

Job Interviewing Tutorial for Job-Seekers / Traditional Job Interview Questions

Here is a list of sample interview questions job-seekers can expect, especially at first, more traditional interviews. It's best to prepare answers to these questions, but don't memorize your answers so that you come off sounding like a robot; in other words, be prepared for these questions and have an outline or script ready, but don't worry about remembering your answers word-for-word.

Looking for some sample excellent answers to traditional interview questions?

Then go to our [Job Interview Questions Database](#), where we have traditional, behavioural, and mixed interview questions for both experienced job-seekers and college students and recent graduates.

How would you describe yourself?

Why did you leave your last job?

What are your long range and short range goals and objectives?

What specific goals other than those related to your occupation, have you established for yourself for the next ten years?

What do you see yourself doing five years from now? Ten years from now?

What do you really want to do in life?

What are your long range career objectives?

How do you plan to achieve your career goals?

What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?

What do you expect to be earning in five years?

Why did you choose this career?

Can you explain this gap in your employment history?

How well do you work with people? Do you prefer working alone or in teams?

How would you evaluate your ability to deal with conflict?

Have you ever had difficulty with a supervisor? How did you resolve the conflict?

What's more important to you -- the work itself or how much you're paid for doing it.

What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?

How would a good friend describe you?

Describe the best job you've ever had.

Describe the best supervisor you've ever had.

What would your last boss say about your work performance?

What motivates you to go the extra mile on a project or job?

Why should I hire you?

What makes you qualified for this position?

What qualifications do you have that make you successful in this career?

How do you determine or evaluate success?

What do you think it takes to be successful in a company like ours?

In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?

Do you have any hobbies? What do you do in your spare time?

Have you ever been fired or forced to resign?

What qualities should a successful manager possess?

Do you consider yourself a leader?

What are the attributes of a good leader?

Describe the workload in your current (or most recent) job.

Which is more important: creativity or efficiency? Why?

What's the most recent book you've read?

Describe the relationship that should exist between the supervisor and those reporting to him or her?

What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction?

Why?

Describe the most rewarding experience of your career thus far.

If you were hiring a job-seeker for this position, what qualities would you look for?

Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?

In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?

How do you work under pressure?

Are you good at delegating tasks?

What's one of the hardest decisions you've ever had to make?

How well do you adapt to new situations?

Why did you decide to seek a position in this company?

What can you tell us about our company?

What interests you about our products?

What do you know about our competitors?

What two or three things are most important to you in your job?

Are you seeking employment in a company of a certain size? Why?

What are your expectations regarding promotions and salary increases?

What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?

Do you have a geographic preference? Why?

Are you willing to relocate?

Are you willing to travel for the job?

Why do you think you might like to live in the community in which our company is located?

What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?

What have you learned from your mistakes?

What have you accomplished that shows your initiative and willingness to work?

Why is it important to ASK questions in an interview?

Your success in obtaining a job offer depends significantly on the quality of your questions and how you ask them.

Check out these Questions You Can Ask at the Interview.

Questions You Can Ask at the Job Interview

Job-seekers need to ask questions in job interviews; here's a list of some questions you can ask your prospective employer. Toward the end of most job interviews, the interviewer will give you the opportunity to ask questions. You must ask a least one question; to do otherwise often signals the interviewer that you don't really have any interest in the job or the company. On the other hand, do not ask questions where the answer is obvious or readily available -- or when the topic has already been thoroughly discussed in the interview. And never ask about salary and benefit issues until those subjects are raised by the employer.

Questions you might ask at a job interview:

- Can you describe a typical day for someone in this position?
- What is the top priority of the person who accepts this job?
- What are the day-to-day expectations and responsibilities of this job?
- How will my leadership responsibilities and performance be measured? And by whom? How often?
- Can you describe the company's management style?
- Can you discuss your take on the company's corporate culture?
- What are the company's values?
- How would you characterize the management philosophy of this organization? Of your department?
- What is the organization's policy on transfers to other divisions or other offices?
- Are lateral or rotational job moves available?
- Does the organization support ongoing training and education for employees to stay current in their fields?
- What do you think is the greatest opportunity facing the organization in the near future? The biggest threat?
- Why did you come to work here? What keeps you here?
- How is this department perceived within the organization?
- Is there a formal process for advancement within the organization?
- What are the traits and skills of people who are the most successful within the organization?

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Closing the Interview

"When do I start?"

That's about as aggressive as you can get at the close of the interview. It may knock the interviewer for a loop, and might appear to be overly aggressive, but some people think of it as "closing the sale." And for some people it has worked. For others, this approach may not be comfortable or have a negative same effect.

Whether you are aggressive, passive and polite, or somewhere in between, will depend on your personality, the interview situation, and the job for which you are applying.

Closing Points

Regardless of your style or how you choose to close the interview, here are some key points to keep in mind:

Leave your interviewer with the right picture of you. Think of at least five skills or traits you want remembered after the interview. Choose something "concrete." When you answer with, "I have great communication skills, and I am a hard worker," you will not stand out.

Example: "I have two skills that are distinctly different but that define my personality. I am a very good pianist and an excellent 'computer guy.' I'm known for my love of keyboards."

Ask if there is anything else you can provide. Examples include references, transcripts, background information, and samples.

Example: "Is there any other information that I can provide that would convince you that I am the right person for this job?"

