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overcome the hurdle. This shows the interviewer you're eager to grow professionally and you're solutions-oriented, which also makes you an attractive candidate. This also shows the interviewer you have the mindset to be willing to learn and change. Examples of common nursing weaknesses our experts say they hear include: Paying too much attention to detail/Wanting to do everything at once/Spending too long on paperwork/Having a lack of clinical experience (for new grads)/Example Response for Nursing Weaknesses:I'd say I've been known to spend too long writing patient notes. On the one hand, my notes are thorough. However, I'm working on ways to better manage my time. In fact, I've recently started using a digital transcription program that allows me to be more efficient.What NOT to Do When Discussing Your Nursing Weaknesses in an Interview:Tip #1: Don't speak poorly of yourself.Although your interviewer may ask you to share some of your weaknesses, she isn't asking you to ruin your chances of getting the job. You shouldn't admit to being late to your shift regularly or spending time gossiping instead of looking after patients. You also shouldn't admit to fears that would flag you as someone who wouldn't be a good addition to the team.For example, you'll want to avoid saying that:You're scared to work with certain types of patients.You dislike handling bodily fluids.You try to avoid confrontation or stressful situations at all costs.Tip #2: Don't blame others.Once you identify a weakness, own up to it. It only makes you look bad if you blame someone on your team or management.Tip #3: Don't skip your plan of action.You'll want to focus on the positive and how you're working on growing to address the shortcoming.Finally, it's important that you play along when answering this question. Some people may not want to point out their faults, so they may describe their strengths and then say, "I have no weaknesses." But if you do this, you'll risk sounding pompous or, at the very least, not too self-aware. So, take this prep time to consider what career skills you'd like to improve and form a positive, professional response to this classic question.Other Examples of Common Nursing Interview Questions and Answers:Let's quickly cover some extra topics that you might be asked in a nursing interview. We've pulled together some example questions and answers you can use to plan your own responses.Getting-to-know-you questionsYour potential employer wants to hear details about you to get a sense of your background and personality. Focus on just you. There's no need to mention kids, family, or relationship status.Sample question: Tell me a little bit about yourself and your goals as a nurse.Sample answer:I've worked for two years as an RN at XYZ Medical Facility, specializing in neurology. During clinicals I developed a strong interest in neurology because I found the science challenging and found the patients and their families inspiring. I'd like to expand my knowledge of neuro, perhaps by pursuing a master's degree or attending specialized conferences where I can learn more about handling stroke and dementia complications. My ability to stay calm fits well with this specialization, too, especially with dementia patients. In fact, my supervisor recently gave me a shout-out during our shift huddle by mentioning how I showed patience while feeding a difficult dementia patient who was experiencing visual hallucinations.use the STAR method here as a way to structure your answer. This is when you respond by identifying the Situation, explaining your Task, stating your Answer, and sharing the Result. We give a few samples below.Sample question: Tell me about a time you displayed teamwork in front of a patient.Sample answer:A new nurse became flustered while setting up an IV pump for a patient who needed antibiotics. [Situation] She came out of the room to ask for help. [Task] I went in and hung the bags correctly while programming the pump. I let the nurse see what I was doing so she could learn, and I made small talk with the patient and his family the whole time because they seemed nervous about what was going on. [Action] I felt this was a great demonstration of teamwork because I was able to communicate with the other nurse, calmly teaching her how to administer the IV, while also showing leadership and capabilities to the patient. [Result]Sample question: What would you do if a critically ill patient isn't responding to the treatment he's receiving while under your care?Sample answer:One time my patient hit his call light in the middle of the night because he was feeling short of breath. I got a set of vitals and saw his blood oxygen was in the 70s even though he was on four liters of oxygen. I called the charge nurse to report this while running to get a non-rebreather mask, and then I called the respiratory team to evaluate him. Eventually the rapid response team was called, and the patient was rushed to ICU. Later that night the patient's doctor contacted my charge nurse to commend me for quickly placing the patient on a non-rebreather. I learned from this experience to address a patient need within my scope while simultaneously knowing which resources to call for help.Sample question: How would you change your communication style if a patient was not understanding you?Sample answer:When a patient doesn't understand something, I make sure to speak in short sentences with easy-to-understand words. For instance, when I'm scanning the medications a patient is about to take, I use the shorter, more familiar brand name for the meds and I don't go into details unless the patient asks. Also, when a patient doesn't understand something that only the doctor can explain, I simply let the patient know when the doctor will next be in the room. Solving communication problems with patients helps ease their anxiety.Sample question: How would you handle a conflict with a teammate?Use this type of question to describe your professionalism as well as your own personality. Craft an answer that proves you are easy to work with yet assertive and calm.Sample answer:I get along well with my co-workers but when a conflict happens, it's usually something like a doctor or nurse snapping at each other during a stressful situation. I was on the receiving end of a snippy remark once when several nurses, including me, were trying to hoist a large, confused man off the floor after he had fallen in the bathroom. It was easy to feel annoyed at the nurse who spoke inappropriately to me, but after the incident was over, I simply thanked her for her help. This prompted her to apologize for her behavior, and all was well. It's important to realize that we can easily say things we don't mean when we're in the middle of chaos, and then the situation can be resolved by showing grace and moving on.Interest-in-the-job questionsThe interviewer really wants to know why you think you are a good fit for the role. Be honest without mentioning HR topics like compensation or benefits. Instead, focus on the type of unit you are applying to, the hours, camaraderie with teammates, and any other positive aspects that prompted you to apply in the first place.Sample question: What interests you about this position?Sample answer:I'm excited to work on a Med Surg unit and learn about a variety of surgeries and illnesses. I believe this job is a great opportunity to use my nursing skills in several different ways by learning how to spot potential surgical complications and taking care of different processes like drips, drains, and mobility needs. I also prefer night shifts, so I look forward to possibly joining this team.Whether you're a nursing student, recent graduate, or seasoned pro learn how Berxi can help you and protect your new career with flexible malpractice insurance. Holly Kline, RN, BSN, nurse and writer-Stacy Doyle, PhD, RN, MBA, NEA-BC, FACHE, vice president of Ambulatory Services in the Department of Patient Care Services at Children's Mercy Kansas City, and a member of the Society of Pediatric Nursesnortonrxs Last updated on Feb 29, 2024. Originally published on Feb 14, 2019. More: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of Berxi™ or Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company. This article (subject to change without notice) is for informational purposes only, and does not constitute professional advice. Click here to read our full disclaimer The product descriptions provided here are only brief summaries and may be changed without notice. The full coverage terms and details, including limitations and exclusions, are contained in the insurance policy. 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