



Top 10 Janitor Interview Questions and Answers [Updated 2024]

Description

When you're preparing for a janitor interview, you can expect to be asked a range of questions about your experience, skills, and work ethic. This guide will help you get familiar with some of the most common questions and how you can answer them to demonstrate your suitability for the role.

Janitor Interview Questions

Can you describe a situation where you had to deal with an unexpected problem during your cleaning duties?

How to Answer

This question is designed to assess your problem-solving skills and ability to handle unexpected situations. Focus on a specific incident where you faced a challenge or problem during your cleaning duties. Describe the situation, how you handled it, and the outcome. It's important to show that you can stay calm and make effective decisions under pressure.

Sample Answer

Once while cleaning a large office, I encountered a major water leak. Water was pouring from a broken pipe, and the office was beginning to flood. I immediately shut off the main water supply and contacted the building's maintenance team. I also quickly moved electronics and other sensitive items to higher ground to prevent damage. The situation was stressful, but I managed to minimize the damage and clean up the water before it could cause major issues.

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What steps would you take to ensure that you are using cleaning chemicals safely?

How to Answer

The candidate should demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the safety protocols when handling cleaning chemicals. They should mention the use of protective equipment, proper storage, and disposal of chemicals, and the importance of following the manufacturer's instructions. They should also highlight the importance of maintaining a well-ventilated area when using these chemicals.



Sample Answer

Safety is always my top priority when handling cleaning chemicals. I always ensure to wear the appropriate protective equipment like gloves and goggles. I read and follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully and I never mix chemicals unless it's specified that it's safe to do so. I also make sure to properly store and dispose of chemicals after use. Lastly, I always ensure that the area is well-ventilated to minimize the risk of inhaling harmful fumes.

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How do you prioritize your tasks when given a large area to clean within a certain time limit?

How to Answer

The candidate should demonstrate their ability to manage time effectively and efficiently. They should explain their process of prioritization, giving emphasis to important factors such as urgency, impact on the business operation, or the degree of visibility of the area. It would be beneficial if they can provide examples from past experiences.

Sample Answer

When I have a large area to clean within a certain time limit, I always start by assessing the whole area first. I then prioritize tasks based on the urgency and visibility of the area. For instance, I would prioritize areas with high foot traffic or where customers frequently visit. After that, I move on to less visible areas or places that are not in immediate use. I also try to be efficient by grouping tasks that can be done together, like sweeping and mopping. This way, I can ensure that all areas are cleaned within the given time frame without compromising the quality of my work.



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What methods do you use to keep track of your cleaning supplies and ensure they are always in stock?

How to Answer

The best way to answer this question is to demonstrate your organizational skills. Explain how you keep track of your supplies, whether it's through a physical or digital inventory system. If you have experience using a specific inventory management software, mention it. Also, discuss how often you check your inventory, how you determine when it's time to order new supplies, and any strategies you use to ensure you never run out of essential items.

Sample Answer

I believe in staying organized and keeping a strict inventory of all my cleaning supplies. I use a digital inventory system to keep track of what I have and what I need. I check my inventory at the end of each week, and based on the level of supplies, I determine if I need to order anything for the coming week. If a supply is running low and I know it's heavily used, I make sure to order it in advance so I never run out. I also keep a small reserve of essential items, just in case.

Can you describe your approach to dealing with potentially hazardous waste or materials during cleaning?

How to Answer

In your response, you should demonstrate your knowledge of standard protocols for handling hazardous waste or materials. Show that you understand the importance of safety and that you are willing to take the necessary precautions to protect yourself and others. You can also mention any relevant training or certifications you have in this area.



Sample Answer

When dealing with potentially hazardous waste or materials, my first step is to always ensure I'm wearing the appropriate protective equipment, such as gloves and a mask. I would then carefully contain the waste in accordance with safety guidelines, ensuring not to mix different types of waste. Once contained, I would dispose of the waste in designated areas or containers. I also make sure to wash my hands thoroughly after handling such materials. In my previous role, I received training on handling hazardous materials, and I always follow these protocols to the letter to ensure safety.

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In your opinion, what is the most challenging aspect of a janitor's work and how do you handle it?

How to Answer

The interviewer wants to know your understanding of the janitorial role and how you handle challenges. It's important to mention a real challenge in this role and discuss how you overcome it. Focus on how you are proactive, determined, and solution-oriented.

