

Common interview questions and answers

Tell me about yourself

- One of the most popular 'ice breakers'.
- This question may be used to assess your ability to think on your feet. An ideal response would briefly state your career history and what skills you have been able to develop. Explain how these skills could easily transfer to this new position.
- Be sure to stay focused on qualities that are career related unless specifically instructed by the interviewer.
- An ideal response for this question should be 1 to 2 minutes.
- *example interview response:*
 - "I have been in the customer service industry for the past four years. My most recent experience has been face to face consulting in the IT industry. One reason I particularly enjoy this business is the opportunity to connect with people. In my last job I formed some significant customer relationships resulting in a 20 percent increase in sales in a matter of months.
 - What I am looking for now is a company that values customer relations where I can join a strong team and have a positive impact on customer retention and sales."

Tell me about your ability to work under pressure

- To assist with your response give an example of a time in which you were able to achieve a desired outcome under constraints such as time or budget.
- *example interview response:*
 - "Throughout my career in the IT industry I have always been able to demonstrate a high level of control even when placed under pressure."
 - For example when employed by ABC Computer Help there were instances in which I received numerous requests for IT support. During these busy times was able categorize requests as either 'urgent' or 'non-urgent' and action them accordingly.
 - I have been able to develop a means of prioritizing tasks so that my workload remains manageable."

What is your greatest strength?

- Mention a skill or behaviour that is transferable. You may want to consider: your ability to work under pressure, ability to prioritize, problem solve, ability to focus on the big picture, leadership skills, etc.
- *example interview response:*
 - "My ability to get along with people has always been a great strength. It is something the I am proud of personally and professionally."

Tell me about a problem you had with a supervisor

- Danger - Don't fall for this type of question.
- Develop a sudden loss of memory. This is a test to see if you will speak ill of your former employer. Stay positive and spend little time here. Answer the question which indicates a level respect and loyalty.
- *example interview response:*
 - "In the entire time I have been in the workforce I cant recall a time in which I have had a misunderstanding with an employer.
 - I have been very lucky to have worked under such great people in my working life. If I have ever had a concern I have always been able to confine in my one up manager."

Do you have any questions for me?

- Your answer should always be yes.
- You may be perceived as disinterested otherwise. Remember that an interview is a two way process. It is a chance for you to see if this prospective company will live up to your expectations as an employer.
- Think of the interview as conversation. As with any type of conversation timing is important. You yourself will need to decipher when to ask what type questions along the way and not only when prompted with this question.
- Asking questions about the interviewer on a semi personal level can can be a great chance to also build rapport. This wont be applicable for every interview. Most interviewers like to talk about themselves. Consider: "What do you yourself like most about working for 'ABC Consulting'?"
- See also: [What questions to ask the interviewer](#)

- *example interview responses:*
 - "How did this position become available?"
 - "What do you consider to be the company's strengths and weaknesses?"
 - "Can you describe a typical day for someone in this position"

Do you consider yourself successful?

- Your answer should always be yes.
- Always aim to provide examples of your past and current career, family, social or community achievements which you feel comfortable sharing.
- No one would ever consider hiring someone who considers them self as unsuccessful.
- Answering this type of question promptly will also reinforce to your interviewer that you are confident and capable individual.
- Remember, factual examples that you can provide of your past will be an indicator of future for success.

Your resume suggests that you're over qualified for this role. What's your opinion?

- Your interviewer is wanting to asses weather or not you are here for the long term. Give assurance that you will be committed to the bigger picture and that the company can only benefit with well qualified staff.
- *example interview response:*
 - "I am looking for a fertile company in which I can see myself in the bigger picture."
 - "I can tell you that I believe I am well qualified for this position and I believe that a strong company needs strong staff."
 - "A growing energetic company can never have too much talent."

More questions to consider

- What are your primary responsibilities in your current role?
- What do you like best about your current role?
- Tell me a time when you dealt with a challenging customer / stakeholder. How did you handle the situation?
- Talking about you current/past workplace, how do you go about maximizing your own performance?
- Tell me a time when when you were faced with conflicting priorities. What was your approach?
- Why do you want this job?
- Why should we hire you?
- What qualities do you look for in a boss?
- What do you know about the company?
- What can you bring to this position?
- What would you look forward to most in this position?
- How does this job fit into your career plan?
- Describe your typical approach to a project.
- Tell me about your dream job.
- What would your colleagues / boss say about you?
- How do you manage a busy day?
- What do you like best about your current position?
- What motivates you?

- Why did you apply for this position?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- What do you know about the company?
- What do you believe are your weaknesses?
- Have you applied for other jobs?
- Tell me about an achievement that you are particularly proud of.
- Why have you had so many jobs?
- Where do you see yourself in five years time?
- Tell me about a time when you have encountered conflict in the workplace.

What questions to ask the interviewer

1. Use these questions as a guide only. Not all questions may be appropriate during your interview.

Consider the following questions

- How did this position become available?
- Can you describe a typical day for a person in this role?
- What are some of the challenges one is faced in this role?
- In this role how is one evaluated?
- What are the future aspirations for the company?
- Can you tell me more about the interview process?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the company as you perceive them?
- How long have you worked for <company name>?
- Where do you see the company (or department) heading in 5 years time?
- How will my performance be monitored?
- How would you describe the office culture?
- Describe the ideal candidate.
- What does it take to be successful in this role?
- Are there opportunities for additional job training / development?

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