

# Interview Questions

## 1) Self-introduction

I am a 36-year-old senior project manager currently working for a top Internet company in China. I've been with the company for 12 years, experienced ups and downs in my career, and now I'm in a stable phase. Have been married for 8 years, have a great relationship with my wife, have a 6-year-old child, my life outside of work revolves around my family and although it can be compressed due to my 996 work schedule, I have done my best to balance it.

At present, I have basically been used to working for a long time, and there is some mental pressure, but the impact is not so great, only some hair loss, but it should not be seen. Even though I haven't sought any psychological help. My view of 996 culture is pragmatic - it's a trade-off between living and a higher wage level, and I've accepted it as part of my reality.

## 2) Personal Experiences with 996 Culture

### A) Can you describe a typical workday under the 996 schedule?

Well, normally I get up around eight for breakfast and get to the office around nine. My day is packed with meetings, managing projects, and a lot of coordination. I was busy until 9 p.m. I often eat dinner at my desk. And it is not necessary to leave work at 9 o'clock every day, sometimes earlier and sometimes need to work overtime, but generally finish around 9 o'clock.

### B) How has the 996-work culture affected your daily life and personal time?

It's pretty tough, honestly. There's barely any time left during the weekdays for myself or my family, so whatever personal time I have gets pushed to the weekends. It feels like my life is being chased by my work.

### C) Can you share any specific instances where the 996 culture significantly impacted your well-being?

In my opinion, the most troublesome thing is occasionally missing family activities because of work. Although I manage to schedule in advance most of the time, there are times when I have to miss birthdays and family gatherings because of urgent work. It doesn't feel good, and it's sure to create some tension at home.

## 3) Psychological State

### A) How would you describe your mental and emotional state while working under the 996 culture?

It's a bit of a rollercoaster. I've gotten used to the pace, but there's always this underlying pressure. It's like you're constantly on, and there's little time to switch off and recharge.

### B) Have you noticed any changes in your psychological health since you started working in this environment?

Definitely. I've become more resilient, sure, but also a bit numb to my own feelings, you know? It's all about getting the job done, and sometimes, you just don't process your own

emotions as you should.

**C) What specific psychological challenges do you face regularly?**

Keeping everything in balance is tricky. Stress can really affect you, and although I've always felt like I'm not that old, I've had some symptoms of hair loss. I don't usually have any problems, but sometimes I can't sleep because of late night anxiety.

**4) Coping Mechanisms**

**A) What strategies do you use to cope with the stress of the 996-work schedule?**

What I do is try to keep a regular healthy life, get into the habit of going to the gym, maybe two or three times a week, then leave the weekend for my family, and try not to let work disturb me on Sundays. I can only try to give myself some opportunities to relax in this way.

**B) Have you sought professional help (e.g., therapy, counseling) to manage work-related stress? If so, how effective has it been?**

Not really, I haven't felt it was necessary yet. But I wouldn't rule it out in the future if it starts to feel overwhelming.

**C) Do you feel that your coping mechanisms are sufficient to handle the stress you experience?**

They're okay for now, but sometimes it's like putting a Band-aid on a gunshot wound. I don't think this is a long-term solution, but I just don't think now is the time to worry about this, after all, the pressure of loans is still there.

**5) Support Systems and Interventions**

**A) Does your company provide any support or resources to help you manage stress?**

The company has relatively robust mechanisms in place, such as mental health days and resident counseling. But I don't think I need professional advice yet, and I hope I never have to (laughs).

**B) How effective are the support systems provided by your company?**

The company's psychological counseling is still relatively professional, after all, it is a way to prevent bigger problems, but it is always a little difficult to talk about, I might prefer to talk to my wife.

**C) What additional support or resources would you like to see implemented in your workplace to help manage stress?**

In my opinion, the working hours of the company have been relatively flexible, and there is no mandatory clock. The main pressure of working hours comes from the pressure of the project itself. As a project manager, I also must play a leading role, but I think the company is quite good.

**6) Views on 996 Culture**

**A) What are your overall thoughts on the 996-work culture?**

It's a trade-off between high salary and personal life. Or it seems to me that this in itself is a

trade-off between a good salary and family life, and it can be quite difficult for many people, but I'm OK with it.

**B) Do you believe the 996 culture is sustainable in the long term? Why or why not?**

No, it's not sustainable. It burns people out and could lead to serious health issues over time.

**C) What changes, if any, would you recommend improving the work culture in your industry?**

I haven't really thought about it, probably because I'm not in a rush yet.

Sherry Jiao