

- (k) Social Skills
- (l) Honesty and Integrity
- (m) Determination
- (n) Professionalism
- (o) Inclination towards learning

### **JOB INTERVIEWS FAQS FOR FRESHERS**

As a fresher, you often experience a lot of anxiety before you go to attend an interview. The solution to this anxiety is good preparation. Here are some interview questions which you can expect to be asked during your HR interview with a way to answer them:

Did you face any difficulty in finding this place?

The interviewer usually asks this question to initiate the talk and put the candidate to ease. You can smile and answer this question by saying: "It wasn't difficult to find this place."

Tell me something about yourself.

This is the most commonly asked first question in any interview and the one which can set a ground for rest of your interview. Include details like: Your education background (beyond 12th standard), some information about your family – father's profession, mother's profession, number of siblings (no need to get into their educational details) and some information about your extracurricular activities or hobbies.

Why does this role interest you? Or why have you applied for this job?

The purpose of this question is to see if you are really interested in this job or you applied to this job just because you are jobless. Relate the job requirements with your candidature and explain why you believe you are a suitable candidate for this job.

Why do you think should we take you for this job?

This is another way of asking the last question. A company will want to hire you if you can add some value to it. So, focus your answer on your skills and how they can be helpful for the position you are being interviewed for. Also, tell them about your ability to grasp new things quickly, adjust well into a team and flexible attitude. These are the qualities that employers usually seek in a fresh graduate.

Remember to keep an example ready for each personal quality you offer.

Are you an Introvert or Extrovert?

Being on either of the extremes at work can be bad for you and the company. Your behavior at work should be as per the requirement. To answer this question you can say something like: I behave as per the requirement of the situation. For e.g. If I am representing the company at an event which requires me to talk to a lot of people, I become an extrovert while if there is some serious issue under discussion, I think quietly and deeply on it.

What is your greatest strength?

This is also one of the most commonly asked questions in any interview. Your answer to this question demonstrates your preparation for the interview. Your same set of strengths cannot be an advantage in every interview. This needs you to tailor make your answer as per the requirement of the position you are being interviewed for.

Before every interview, analyze the requirements of the role carefully and list out the qualities required to perform that role. Now, make a list of the qualities you have and match them with the requirements. You can offer these qualities as your strength for the role.

What do you want to achieve in the next 5 years?

This answer shows your ability to make plans for yourself, have an ambitious but realistic plan:

- Say you would like to acquire certain skills and move up the ladder
- If you are interested in Management, say you would like to take up a part-time course/full time course in x years time.

Would you be open to change your project/profile when required?

This is very important for a company, they want employees who are willing to change roles, to meet business demands, and so the typical answer here is "Yes". Say "I understand it will be in best interest of the business, if my manager wants me to develop my skills and take up another role."

What skills do you want to develop to succeed in this role?

Again talk about some key skills that are necessary for the role, this will show them that you are ready to learn and are aware of your shortcomings.

Tell them that you, as a fresher, have the ability but require formal training to enhance your skills for a professional environment

Are you planning to go for further studies?

This answer needs to be answered tactfully, they want to know whether you are going to stay for long or you are just there to use their training resources and then say goodbye in six month's time.

- If you are pursuing further studies, say so. Tell them why you want to go for that course
- If you are taking up a distance education course or a part time course, they should know, as you will need to take leaves when you appear for exams.

In addition to the general questions fresher graduates face in an HR interview, here are some typical questions which experienced people can face during the interview:

What makes you interested in this job?



If you can't add any value to the company, the interviewer will not be very interested in knowing how this job can offer you a career progression and how much you enjoy taking up new challenges. The best way is to keep the focus of your answer on how your skills, experience and personal qualities fit into the requirements of this particular position.

Why do you think should we take you for this job?

Analyse the requirements of the job profile well before you go for the interview. Relate your skills; experience and qualification with it and tell them these are reasons why they should consider you for this position.

If there are any new things that you are expected to perform in the new job you can say that every new job needs a person to do something new and you have an ability to grasp new things quickly. Back this up with an example from your last job.

What is the motivating factor for you at work?

You can say that competition and new challenges motivate you at work.

Why do you want to leave your present job?

The reasons for switching the job could be numerous. The best answer to offer for this question is to say, "for better prospects".

Now they can ask you another question, what do you mean by better prospects? To this you can say, better prospects in terms of experience, and exposure.

If you have been made redundant, put your words across very carefully. Your wrong words can give an impression that only you were the one whose position was made redundant, which hardly might be the case.

May be you can say something like, "Over last 8 months a lot of restructuring was going on in the company and 40 positions became surplus. One of them was mine but I have learnt a lot during my tenure at XYZ company and I am sure I can add a lot of value to a position like the one we are discussing about".

What is your greatest achievement?

Find an answer to this question from the recent past and focus on the qualities that were required to achieve it.

What qualities would you look for, if you were recruiting someone for this position?

The purpose of this question is to estimate your understanding of the position. Make sure that you have analyzed the requirements of the role before appearing for the interview. Focus your answer on the skills, personal qualities and experience you would seek in a person for this position.

You seem to be working with the same company since a long time. - Why?

Staying with the same company for too long may be considered as lack of ambition in the candidate.

You can put this negative thought to rest by telling the interviewer how you were adding value to yourself being in the same company. Discuss some different kinds of assignments you handled and their importance to the company.

You seem to have switched many jobs-why?

Too much job hopping gives an impression that the candidate is unstable and unreliable. If you have switched jobs very often you can say that you did it to broaden your experience.

You do not have all the experience we are seeking for this position.

The answer to this question lies in your analysis of the requirements for this role. If you have most of the qualities required for the role, you can highlight that and say that you understand every new job needs a person to learn new things and you are pretty capable to picking up new things quickly.

