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Interview Questions Purchasing Manager

Plan, direct, or coordinate the activities of buyers, purchasing officers, and related workers involved in purchasing materials, products, and services. Includes wholesale or retail trade merchandising managers and procurement managers.

Strategic Planning and Organization

- How well has your business/facility/group performed? How did your purchasing strategies contribute to this?
- Tell me about your experience purchasing raw goods and/or finished goods including volume and lead-time information.
- What are your criteria for selecting the most ideal suppliers and vendors for your employer?
- What factors do you consider when determining whether to stay with an existing supplier or switch to a new one?
- What are the drivers of a successful purchasing department? What metrics do you review to know if you're meeting your goals?
- Which industry trends have specifically affected you as a manager?
- How do you schedule your day? How do you handle interruptions?
- Tell me a time when you were short on materials for manufacturing and you had to scramble to get supplies in.

Leadership

- Some people consider themselves to be "big picture people" and others are "detail oriented". Which are you? Give an example of a time when you displayed this.
- What characteristics do you look for when recruiting buyers and materials administrators?
- How do you delegate work?
- Tell me a time when you motivated a team to implement your vision.
- Has your team ever struggled to meet business goals? How did you address the situation?

Negotiations and Cost Reduction

- Tell me about a contract you negotiated that you are particularly proud of.
- Tell me about a cost reduction project that you implemented. What were some of the challenges you overcame to make these changes?
- Tell me about a project you implemented that didn't go so well. What did you learn?
- What is the most effective way you have found to engage stakeholders where you have to convince people who do not work for you to provide information?
- Tell me a time you had a dispute with a vendor. What did you do and how did things turn out?

Administrative Knowledge and Technology

- What ERP programs have you used?
- Describe the main parts of the supply chain as they relate to our organization.

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