you have ever worked with.
21. Describe what you perceive to be the most successful outcome with a client?
22. What are some of the most important things that you learned while at your practicum site(s)?
23. Consider this clinical vignette. Tell me how you would approach treatment with this client? What do you think is the first thing that needs to be addressed?
24. Give me an example of a time when you had to handle a client in crisis or an emergency.