



Values-Based Interview Questions

By understanding the VALUES that are most important for a role, you have a better chance of **hiring right the first time** and **setting your people up for success**.

A Courageous Quick Guide from Cindy Solomon
and the Courageous Leadership Institute®



Values-Based Interviewing Questions

Values are defined as the essence of who we are, shown in individual and recurrent patterns of thoughts and behaviors. Importantly, values cannot be taught to adults or transferred from one person to another. During your work with Cindy Solomon and the Courageous Leadership Institute, you identified the following list as the most important “ticket-to-entry” values for success in various roles within Sound.

The key to successful values-based interviewing is making sure you ask open-ended questions and dig for SPECIFICS after the candidate provides an answer. Use these questions as stepping stones to dig deeper for specifics that will show evidence of the value you identified for success in the role. As you probe for specifics in their responses, you will gain a better sense of whether or not the candidate actually understands and possesses the value being explored.

Adaptable

Demonstrates flexibility and a willingness to change and accommodate as circumstances evolve.



Give me an example of when you had to adapt your communication or work style because your preferred style wasn't effective with your colleague/team.

Tell me about a time when you struggled to adapt to a change in the workplace. How did you work through the challenge?

Attention to Detail

Demonstrates care in overseeing and reviewing details in the work requested so they are accurate and complete.



Walk me through a project that required a high attention to detail under a tight timeline. How did you prioritize quality vs. quantity/timeliness?

Tell me about a time you made a mistake at work. How was it brought to your attention? Did you discover on your own or did someone else tell you? How did you fix it?

Bias Toward Action

Has a focus on progress rather than perfection. Breaks things into bite-sized pieces to make progress against larger goals.



Tell me about your decision-making and thought processes when you are tackling a large goal.

Give me an example of a time when you had to make a decision, even though you didn't have all the information you or your leader would have liked. What was your thought process and how did you decide to take action?

“Can-do” Attitude

Proactively seeks assignments and solutions; takes action where and as needed.



Tell me about a time you made a project work, even when some of your colleagues didn't support you.

Give me an example of when someone else failed to deliver or neglected their work commitments and it had a negative impact on your productivity. How did you respond and what was the outcome?

Give me an example of a time you had to handle a task without prior experience in that area.

Coachable

Is confidently able to accept positive and constructive feedback from others and put it into practice.



Give me an example of feedback you have received that you were surprised by or disagreed with; what did you do about it?

As you look at your career to date, what is the best piece of advice you have received and how has that impacted you?

What is a skill you wish you had that you currently don't have?

Collaborative

Works well with others to accomplish a goal; takes opinions of others into consideration; includes others in the decision-making process.



Describe a situation where it was critical that you establish an effective working relationship with an individual or group – outside of your own department – to complete an assignment or deliver a service. What were the steps you took to make that happen?

Walk me through what you have done when a team member is unable to handle their part of a project.

Committed

Demonstrates dedication to their job, project, organization, customer/clients, and co-workers.



Tell me about how you keep a long-term project on track.

Describe a time when you were dissatisfied at work or with a project or team. What did you do to overcome this?

Compassionate

Empathetic and kind towards others; makes the effort to understand where someone else is coming from.



Give me an example of the last time you did something for another person that “made their day.”

Tell me about a time you had to help someone on your team who was struggling with a task or project. What did you do to help them? How did you identify what the real issues were?

Courageous

Proactively takes action, in spite of personal fear.



Tell me the last time you had to share an unpopular opinion with your leader and/or team. What did you do, and what were the results?

Give me an example of when you had to address a difficult or uncomfortable situation with another leader on behalf of your team, even when others wouldn't. What did you say/do and how did the leader respond?

Talk about a time when you had to correct a client because they made an incorrect assumption or had bad information. How did you approach that?

Customer-focused (not a value but an outcome)

Puts customer (internal and external) needs first and makes customers a top priority.



Tell me about the last time you had to resolve a difficult situation with a customer/client. What steps-by-step actions did you take to resolve it?

Walk me through a time when a customer or client asked you to do something and you had to take action without any supervisory input.

Driven

Motivated to succeed and get things done at a high level of achievement.



Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond to get a job done.

Walk me through the most important goals you set for yourself in your last role. Which goals were you successful at achieving and what did you specifically DO to achieve those goals?

Think about the goals you weren't able to achieve? What would you do differently if you could do it over again?

