Some Common Interview Questions

General Interview Questions:

Tell us about your educational background and your experience.

What part of your past experiences and education background do you believe would make you an ideal candidate for this position?

Why do you believe you should be selected for this job position?

Why do you want to work for our organization?

Describe your ideal supervisor.

Describe your ideal work environment.

Describe your ideal co-worker.

What is your motto?

If we ask you to describe yourself in one word, what would it be and why?

If we ask your co-worker/classmates/friends/supervisor to describe you in one word, what do you think it would be?

How would your friends/co-workers/classmates/supervisor describe you?

Tell us about a situation in your past experience where there was a conflict between you and a co-worker; how did you handle the situation and what was the outcome?

What are your strengths?

What are your weaknesses?

What are your career goals for the future/where do you see yourself 5 years from now?

Finally, now that we've asked you so many questions, do you have any questions for us?

Describe your most rewarding work experience and your worst work experience and tell us why they are the most rewarding and worst experiences.

General Forensic Science-related Questions:

What is Forensic Science?

What is Quality Assurance?

If you are a QA Manager for a lab, what would you do to make sure that your lab achieves the goals of QA?

What is Quality Control? Why is it important?

Why would you like to be a Forensic Scientist/why would you like to work in Forensic _____?

What is a proficiency test?

What is a competency test?

What is the chain of custody? Why is it important?

What is a presumptive test? Can you give an example of one?

What is a confirmatory test? Can you give an example of one?

In your opinion, what is the most horrible thing a Forensic Scientist can ever do?

You received a piece of evidence and before you did anything with it you noticed that there was a big rip on the bag and part of the evidence on the inside could be seen through the rip. What should you do?

If you see that one of your co-workers is falsifying data in the lab, how would you handle the situation?

You are working in the lab and you think you might have switched/contaminated two of the samples. What should you do?

DNA-related Questions:

If you are a college professor lecturing to your students in a molecular biology class, how would you describe to them/what would you tell them about the process of going from a biological stain (such as semen) to a DNA profile.

A 37-year old man was found stabbed to death in his apartment. The body was found laying face-down, with the right arm hanging off the edge of the sofa in the living room. Assuming that you can only collect 3 samples from this crime scene to be processed, which of the following 3 samples would you collect choose?

Blood spatter on the wall
Blood from the bloody footprints leading from the living room to the outside of the apartment
Blood on the front of the victim's shirt
Oral swab samples from the victim's mouth
Blood on the back of the victim's shirt
Blood on the victim's hand
Swabbing of the handle of the knife supposedly used to stab the victim
Swabbing of the blade of the knife supposedly used to stab the victim
A piece of hair on the victim's shirt near one of the stab wounds
Blood found on the kitchen floor

What is PCR? Please describe the process and the materials involved.

Chemistry-related Questions:

You were given a small bag containing some unknown white powder to analyze. How would you go about analyzing it? Please describe the steps you would take and the instrumentations you would use. Please take into consideration the fact that you are only allowed to consume a limited amount of sample for your analysis.

Please choose one of the following analytical instruments/systems/methods and describe how it works:
GCMS
HPLC
CE
FTIR
ATR
SEC
Look at the ABC Classification of analysis methods

Can you give an example of an analysis method for unknown white powders that is destructive? Can you give an example of one that is nondestructive?

Computer-related Questions:

Please describe the general structure of a hard drive.

What is a message-digest? Why is it important in Forensic Science?

You were called in to help investigate a case involving underground distribution of child pornography through an Internet message group based in _____(whatever city you're in). The suspect was allegedly the host of the message group and had disseminated through this group for the past 3 months over 1,350 pictures depicting naked children involved in sexual situations. You were informed by law enforcement authorities after their initial survey of the suspect's house that the apartment contained the following items:

Computer monitor	Digital camera without memory card
Rolex watch	Television
DVD-RW player	Suspect's clothes and shoes
Cell phone	VCR
A footlocker filled with notebooks	Flatbed scanner
Inkjet printer	Network Router
Computer tower-with no hard drive	Burned CD-ROM discs in trash can
Xbox game console	

Assuming law enforcement authorities can only take 3 items to be examined in their Computer Crimes unit, which items should they take? In other words, which 3 items have the MOST probative value to this case?

It's good to know what these initials stand for (not an exhaustive list):

AABB

AAFS

ABC

ABI

ASCLD

ASCLD-LAB

CBD-IAI

FEPAC

FRN

IAI

MAAFS

MAFS

TWG

SWG