

HOW TO ANSWER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

This will normally be the first question you'll get asked in an interview. Here, the interviewer is looking to get a sense of what you're like as a person and get an overview of your experience and work history.

Keep your answers short and to the point, making sure you focus on the elements you really want to talk about. Be careful not to simply regurgitate the work history on your CV. It's important to be bright, positive, and relaxed to make sure you make a great first impression.

Now sit back, relax and let's go through the rest of these interview questions so that you become a perfect candidate for your perfect job. Good luck to all.

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2. What are your weaknesses?

The biggest mistake you can make with this question is to say that you don't have any weaknesses. The interviewer is looking to employ a human and not a robot, so avoid this answer as you risk looking arrogant. Same goes for dressing down a positive as a negative, e.g. "I'm a perfectionist" or "I work too hard". The interviewer is likely to see straight through this!

Use this question as an opportunity to identify something you would like to improve on. Identify a weakness, but then suggest ways in which you can resolve it. Employers are much more likely to respond to an answer like this as it shows that you are willing to invest time into your own professional development and are not complacent.

3. Why should we choose you for this job?

This question is a difficult one as it is basically asking you to blow your own trumpet, and say why you are better than the other candidates. However, there is a tactical way to do this so don't just dive straight in.

This question gives you the perfect opportunity to show why you are suited to the job. Bear in mind that it's likely that other candidates have the same or similar qualifications as you, so here you need to show what makes you different, and what skills you can bring to the role that maybe others can't.

4. What are your hobbies outside of work?

Employers will often ask questions about your personal life to get an insight into your personality and see how you'd fit in with the team. Although this question is relatively informal, make sure your answer is sensible.

If you're part of a sports team or community group, this is a great thing to mention as it shows that you can work in a team or enjoy helping others. If you enjoy reading industry blogs or watching webinars on the weekend, it's great to mention this too. But, if you don't do these things, don't lie. Cycling, watching the cricket or trying out new recipes are all good enough answers!

5. Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

This is one of the most typical interview questions, so it's important that you've thought about your answer. For this question, the interviewer is looking for an answer that shows you have goals and are ambitious. Be honest but realistic.

Avoid talking about money, or about starting up your own business as these are not the intentions your potential employers will be looking for you to have. Instead, put your ambitions into context within your role and the company, this will show the interviewer that you are committed and driven.



6. Why are you leaving your current position?

The worst thing to do when faced with this question is to speak about your current employer or colleagues in a negative way. This will make you look unprofessional, and alluding to rifts between you and your manager or colleagues will make you appear difficult to work with.

Instead, focus on what appeals to you about the role you're applying for and why you're looking to explore new opportunities. Your answer should reflect your aims for positive personal development.

7. What are your main strengths?

For this question, don't fall into the trap of reeling off a list of generic qualities. Instead, focus on 3 or 4 key strengths that make you suited to the role.

Give examples from your previous experience for each strength to demonstrate your capabilities to the interviewer.



8. Why do you want to work here?

This question gives you the perfect opportunity to show that you have thoroughly researched the company you're applying to. This is your chance to show that you have a good understanding of the role and what is required of you, explaining how this job will align with your personal career goals.

When answering this question, it's important to keep the focus on the employer and explain what you can do for them, and not the other way around.

9. What motivates you?

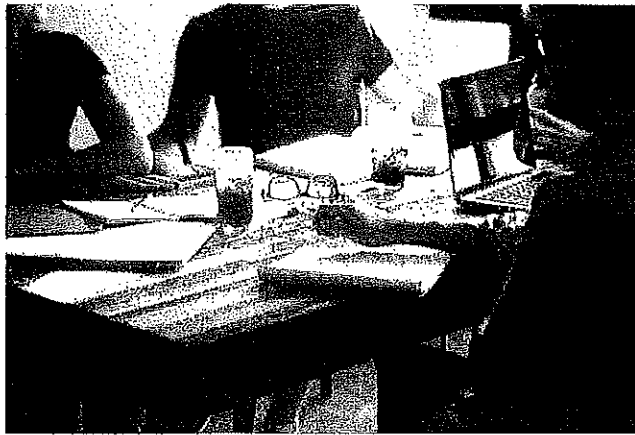
There's no right or wrong answer for this question as everyone's answer will be different. In this instance, the interviewer is looking to find out what makes you tick, and what you really value. Therefore, your answer needs to reflect this. Whatever your answer is, make sure you say why.

Be careful saying that money is what motivates you. Although it might be honest, it can lead your employer to worry about you leaving the company at the first sign of an opportunity with a bigger salary.

10. Do you prefer working by yourself or working in a team?

This question is a tricky one as both are hugely important. Show that you are aware of the benefits of both and that you understand that you need to be comfortable working in either scenario.

It's fine to have a preference, as many of us will prefer one to the other, but the key is to make sure you demonstrate that you can do both.



11. What are your salary expectations?

Usually you will have a good idea about the salary on offer so answering this shouldn't be too difficult. Suggest a range of pay you would be happy with, but do not name a specific amount.

Do your research into the industry and what other companies pay their employees for the same role to inform your answer before the interview.

12. Tell me about an achievement you are proud of?

This question is very popular with employers so you need to make sure that you have an answer ready. Generally speaking, the interviewer is looking for a work-related or academic answer, so it's best to avoid talking about your personal life unless you can relate it to work.

Although you may have a number of accomplishments you are proud of, you're best to choose one that you can speak about in detail. Explain what the situation was, the challenges you faced, how you dealt with it and the outcome in a concise and confident manner. Show

enthusiasm and speak proudly about your achievements to invoke a positive response from the interviewer.

13. Tell me about a challenging situation and how you overcame it

For this question, the interviewer is testing your ability to be resilient and cope under pressure. Your answer should focus on a work-related issue, explain clearly the measures you took to overcome the problem.

This question gives you the opportunity to demonstrate how you can use your initiative and act with integrity. Don't fall into the trap of criticising your company or colleagues and trying to present yourself in a superior light. This will come across as unprofessional and arrogant.

14. What do you know about the company?

Research, research, research! In order to answer this question well, you must show an understanding and awareness of what the company does. This includes the different service areas it offers, who their main clients are, and a good idea about the size of the company. You should also research the history of the business, find out when it was started and what the company has achieved.

It doesn't matter how competent and qualified you are for the role, turning up to the interview unprepared for this question can completely ruin your chances of getting the job.

15. What would your colleagues say are your best qualities?

The interviewer is looking to assess your relationships with your colleagues and how you engage with other team members. They're looking to see if you'll be a good match for their team. Avoid giving vague or over the top claims, this will dent the credibility of your answer.

Instead, prepare for this question prior to the interview. Ask your existing colleagues what they would say about you and think about examples you can use to back their comments up. Qualities that your future employers would want to see include; being positive, hard-working, dependable and easy to get along with.

If you have already left your position and do not feel comfortable contacting your old co-workers, think back to previous appraisals and use the positive feedback you received to form your answer.

16. What experience can you bring to this job from your previous role?

When it comes to this question you'll need to explain how your previous experience translates into this role and how it will enhance your performance. This should be fairly easy to answer if you're applying for a job which is similar to your existing role, as a lot of your previous experience should correspond directly. Ensure that you have specific examples you can use in your answer and talk about how you'd apply what you have learnt from previous roles.

The difficulty comes if you're switching from one industry to another, or if you're starting a new career path. If this is the case, focus on transferable skills that you can bring to the role such as being self-motivated, working in a