

Interview Questions: How To Stump The Interviewer by David Richter

In the limited time an interviewer has with you, their mission is to know you and assess your worth, especially in relationship to the other candidates interviewed. Asking you questions is the way they accomplish that mission.

Since interviews are two-way streets, your time should be spent assessing the position, the company, the employees and anything else that could sway you toward, or detract you from, the job opening at hand. To accomplish this, you'll want to come to the interview prepared to ask your own questions. Keep in mind that although an interviewer may like you and want to see you continue through subsequent interview stages, you may decide that, based on their responses to the questions you have posed, the job may not be for you.

The following represents a sampling of questions an interviewer may ask. Preparing meaningful responses in advance will impress your interviewer:

- Tell me about yourself?
- How are you different from other candidates?
- Why should I consider you for this position?
- If hired, what will your greatest challenge be?
- Tell me how you would perform on the job, if offered?
- Why should I want to get to know you better?
- What qualifications do you possess that pertain to this position?
- Tell me about your professional background?
- What did you like the best about your most recent job?
- What did you like the least about your most recent job?
- Name your biggest strength.
- Name your biggest weakness.
- What are your goals - short and long-term?
- How do you set goals for yourself?
- What was your biggest accomplishment in your previous job?
- What motivates you to be successful?
- What was your biggest disappointment?
- Why did you leave your last position?
- How would your previous boss describe you?
- How would your previous subordinates describe you?
- What was a major problem you faced in your last job, and how did you deal with it?
- Describe a time you had problems with a supervisor, and how you handled that.

The following represents a sampling of questions you may want to ask. Knowing ahead of time the responses you require will allow you to quickly assess the viability of your pursuing the position further:

- Are you the one who will be making the hiring decision?
- Who will I report to?
- How much travel is involved?
- Where do you see the company headed?
- What are the company's short and long-term goals?
- How would you size up the company's position in the marketplace?
- What are the opportunities for growth here?
- What new products are being developed?
- How would you assess revenues, year over year?
- How would you describe the corporate culture?
- Is this a new position, or am I replacing someone?
- If I am replacing someone, what happened?
- What exactly are the responsibilities of the position?
- What are the biggest problems facing your company?
- What qualities are you looking for in a candidate?
- What is the next step in the interview process?
- What is your timeframe for bringing someone onboard?

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