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Authentic Interviewing: Sample scenario #1

This is an interview for a marketing position at a community nonprofit agency.

INTERVIEWER

Tell me about yourself.

INTERVIEWEE

(Leaning back in chair, with legs crossed, and arms folded over chest.)

Well, I was born in a super-small town in the middle of nowhere, and as soon as I could, I, like, got out of there to go to college. I majored in business, partied a bit too much, and then had my first job at Acme Public Relations. They were WAY too strict and boring, so I left after a few years.

I have a [husband/wife] and two kids already. Now I need to make more money at a company that has a convenient commute and good benefits. This seemed like a good place to get all that, plus, like, some experience, so...

INTERVIEWER

What are your strengths and weaknesses?

INTERVIEWEE

I'm good with people and I'm great with numbers. Hmm, what can I say about weaknesses? (Pause, look around, shift in chair.) You want to know how messed up I might be, right? (Laugh.)

I probably spend too much time on reports. And, ummm, I need to work on my public speaking??

INTERVIEWER

Where do you want to be five years from now?

INTERVIEWEE

Oh wow. I don't know. Ok, yeah. I want to be making twice as much as this job probably offers! Live in a bigger, better house. You know. Have more time with the kids. I guess I'd like to have your job! Hahaha.

INTERVIEWER

Please give me an example of a time when you had a problem with a co-worker, and how you approached the problem.

INTERVIEWEE

That's easy! A couple of years ago, this crazy person was hired to be our receptionist. I couldn't stand her, and no one else could either. He was always telling us to do things differently, I guess to make HIS life easier, so... (Roll eyes.)

Anyway, I organized a bunch of other account associates and we all went to the manager with proof that what the receptionist was doing was out of line. Nothing really changed, though, until he quit. That was a relief!

INTERVIEWER

Why are you leaving your current job?

INTERVIEWEE

Like I said before, they were too strict and boring. Like, WAY too many rules. I get that it's a private firm, but my goodness!

Anyway, I want to move to a nonprofit because it's more laid-back, and I heard you guys offer decent benefits. Obamacare is gonna be brutal if I can't get a full time job, you know?

Questions excerpted from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2013/01/11/how-to-ace-the-50-most-common-interview-questions/>