

How To: Interview Questions and Answers

Tips When Being Interviewed

Q. What are your weaknesses?

Answer.

"What are your weaknesses" is one of the most popular questions interviewers ask. It is also the most dreaded question of all. Handle it by minimizing your weakness and emphasizing your strengths. Stay away from personal qualities and concentrate on professional traits: "I am always working on improving my communication skills to be a more effective presenter. I recently joined Toastmasters, which I find very helpful."

Q. Why should we hire you?

Answer.

"Why should we hire you?" by summarizing your experiences: "With five years' experience working in the financial industry and my proven record of saving the company money, I could make a big difference in your company. I'm confident I would be a great addition to your team."

Q. Why do you want to work here?

Answer.

Many interview questions and answers seek to evaluate whether or not a job is a good fit for a candidate. By asking you, "Why do you want to work here?" the interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you've given this some thought and are not sending out resumes just because there is an opening. For example, "I've selected key companies whose mission statements are in line with my values, where I know I could be excited about what the company does, and this company is very high on my list of desirable choices."

Q. What are your goals?

Answer.

When you're asked, "What are your goals?" sometimes it's best to talk about short-term and intermediate goals rather than locking yourself into the distant future. For example, "My immediate goal is to get a job in a growth-oriented company. My long-term goal will depend on where the company goes. I hope to eventually grow into a position of responsibility."

Q. Why did you leave (or why are you leaving) your job?

Answer.

One of the most critical job interview tips: Don't badmouth a former employer. So if an interviewer asks, "Why did you leave (or why are you leaving) your job?" and you're unemployed, state your reason for leaving in a positive context: "I managed to survive two rounds of corporate downsizing, but the third round was a 20% reduction in the workforce, which included me."

If you are employed, focus on what you want in your next job: "After two years, I made the decision to look for a company that is team-focused, where I can add my experience."

Q. When were you most satisfied in your job?

Answer.

The interviewer who asks, "When were you most satisfied in your job?" wants to know what motivates you. If you can relate an example of a job or project when you were excited, the interviewer will get an idea of your preferences. "I was very satisfied in my last job, because I worked directly with the customers and their problems; that is an important part of the job for me."

Q. What can you do for us that other candidates can't?

Answer.

Emphasize what makes you unique when you're asked, "What can you do for us that other candidates can't?" This will take an assessment of your experiences, skills and traits.

Summarize concisely: "I have a unique combination of strong technical skills, and the ability to build strong customer relationships. This allows me to use my knowledge and break down information to be more user-friendly."

Q. What are three positive things your last boss would say about you?

Answer.

It's time to pull out your old performance appraisals and boss's quotes to answer the question, "What are three positive things your last boss would say about you?". This is a great way to brag about yourself through someone else's words: "My boss has told me that I am the best designer he has ever had. He knows he can rely on me, and he likes my sense of humor."

Q. What salary are you seeking?

Answer.

When you're asked, "What salary are you seeking?" it is to your advantage if the employer tells you the range first. Prepare by knowing the going rate in your area, and your bottom line or walk-away point. One possible answer would be: "I am sure when the time comes, we can agree on a reasonable amount. In what range do you typically pay someone with my background?"

Q. Where do you see yourself in five years?

Answer.

Answers to this question go one of two basic ways. Candidates try to show their incredible ambition (because that's what they think you want) by providing an extremely optimistic answer: "I want your job!" Or they try to show their humility (because that's what they think you want) by providing a meek, self-deprecating answer: "There are so many talented people here. I just want to do a great job and see where my talents take me."

How to build a good rapport at an interview

- Always arrive on time for the interview.
- Maintain good eye contact.
- A firm hand shake.
- Greet with a warm and friendly smile.
- Do not sit down until invited to.
- Be relaxed and confident.
- Be polite and respectful.
- Try to find common ground between you and the person / persons interviewing you.

Tattoos

If possible always cover.

Jewellery

Keep rings, necklaces, earrings etc to a minimum.

What not to wear at an interview:

- Jeans.
- Trainers.
- Hooded tops.
- Dirty or stained clothing.
- Outlandish, bright or multi coloured clothing.

Your image

Through your personal appearance aim to create a professional and conservative image.

Look good... feel good

Dressing up in the right attire can also make you feel more confident during an interview.

Tips for men on what type of suit to wear:

- Go for dark colours, black or dark blue etc.
- Make sure it's a good fit.
- Always wear a white shirt.
- Wear ties that are plain coloured and not too loud.
- Have black or dark coloured polished shiny shoes.

Personal grooming

- Make up - women should not go over the top with their make up and ensure that it is appropriate for a business meeting.
- Hair - keep your hair combed, neat and tidy.
- Finger nails – keep these trimmed and manicured.
- Men should be clean shaven, or if they have beards and facial hair, then they should ensure that these are trimmed and neat.