Sample Answer

In my opinion, one of the most challenging aspects of a janitor's work is responding to and managing unexpected messes or spills. These can occur at any time and require immediate attention to prevent accidents or further damage. To handle this, I always ensure I have the necessary cleaning supplies on hand and prioritize these tasks to ensure safety. I also try to keep calm and composed during these situations because I believe that efficiency comes with a clear mind.

Tell us about a time when you had to adapt to a major change at work. How did you handle it?

How to Answer

The interviewer wants to know your adaptability and resilience to changes. You can start your answer by briefly describing the change you faced. Then, explain how you adapted to it, what actions you took, and the results of your actions. It's also good to mention what you learned from that experience.

Sample Answer

At my previous job, our management decided to implement a new cleaning protocol due to the pandemic. Initially, I was overwhelmed because it meant learning new procedures and using new chemicals I wasn't familiar with. However, I understood that it was necessary for everyone's safety. I



took the initiative to study the new protocol, ask questions when in doubt, and even did some practice runs to get comfortable. Within a week, I was able to adapt to the new procedures and even trained my colleagues. This experience taught me the importance of adaptability and continuous learning in maintaining a safe and clean environment.

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Can you explain how you would handle a situation where you have to clean an area, but there are people still working or moving around in it?

How to Answer

The interviewer wants to know how you would deal with distractions or interruptions while maintaining your productivity. Discuss your ability to work around people, either by cleaning in a way that doesn't disturb them, or by politely asking them to move if necessary. It's important to show that you can maintain a high level of professionalism and respect for others while still fulfilling your duties.

Sample Answer

From my previous experience, I've learned that communication is key in such situations. I usually approach the individuals in the area and inform them about the cleaning schedule. I try to negotiate a time that suits them and does not interfere with their tasks, or I suggest alternative spaces they can use while I clean. My goal is to ensure that I do my job efficiently without causing any inconvenience to others.

Describe how you would handle a situation where you encounter a difficult stain that standard cleaning methods are not able to remove.

How to Answer

The interviewer would like to know your problem-solving skills in the context of the janitorial job. Demonstrate your knowledge about various cleaning solutions and methods, as well as your ability to figure out the best solution in difficult situations. If you have faced a similar situation in the past, it would be good to mention it, and explain how you tackled it. Also, it's good to mention about seeking help or advice when required.

Sample Answer

In my previous job, there was a time when I encountered a stubborn stain on the office carpet that wouldn't come out with our standard cleaning solutions. I first tried to identify the cause of the stain, and then researched about different cleaning methods that could work. I found a different cleaning solution that was safe to use on the carpet and effective for the type of stain. I tested it on a small,



inconspicuous area to ensure it wouldn't damage the carpet, and then used it to successfully remove the stain. However, I also know that it's important to ask for advice when needed, so if I were to encounter a situation that I couldn't handle, I wouldn't hesitate to seek help.

What would you do if you noticed a co-worker not following safety protocols during cleaning?

How to Answer

The interviewer wants to gauge your understanding of safety measures and your ability to handle situations where others are not complying. You should show that you prioritize safety and are willing to take action when necessary. Highlight your communication skills, as it's important to address such issues respectfully and professionally.

Sample Answer

If I noticed a co-worker not following safety protocols, I would gently remind them of the importance of these rules for our well-being. If the behavior persisted, I would report it to my supervisor to ensure everyone's safety.

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Janitor Job Title Summary

Job Description

A janitor is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and orderliness of buildings such as offices, hospitals, schools, and residential areas. Their duties include cleaning floors, windows, and other surfaces, emptying trash bins, and performing minor repairs. They may also ensure the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems are working properly and perform outdoor upkeep tasks such as landscaping and snow removal.



Skills	Physical stamina, Attention to detail, Basic maintenance skills, Time management, Ability to work independently, Problem-solving skills
Industry	Building services, Education, Healthcare, Corporate
Experience Level	Entry-level
Education Requirements	High school diploma or equivalent. No specific educational background is needed, but janitors typically receive on-the-job training.
Work Environment	Janitors typically work indoors, though some may perform outdoor work. The job is physically demanding, with janitors spending much of their time on their feet, often lifting, pushing, or pulling heavy furniture or equipment. They may work during normal business hours or during the evening and weekend shifts for buildings that are not open 24/7.
Salary Range	\$22,000 – \$40,000 per year
Career Path	Janitors can advance to become building superintendents or building managers. With additional education or certification, they may move into related roles such as facilities management.
Popular Companies	ABM Industries, Servpro, CleanNet, Jan-Pro, ServiceMaster

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