Eager to Learn

Proactively seeks out information, embraces learning new things, and enjoys the learning process.



Tell me about a time when you had to develop a new skill. How did you approach the learning process?

Tell me about the last new interesting thing you learned. What grabbed your attention?

What's a skill or challenge that you wish you had and what are you doing about it?

What steps did you take at your last job to get up-to-speed quickly?

Intellectually Curious

Exhibits a natural interest in learning new things and wants to know the “why” behind the way things are done.



Tell me about the most interesting thing you’ve learned about recently. What was it and what piqued your interest? What did you do to learn more about it?

Tell me about a time when you had to develop a new skill. How did you approach the learning process?

Walk me through what you did at your last job to get up to speed when you first arrived?

Tell me how you would go about describing a highly technical topic to someone without that expertise.

Likes People

Genuinely enjoys engaging with and helping others; feels a sense of accomplishment when helping and working with other people.



Walk me through what you do when working with a new colleague. How do you establish rapport and get to know the person as an individual?

Tell me about the last time you had to resolve a situation with a difficult customer/client.

Open-minded

Listens and considers different opinions and approaches; able to change their mind after an initial judgment or decision; embraces others who are different and bring different perspectives.



Tell me about the last time you changed your mind about someone after an initial negative first impression.

Tell me about the most difficult peer relationship you have dealt with and how you made it work.

Tell me about the most successful team you have worked on. What was the make-up of the team and what do you think made the team successful?

When you are hiring people, what top three things do you look for?

Passionate

Shows palpable enthusiasm and excitement about the work; gets others excited about work/projects they're involved in and working on.



Describe something at work that you love doing. Why does it make you happy?

Tell me about the job you most enjoyed in your career and what about it created that connection?

Patient

Able to take a deep breath and stay calm, even when frustrated or stressed; sets the standard for others to follow.



What does patience look like for you in the workplace? Give examples of when you've had to show patience.

Tell me about a time you had to demonstrate patience, even if you were frustrated or annoyed. What did you do to ensure you were patient?

Tell me how you would go about describing a highly technical topic to someone without that expertise.

Persistent

When obstacles or challenges are present, can “keep at it”; returns to the work at hand after a change of course.



Tell me about a situation where you encountered obstacles and had to overcome them in order to get to the finish line. What did you do and how did you keep yourself motivated to get it done?

Describe a time when you failed to achieve your goals and had to try a different approach. What happened?

Resourceful

Demonstrates a willingness to utilize or seek out information and tools to solve problems.



Describe a situation where you were on your own to figure out a solution or make a decision. What did you do, specifically, to find the answers?

Talk about a time when you started a new job, project, or assignment that you were unfamiliar with or didn't have the necessary technical expertise. How did you get up-to-speed?

Self-aware

Can identify their own strengths and opportunity areas for personal improvement.



Give me an example of one of the areas of your leadership style that you struggle with and how you address it in your career.

Give me an example of one thing you would have done differently in your professional history. Why did you pick that particular example?

Tell me about your most significant professional failure and how you recovered.

Self-motivated

Proactively jumps in to start a task or project with limited direction; asks “what’s next?” and wants to take on more responsibility.



Give me an example of a time when you had to jump in and take action, even without all the information and direction you would have liked.

Share a recent goal you have set for yourself and what you did, specifically, to achieve it.

Self-starter

Can initiate or jump into a task or project with limited direction.



Give me an example of a time when you had to take action, even without all the information and direction you would have liked. What were your steps?

Give me an example of a difficult problem you had to solve at work. Walk me through the steps you took to find a solution.

Give me an example of a time you had to handle a task without prior experience or technical expertise. Were you successful? If so, what steps did you take?

Strategic Thinker

Has the ability to look at the big picture and proactively develop a plan of action.



Tell me about the most difficult issue you’ve had to deal with within your business. How did you go about gathering information and what steps determined your actions?

Team Player

Seeks to work with other people to accomplish a common goal. Shows willingness to share challenges and successes with others.



Describe a time when you had to work with a colleague that had a personality or opinions that differed from yours. How did you approach that situation and what did you specifically DO to work together?

What has been your greatest team success in your career and why was that team successful? What was your role and what were the specific activities that contributed to the success?

Trustworthy

Displays a high degree of integrity; keeps confidences; does what they say.



Consider a situation where you had to keep information confidential, even when others were trying to get you to tell them more. How did you handle that?

