



Tough Interview Questions

General Questions

- 1. Tell me about you!**
Keep your answer to one or two minutes; don't ramble. Use your resume summary as a base to start.
- 2. What do you know about our company?**
Do your homework before the interview! Spend some time online or at the library researching the company. Find out as much as you can, including products, size, income, reputation, image, management talent, people, skills, history and philosophy. Project an informed interest; let the interviewer tell *you* about the company.
- 3. Why do you want to work for us?**
Don't talk about what you want; first, talk about their needs: You would like to be part of a specific company project; you would like to solve a company problem; you can make a definite contribution to specific company goals.
- 4. What would you do for us? What can you do for us that someone else can't?**
Relate past experiences that show you've had success in solving previous employer problem(s) that may be similar to those of the prospective employer.
- 5. What about the job offered do you find the most attractive? Least attractive?**
List three or more attractive factors and only one minor unattractive factor.
- 6. Why should we hire you?**
Because of your knowledge, experience, abilities and skills.
- 7. What do you look for in a job?**
An opportunity to use your skills, to perform and be recognized.
- 8. Please give me your definition of a.... (the position for which you are being interviewed).**
Keep it brief -- give an action- and results-oriented definition.
- 9. How long would it take you to make a meaningful contribution to our firm?**
Not long at all -- you expect only a brief period of adjustment to the learning curve.

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10. How long would you stay with us?

As long as we both feel I'm contributing, achieving, growing, etc.

Your Work Habits and Style

1. If I spoke with your previous boss, what would he say are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?

Emphasize your skills, and don't be overly negative about your weaknesses. It's always safer to identify a lack of a skill as an area for improvement rather than a shortcoming.

2. Can you work under pressures, deadlines, etc.?

Yes, it's a way of life in business. Be sure to cite examples of your success.

3. How have you changed the nature of your job?

Explain how you have improved the efficiency, productivity, and the like.

4. Do you prefer staff or line work? Why?

It depends on the job and its challenges.

5. In your present position, what problems have you identified that had previously been overlooked?

Keep it brief and don't brag.

6. Do you feel you might be better off in a different size company? Different type company?

It depends on the job -- elaborate slightly.

7. How do you resolve conflict on a project team?

Explain that communication is important, and that you would first discuss the issues privately.

8. What was the most difficult decision you ever had to make?

Try to relate your response to the prospective employment situation.

Salary Questions

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- 1. How much are you looking for?**
We know the client range on this position, which has been discussed with you. Answer with the salary that was submitted to the client for the position.
- 2. How much do you expect, if we offer this position to you?**
Be careful; the market value of the job may be the key answer, e.g., "My understanding is that a job like the one you're describing may be in the range of \$_____."
- 3. What kind of salary are you worth?**
Have a specific figure in mind...don't be hesitant

Personality Questions

- 1. Do you generally speak to people before they speak to you?**
It depends on the circumstances.
- 2. What was the last book you read? Movie you saw? Sporting event you attended?**
Talk about books, sports or films to show that you have balance in your life.
- 3. What is the toughest part of a job for you?**
Be honest. Remember, not everyone can do everything.
- 4. Are you creative?**
Yes. Give examples that relate to your current job.
- 5. How would you describe your own personality?**
Balanced is a good word to use, but remember the type of company you are interviewing at. Some companies may want someone who is aggressive and a go-getter.
- 6. Are you a leader?**
Absolutely! Cite specific examples using your current job as a reference point.
- 7. What are your future goals?**
Avoid, "I would like the job you advertised." Instead, give long-range goals.
- 8. What are your strengths?**
Present at least three and relate them to the company and job you are interviewing for.



9. What are your weaknesses?

Don't say that you don't have any. Try not to cite personal characteristics as weaknesses, but be ready to have one if the interviewer presses. Turn a negative into a positive answer: "I am sometimes intent on completing an assignment and get too deeply involved when we are late."

If You Are Leaving a Job

1. Why are you leaving your present job?

Refine your answer based on your comfort level and honesty. Give a "group" answer if possible, e.g. our department was consolidated or eliminated.

2. How do you feel about leaving all of your benefits?

Concerned but not panicked.

3. Describe what you feel to be an ideal working environment.

One in which people are treated as fairly as possible.

4. How would you evaluate your present firm?

It's an excellent company that afforded me many fine experiences.