

Video 2.1 Tell me about yourself

In this video, we're going to focus on the question *Tell me about yourself*. This is a common question that you should expect at the beginning of every interview.

So, why does every interview start with *tell-me-about-yourself*?

Well, in the first place this question helps the interviewer break the ice with the candidate and transition smoothly from small talk into the actual interview. It's a great starting point that can shape the direction of the interview. The things that you mention in your self-presentation are going to help the interviewer plan the follow-up questions.

Another reason the interviewer asks you this question is to see how well prepared you are for the interview. That's why you'd better do your homework and prepare a short and focused introduction that will start the interview on the right note.

Let's look at some useful tips that will help you prepare a great self-presentation. Remember that answering a *tell-me-about-yourself* question you should focus on the needs of the job position. It isn't the time to talk about your hobbies and passions. So, read the job description attentively and choose the information about yourself that is relevant to the job.

Don't include too much detail in your story. Your self-presentation shouldn't be longer than two minutes. There's no need to repeat all the facts you have in your resume. You will have a chance to provide more information about your skills and work experience later in the interview when the interviewer starts asking follow-up questions.

Now let's focus on what to say within the 2 magic minutes you have. You can vary this a lot, but here is a simple structure that you can use.

So, start your self-presentation with who you are professionally. This may include your current position, most important responsibilities and experience relevant to the position. If you have no or very little work experience, you may want to say a few words about your educational background here. Remember that your introduction doesn't have to be long; a couple of sentences would be enough.

After that it's important to explain why you are qualified for the job. Say how your technical and soft skills fit the position and support them by examples. You can also mention here a few major accomplishments that you think would interest the interviewer.

Finally, say why you are here. This is your chance to show you're excited about the opportunity and stress your interest in the position. So, you should be light, enthusiastic, and positive to leave a strong first impression.

Now please move on to the exercises in the unit to practice answering the *tell-me-about-yourself* question.