Describe a circumstance where you found it justifiable to break a professional confidence. What happened?

Describe a time when you were asked to do something that you thought was impossible to accomplish. How did you handle and communicate this?

Visionary

Can see, articulate, and share the future vision of the organization in ways that engage and motivate those around them.



Give me an example of when you have had to create a vision for a project or team, and how you shared it with others to excite them.

Think of a time when you had to engage a team against a difficult goal. What was your process to gain their buy-in?

Tell me about your proudest professional accomplishment that you've gained through others and what you did to achieve it.

Work Ethic

Dedicated to getting a job done well and on time, regardless of the circumstances.



Tell me about a time where you were facing very difficult odds in achieving your goals and how you approached it. What were the steps you took?

Give an example of the most difficult project or goal you've worked on. How were you successful overcoming obstacles?

Build your courage. Right here, **right now.**

Take a minute to consider your next move. You're already outside your comfort zone. Why not take an actionable step today to create a Culture of Courage within your own organization or team? **Let's do this!**



Courageous Leadership Keynotes

Cindy has presented her Courageous Keynotes for over 100,000 leaders and individual contributors around the world. These motivational, action-oriented, and always hilarious keynotes are perfect for any organization looking to align, motivate, and engage their teams against even the most challenging goals.

“Cindy’s keynote was amazing! She created the platform that made our entire meeting more productive, effective, and engaging. We’ve already had hundreds of attendees ask to have Cindy back again next year!”
CEO, Raytheon



Courage Leadership Webinars

These highly interactive, 60-minute programs hone in on the skills and perspectives needed to not just survive in our disrupted world, but to thrive. Perfect for large geographic footprints and ideal to address current business realities and goals.

“This webinar was just what I needed to build the courage (and skills) I need to engage my team during this difficult time. I feel better equipped to do what’s right for my customers and my teams.” Webinar Attendee, Dow



Courageous Leadership Intensive Workshops

Get serious about building a Culture of Courage in your organization with Cindy and her global group of facilitators. Jumpstart your entire leadership footprint with the language and skills needed to build consistent, proactive, effective results against customer experience and employee engagement. Utilized by over 345,000 leaders in over 420 companies worldwide, these programs create the competitive differentiator in customer experience, talent acquisition/retention, and leadership alignment. Fully customized and designed for fast delivery across large geographies.

“This is the best leadership training I’ve had in my 30-year career. I can’t believe the difference these two days have made for both me and my teams.” Attendee, KeyBank

25+ Years of Courageous Experience. Built by Leaders, for Leaders.

40+

GLOBAL
FACILITATORS

345,423

LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS

98.2%

WOULD RECOMMEND
TO A COLLEAGUE

462

CLIENTS...AND
GROWING



About Cindy

Connect on 



Cindy Solomon is one of the most sought-after leadership and customer experience experts in the world. Selected in the top 10 Leadership Global Gurus in 2026, she is known for her bold voice, research-driven insights, and unforgettable keynote experiences that move audiences from inspiration to action.

Her extensive global work includes partnerships with 26 J.D. Power Award winners, 16 Best Places to Work, and over 462 organizations, including industry leaders like Google, Alaska Airlines, Oracle, UPS, Wells Fargo, Dow, the American Bankers Association, and The Gates Foundation—all looking to build Courageous Leadership® at scale.

As Founder and CEO of the Courageous Leadership Institute®, Cindy and her international team of facilitators deliver training and tools that help organizations cultivate everyday courage, breakthrough communication, and leadership that drives measurable results.

Her accessible, laugh-out-loud programs have reached more than 350,000 leaders worldwide, offering real-world frameworks that create customer loyalty and employee engagement—even in the most disrupted environments.

Cindy's accolades include the Top 200 Biggest Voices in Leadership by leadersHum, the Inc. 5000, Fast Company's Fast 100, and 3.1M+ views on her TED Talk, 5 Tips for Dealing with Meeting Overload. Her bestselling books, **The Courage Challenge Workbook** and **The Rules of Woo**, are available on Amazon.



American
Bankers
Association



Pacific Coast Banking School

QUESTIONS? Got a leadership challenge or an initiative in your organization?

Let us know! We'd love to help in any way. Visit courageousleadershipinstitute.com to get in touch.



Values-Based Interviewing Questions

CourageousLeadershipInstitute.com

©2023 Courageous Leadership Institute. All rights reserved.