

McMaster's Leadership Capabilities – Sample Questions

The following are targeted questions that address each of McMaster's six leadership capabilities and will serve as a guide when considering the development of applicable interview questions:

McMASTER'S CORE LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES



Takes a Strategic Approach

- Promotes McMaster culture and values
- Understands global trends and impact
- Anticipates challenges, risks and outcomes
- Gathers key information and resources
- Enables strategic plans through role

Communicates & Collaborates

- Identifies opportunities to collaborate with others
- Generates trust and an inclusive environment
- Listens with insight and respect
- Leverages internal and community networks
- Provides meaningful recognition

Drives Results

- Advances the University strategy
- Delivers with integrity
- Balances priorities to achieve success
- Accepts responsibility and accountability for results
- Takes prudent risks which enable innovation
- Operates with fiscal responsibility

Champions Change & Innovation

- Acts as a positive change agent
- Illustrates resilience and adaptability
- Is bold in championing innovations
- Identifies and fosters opportunities for continuous improvement
- Seeks and utilizes feedback

Develops People

- Engages in personal, team and leader development
- Celebrates and promotes diversity
- Actions learning to enhance value of work
- Inspires others using a coach approach
- Provides balanced and timely feedback

Invests in Relationships

- Enhances the university brand, reputation and financial success
- Builds relationships using a service model approach
- Creates positive student, employee and partner experiences
- Participates actively in community engagement
- Demonstrates creativity in resolving issues

Takes a strategic approach

Employees need to be comfortable with our organization's mission, vision, goals and priorities. Understanding the environment or landscape in which Universities and specifically, McMaster, operates will make work much easier. This capability includes the following behaviours:

- Promoting McMaster culture and values
- Understanding global trends and impacts
- Anticipating challenges, risks and outcomes
- Gathering key information and resources, and
- Enabling strategic plans through their role

Targeted Questions:

- Provide a specific example of a time when you had to gather key information and resources to enable a strategic plan.
- Provide an example of how you identify major changes in an organizational environment and how you develop a strategic plan to take advantage of them.
- Tell me about a time where you had to anticipate challenges, risks and outcomes when developing a solution to a problem.
- Tell me about a time where you have had to keep your strategies fresh and ahead of the competition.

Communicates and Collaborates

Doing these well are critical for everyone to be successful in their roles. Desired behaviours include:

- Identifying opportunities to collaborate
- Generating trust and inclusivity
- Listening with insight and respect
- Leveraging networks
- Providing meaningful recognition

Targeted Questions:

- Describe a situation in which you were required to accept assistance from another group/source. What was your approach and the outcome?
- Tell us about a time when you needed to assist a colleague/Department. What was the situation and how did you manage your responsibilities as well?
- Describe a situation in which you dealt with someone who didn't communicate as much as you needed/required. Explain your approach and result.

Drives Results

Part of being a leader means getting the job done, setting and meeting goals and driving results. It's important to gain an understanding of how things work at the University and align your Department and/or individual goals with the University's. Driving results includes:

- Advancing the University's strategy
- Delivering what you do with integrity
- Balancing priorities
- Accepting responsibility and accountability
- Taking prudent risks
- Operating with fiscal responsibility

Targeted Questions:

- Describe a situation where you had multiple priorities and your approach to creating balance while still delivering positive results.
- Tell us about a time when you had to consider multiple solutions to a situation, some of which involved medium to high risk, and how you identified your ultimate solution. What was the result and would you consider an alternative approach next time?

Champions Change and Innovation

Change is ever-present in today's world and it's important to remember that it affects everyone differently. This capability is about:

- Being a change agent
- Demonstrating resilience and adaptability
- Championing innovations and improvements
- Seeking and using feedback

Targeted Questions:

- Describe a time when you had to adapt to a variety of changes and how you acted as a positive change agent during this process.
- Provide an example of how you have illustrated resilience and adaptability to a situation.
- Describe a time when you identified and fostered an opportunity for continuous improvement and something and how you sought and utilized feedback.

Develops People

McMaster is very progressive when it comes to employee development. This capability includes:

- Engaging in personal and team development
- Turning learning into action on the job
- Inspiring others via a coaching approach
- Celebrating diversity
- Providing balanced feedback

Targeted Questions:

- Tell me about a skills and/or competency gap that you identified with a team member and how you developed a plan to address this? Please provide details of the outcome and whether there was an opportunity for improvement.
- Describe a situation where you had to provide feedback to a team member that was not meeting performance objectives on certain tasks but was exceeding expectations on other tasks.
- Provide a specific example of when you had to use a coach approach with one of your team members and describe why you thought this was appropriate and the results of this approach.

Invests in Relationships

McMaster is such a large and diverse organization that maintaining positive relations is a key capability for everyone across the organization. This capability includes:

- Enhancing the university brand, reputation and financial success
- Building relationships using a service model approach
- Creating positive student, employee and partner experiences
- Demonstrating creativity in resolving issues

Targeted Questions:

- Tell us about a time you changed your interpersonal style midstream because something wasn't working. What did you do differently? What was the reaction/result?
- Tell us about a time where you were responsible for communicating with someone who had a hard time grasping the concept. What tactics did you use to help the person understand? What would you have done differently?
- Tell us about a conflict or a disagreement you ran into at work with a colleague. How did you handle the conflict? Were you able to come to a mutually agreeable solution? Did you involve a third party?

For additional support and more information on targeted questions to enhance your selection process, please contact Melanie Garaffa, Senior Manager, Organizational Development in Human Resources Services at garaffa@mcmaster.ca or ext. 28660.