

How to Answer Common Interview Questions

Being interviewed is a skill, and if you practice that skill and prepare well, you should do a good job in any interview.

1. So, tell me about yourself.

Be careful not to give the interviewer your life story here. You don't need to explain everything from birth to present day. Important facts about your education, your career and your current life situation are fine. You do not have to disclose everything about your disability.

2. What are your career goals? Where do you see yourself in five years?

The interviewer wants to know if your plans and the company's goals are compatible. Let him/her know that you are ambitious enough to plan ahead. Talk about your desire to learn more and improve your performance. Be specific about how you will meet the goals you have set for yourself.

3. Why do you want to work at this Company?

This answer should be directly related to the last question. Any research you've done on the company (and you should always do this) should have led you to the conclusion that you would want to work there. Put some thought into this answer **before you have your interview**. Mention your career goals and highlight forward-thinking goals and career plans.

4. What is your greatest strength?

This is your chance to shine! You're being asked to explain why you are a great employee, so don't hold back and stay very positive. You could be someone who performs well under pressure, a great motivator, an amazing problem-solver, or someone who great attention to detail. Remember, the interviewer is looking for strengths that relate to work.

5. What is your biggest weakness?

If you are completely honest, you may end up giving a bad impression. If you say you don't have a weakness, it will not sound good because we all have weaknesses. This is a tough question because you want to sound truthful but not make yourself look bad. Do not just make something up. If you are asked this question, give a short, work-related flaw that you're working hard to improve. Example: "I've been told that I occasionally focus on details and miss the bigger picture, so I've been spending time each day looking at the complete project to check my overall progress."

6. Are you good at working as a part of a team?

You should always answer “YES” to this question. It is really the only good answer and the ability to work cooperatively with others is highly valued by employers. How can anyone work inside an organization if they are a loner? You may want to mention what part you like to play on a team. It’s a great chance to explain that you’re a good leader.

7. What are your hobbies?

The interviewer may be looking for evidence of your job skills outside of your professional experience. For example, hobbies such as chess or bridge demonstrate analytical skills. Reading, music, and painting are creative hobbies. Individual sports show determination and stamina, while group sports activities may indicate you are comfortable working as part of a team.

8. Tell me about some difficulty you have had with a coworker or boss and how you handled it?

The interviewer is testing you to see if you’ll speak badly about a previous supervisor or coworker. Simply answer this question honestly, remaining as kind as you can about who you are describing. Be careful to remain calm and not appear upset or angry when you answer.

9. So, explain why I should hire you. What makes you the best candidate?

Answers like “because I’m great” or “I really need a job” are not good answers here. This is the time to give the employer a list of your greatest talents and skills that match the job description of the job for which you are interviewing. It’s also good to avoid talking badly about other job candidates. Just focus on yourself and your own talents.

10. Finally, do you have any questions to ask me?

This directly relates to the research you’ve done on the company and also gives you another chance to show how eager and prepared you are to start the job. You’ll probably want to ask about benefits if they haven’t yet been discussed. A good generic question might be, “how soon could I start if I were offered the job?” You may also ask for some details about the duties of the job you’re applying for and how that job affects the rest of the company. Always have questions ready. This will be a great way to finish your interview. Also, have some questions ready to ask them about their company. Check on their website to learn more about them, their mission, customers, services, products, or locations, for example.

What NOT to ask... What do you pay? Can I wear jeans? How many breaks do I get? How long is my lunch break? Do I get a discount? How much sick leave and vacation time do I get? How often do you give raises?