

Tip Sheet

How to Answer the Most Common Categories of Questions

- *The Tell Me About Yourself Question* – often the opening question, this is a good opportunity to use your customized elevator speech.
- *The Strengths Question* – talk about key strengths that are specific to the job you’re interviewing for, using stories to illustrate those strengths.
- *The Weaknesses Question* – use the opportunity to demonstrate your self-assessment skills and your ability to take responsibility for your own growth and development.
- *The Where do You See Yourself in the Future? Question* – stress growth and development – not future job titles – in the context of the organization you’re interviewing with.
- *Conflict with a Boss Question* – avoid the trap, if you have never had a conflict, tell how you would handle it if you did.
- *The Why Should We Hire You? Question* – tell the interviewer what makes you unique; work from your pitch sheet; be specific about how you can contribute to the success of the organization.
- *The Ideal Job Question* – your ideal job should sound like the job you’re interviewing for.
- *The Do You Prefer to Work with Information or With People? Question* – tailor your response to the job and be sure to describe your strengths in each area.
- *The What Makes a Successful Manager? Question* – demonstrate your ability to work with different management styles (i.e. how you will get along with management) and how you will get the best from diverse individuals (i.e. how you would approach a management assignment.)
- *The How has your Education Prepared You? Question* – be as specific to the job as you can, providing concrete examples when possible.
- *Yes or No Questions* – avoid answering simply “yes” or “no” – elaborate, give specific examples, provide an opportunity for the interviewer to follow-up.
- *Organization Knowledge Questions* – make sure you’ve done your research and have thought through your fit with the organization and the position.
- *"Thought" Questions* – show that you’ve reflected on your strengths and motivations; avoid self-serving answers; strive to make your responses specific to the organization and the position.

- *Money/Salary Questions* – delay talking specifics until an offer is made; stress a balanced perspective that recognizes the total value of a position; let the interviewer know you trust them to make a fair offer.
- *The Why did you choose this career? or What are your goals? Questions* – use this as an opportunity to showcase your sound decision-making.
- *The "Choice of College" Question* – tell what makes your college experiences worthwhile from the employer's point of view; how will the organization benefit from your specific education; showcase your decision-making skills.
- *Work Experience Questions* – discuss the key transferable skills that you bring to the organization and how those skills will help the employer and fit the requirements for the position you seek.
- *Technical Expertise Questions* – emphasize your willingness and ability to learn any skills you don't yet have; assure the interviewer that you'll have no problems getting up to speed.
- *Off-the-Wall Questions* – keep your cool, show your sense of humor, and try to relate the topic positively to key qualifications for the job.