

QUESTIONS GUIDE



COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

To best prepare for the interview, consider questions employers may ask and practice how you'll respond to those questions. Know the job description well and tailor your skills and experience when answering questions during the interview.

Interview question categories to prepare for:

Education	Experience & Qualifications	Work Ethic	Motivation & Goals	Interpersonal Skills
-----------	-----------------------------	------------	--------------------	----------------------

Here are some sample questions, along with suggestions on how to approach them:

- **What is your greatest strength?**
 - Give a specific example of how you use the strength and how it would apply to the specific position.
- **What is your biggest weakness?**
 - Identify something true, as there are always areas to improve, then state steps you're taking to improve it. Avoid 'red flag' weaknesses like "I'm always late" that would cause an employer to doubt your ability to do the job, or your fit with their organization.
- **Where do you see yourself in five years?**
 - Express your interest in this position and how it will allow you to grow within the company. Also state aspirations for future skill development, such as degree completion, that will help you be successful in this position.



QUESTIONS TO ASK

The interview is as much for you as it is for the employer.

Ask applicable questions throughout the interview to show your interest and engagement. This helps facilitate a professional conversation and a more comfortable interviewing environment.

- *Example: The employer asks about your social media knowledge and skills. You answer describing your professional experience with Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and then ask, "I've noticed your company is currently using Facebook and Instagram for marketing purposes. I've also found Twitter to be a successful marketing tool, and I'm very comfortable using it as well. Is this a platform you would be interested in using?"*

Prepare 2-3 questions to ask at the end of the interview. Here are some examples:

- What do you like best about working for this company?
- Could you please describe examples of: team collaboration within the organization? The work environment? Day-to-day structure?
- Within the first 30 days, what are the most important things you would like to see accomplished in this role?

QUESTIONS TO AVOID

During the interview, avoid asking about:

- Salary, benefits, time off or schedule flexibility, raises and promotions.
- Save these questions until after the company is convinced they want to hire you and you have been given an offer. Then discuss these items as part of your negotiation process, usually with HR. You want to display professionalism, and avoid asking questions that aren't applicable to the job.

BEHAVIOR BASED QUESTIONS

Employers want to picture what it would look like to have you as part of their team. For behavior based questions, prepare quality examples that follow this basic format:

P - Problem/Situation - State the circumstances, while remaining professional and brief.

A - Action - Explain your approach, and the specific steps you took in the situation.

R - Result - How did the situation end? How did you exceed expectations? What did you learn? Would you repeat this approach in future situations - why or why not?

Your examples should be specific, professional, and maintain confidentiality - avoid using client / company names, or being emotional. Examples should generally be 1-2 minutes long, with most of your time spent on the Result section.

Examples:

Tell me about a time when...

...you dealt with a difficult client/co-worker.

Explain how you remained professional and composed. Always speak respectfully of others.

...you worked in a stressful environment.

Recount how you remained calm, prioritized your responsibilities, and still met your goals/deadlines.

...accomplished a major goal, other than your degree.

Clearly outline how you set and accomplished the goal, why it was important, and how you'll apply what you learned from this experience to the position.

Make clear connections for the employer - tailor your experiences and what you learned to this specific position. If explained well, people will remember your stories and your character.

YOUR CONCLUSION

At the end of the interview they may ask, "Why should we hire YOU?" Here are some helpful tips for answering that final question:

- This is your final 'sales pitch' to the company - it should be as polished as your introduction.
- Re-emphasize key points from the interview - skills, highlights in your education and experience, characteristics, etc.
- Reiterate how you meet the qualifications. For example, what are the three most important things they need to remember about you?
- Remind them of how you fit within their company culture, mission statement, etc. Show off your company knowledge!
- Display your confidence and enthusiasm, but avoid being arrogant.
- Always end your time together with a smile, a thank you, and a firm handshake.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Assess the interview and write down:

- Names of committee members
- Questions asked and how you responded
- What went well and how you could improve
- Questions or items to discuss in a second interview



Follow-Up:

- Send a thank you email or card to the hiring committee within 24 hours with the following points:
 - Thank them for their time and consideration.
 - State your interest in the position and motivation to do it well, and briefly reiterate your qualifications.
 - Share your intent to follow up regarding their decision if you haven't heard back from them within the time frame they provided.