State your interest in the position. Sound interested and tell what added value you can bring to the job.

Example: "From what you have been telling me about this position, and from what I know about your company, I know that I have the right mix of experience and education to bring value to this position. Based on past experiences I can 'ramp up' quickly and be on board with projects within the first few weeks."

Ask about the next step in the process. It's important for you to know the next step for follow up. Ask for the decision date, if possible.

Example: "I'm interested in knowing what the next step in the process is and when you will be making a decision so I can follow up."

Find out how to contact the interviewer. If you don't hear back, you will need to know whom to contact and whether the employer will accept calls to check the status.

Example: "I'd like to stay in touch and follow up with you in a week or two to see how the process is going and where I stand. How do you prefer that I communicate with you -- email or phone?"

Closing the sale is important, but your closing should be tailored to the position; your personality and interviewing style, and the interviewer. Keeping these things in mind will help you determine which closing is appropriate for you and the situation.

Job Interviewing Do's and Don'ts

Here are the keys to successful job interviewing. Follow these simple rules and you should achieve success in this important phase of job-hunting.

Do take a practice run to the location where you are having the interview -- or be sure you know exactly where it is and how long it takes to get there.

Do your research and know the type of job interview you will be encountering. (See types of job interviews.) And do prepare and practice for the interview, but don't memorize or over-rehearse your answers. (See our some of the best collections of interview questions.)

Do dress the part for the job, the company, the industry. And do err on the side of conservatism. If you're not sure, you should consider reading our article, When Job-Hunting: Dress for Success.

Do plan to arrive about 10 minutes early. Late arrival for a job interview is never excusable. If you are running late, do phone the company.

Do greet the receptionist or assistant with courtesy and respect. This is where you make your first impression.

Don't chew gum during the interview.

If presented with a job application, do fill it out neatly, completely, and accurately.

Do bring extra resumes to the interview. (Even better, if you have a job skills portfolio, do bring that with you to the interview.)

Don't rely on your application or resume to do the selling for you. No matter how qualified you are for the position, you will need to sell yourself to the interviewer.

Do greet the interviewer(s) by title (Ms., Mr., Dr.) and last name if you are sure of the pronunciation. (If you're not sure, do ask the receptionist about the pronunciation before going into the interview.)

Do shake hands firmly. Don't have a limp or clammy handshake!

Do wait until you are offered a chair before sitting. And do remember body language and posture: sit upright and look alert and interested at all times. Don't fidget or slouch.

Don't tell jokes during the interview.

Do make good eye contact with your interviewer(s).

Do show enthusiasm in the position and the company.

Don't smoke, even if the interviewer does and offers you a cigarette.

And don't smoke beforehand so that you smell like smoke. And do brush your teeth, use mouthwash, or have a breath mint before the interview.

Do avoid using poor language, slang, and pause words (such as "like," "uh," and "um").

Don't be soft-spoken. A forceful voice projects confidence.

Do have a high confidence and energy level, but don't be overly aggressive.

Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.

Do avoid controversial topics.

Don't say anything negative about former colleagues, supervisors, or employers.

Do make sure that your good points come across to the interviewer in a factual, sincere manner.

Don't ever lie. Answer questions truthfully, frankly and succinctly. And don't over-answer questions.

Do stress your achievements. And don't offer any negative information about yourself.

Don't answer questions with a simple "yes" or "no." Explain whenever possible. Describe those things about yourself that showcase your talents, skills, and determination. Give examples.

Do show off the research you have done on the company and industry when responding to questions. (See our Guide to Researching Companies.)

Don't bring up or discuss personal issues or family problems.

Do remember that the interview is also an important time for you to evaluate the interviewer and the company she represents.

Don't respond to an unexpected question with an extended pause or by saying something like, "boy, that's a good question." And do repeat the question outloud or ask for the question to be repeated to give you a little more time to think about an answer. Also, a short pause before responding is okay.

Do always conduct yourself as if you are determined to get the job you are discussing. Never close the door on an opportunity until you are sure about it.

Don't answer cell phone calls during the interview, and do turn off (or set to silent ring) your cell phone and/or pager.

Do show what you can do for the company rather than what the company can do for you.

Don't inquire about salary, vacations, bonuses, retirement, or other benefits until after you've received an offer. Be prepared for a question about your salary requirements, but do try and delay salary talk until you have an offer. (You might consider visiting our salary tutorial for more tips and strategies.)

Do ask intelligent questions about the job, company, or industry. Don't ever not ask any questions -- it shows a lack of interest.

Do close the interview by telling the interviewer(s) that you want the job and asking about the next step in the process. (Some experts even say you should close the interview by asking for the job.)

Do try and get business cards from each person you interviewed with -- or at least the correct spelling of their first and last names. And don't make assumptions about simple names -- was it Jon or John -- get the spelling.

Do immediately take down notes after the interview concludes so you don't forget crucial details.

Do write thank you letters within 24 hours to each person who interviewed you. And do know all the rules of following up after the interview.

Job-seekers must send a thank-you letter right after you've been on a job interview. At the very latest, send thank-you or follow-up letters by mail within 24 hours of an interview. You may even want to ensure that the interviewer has your thank-you letter in hand no later than end of the next day. What should be in a thank-you letter?

Downloaded from <http://www.cv-service.org>