Back this up with an example about the new things you learnt at your last job.

How did you manage to attend this interview during your working hours?

The interviewer knows that you won't ask for a permission in office to attend the interview. You can say that you took an off from the office to attend this interview.

Did you think of changing your present job earlier? If yes, what do you think made you stay back?

It is possible that you might have thought about leaving your present job earlier but later decided to continue. Here, you also need to think about what made you think about changing your job in the first place. Now you can talk about the pros and cons of changing the job that went through your mind. You can discuss about the positive aspects of the job, any advancement opportunities you saw or any type of flexibility which kept you attached to your last employment.

Did you ever face a situation when your work was criticized? What did you do?

You can face moments when your work will be criticized but you have to remember that only those who work can make mistakes. The main purpose of this question is to see your attitude when you are criticized and how you deal with it. If you face this question and you have been in a situation where your work was criticized, tell a bit about it and then tell the interviewer the way you dealt with it - if you think that there can be a better approach to what you are doing, evaluate it and accept it. The most important thing is to remember that you do not lose your cool on hearing negative remarks about yourself.

If you have never lead in the past, how would you do it in this role?

If you know how to do the work and you have the right attitude, you can lead. Many times you will find yourself leading unofficially in the current role - it is more important to have the leadership traits. So, you can say that, I know the job well and I have the qualities which need me to lead here. So, I think I am ready to



move on to a more challenging and responsible positions like this.

What do you prefer working with figures, or with words?

The basic purpose is to check your analytical and communication skills. So, if you face this question, analyze the job requirement properly and frame your answer. However, in senior positions you would require a combination of both, so you can say that though I love to play with words, I know figures are an inseparable part of any business. So, I am quite comfortable working with them too or vice versa.

Are there any kinds of people you cannot work with?

The basic purpose is to check your level of maturity here and how well you get along with people. At work, you find different personality traits and with time you learn to deal with them. So, rather than saying that "I cannot work with people with this particular personality trait" focus your answer on some traits which even employers do not like. For e.g. People who are not team players, people who are not committed to their work, people who do not like to take responsibilities. The interviewer will also think that "I don't like to work with these types of people too."

Have you ever fired anyone? How did you handle it?

Being a boss means being ready to even part away with your most favorite people if they are not working in interest of business. So, this is more about your emotional quotient. However, it is important to deal with firing an employee in a proper way so that there's no bad feeling on either of the sides. If you have not fired any one, you can say that " Though I haven't fired any off till now but if I am faced with such a situation, I would get to the root of the problem, try to solve it, apply methods like job rotation where ever possible and if nothing works, I'll tell the person that for these reasons we need to part our ways".

Have you ever worked under pressure? Give example.

Pressure is an inseparable part of business. However, it can take different forms. At times, it will be the pressure of escalating your performance while at others; it could be the pressure of meeting the deadlines. The purpose of this question is to see, how you handled that pressure. So, mainly talk about what did you do to not let your focus dilute like drawing a proper plan to meet the expectations, prioritizing the right activities, starting and finishing them till end and staying dedicated to the final outcome.

If you think a work should be done in a particular way while the other person thinks that it should be done the other way, what would you do to resolve the conflict?

No doubt there can be different approaches to do a work. It is more important that you evaluate each of them and take the right one. So, if you are faced with this question, you can say something like, I understand that there could be more than one approach to do a thing. If I am faced with a situation as quoted by you, I'll evaluate both solutions and take up the one which is right and will get results faster.

The purpose here is to check your level of acceptance and adamancy.

If you are a team leader and one of your team member is not able to meet his/her targets on a regular basis. You discussed it with him and tried all measures to improve his performance in that role but nothing works. What would you do?

When faced with a situation like this, may be you can try to put that person to another job and if that also doesn't work you might have to fire them off. This is again about emotional intelligence and making practical decisions in favor of business.



If you face a problem with your own performance, what would you do?

The purpose here is to see if you are able to identify the problems with your own performance and take corrective measures. To answer this question, you can say something like, "If I face a problem with my own performance, I will try to estimate how big is the problem, what is causing the problem and then take action on each of the listed things."

### LEADERSHIP RELATED QUESTIONS

Business in the modern days has become very turbulent with the growing competition and fast developments in technology. It is of late understood that one man shows where it is difficult for the CEO to look after all the aspects of the business and people with the growing businesses. Leadership is encouraged at all levels in the organization and a certain amount of power & authority are shared so as to deliver the set targets and goals for the success of the organization.

Organizations not only look for candidates with the right technical skills and experience but also the driving spirits and the zeal that an individual possesses. The interviewers would focus on understanding behavior pattern and the professional approach the person follows to become a right cultural fit in their organization. The question "Tell us about yourself" would help in breaking the ice and proceed with the further discussion.

Here are some of the questions that can be asked in an interview to assess the skills of a person in various aspects like communication, decision making, problem solving, critical & analytical thinking, strategic planning and team management which are necessary for a person to be a leader.

What is leadership and how do you define a 'good leader'?

Leadership is all about influencing others and is an art of leading deliberately to create a result that wouldn't have happened otherwise. Leaders are tagged with power and authority who guide the team towards achieving the goals. A good or a great leader leads the team by being an example, inspires, persuades and develops personal connections that help in the success of the organization.

There are many styles of leadership. Which one do you follow to get the work done?

Changing according to the situations and analyzing the implications is very important for a leader. Sticking to a particular leadership style all the time does not work in any organization, be it autocratic or democratic. The order of the day is to wear different hats dealing with different situations. One should be autocratic at times when the targets are set by management and also when time does not permit any discussions. Similarly one can be participative and encourage ideas at the early project stages to firm up on the roadmap and fix the individual targets.

Leadership is all about taking risks. Share an instance where you have taken a big risk and proved to be successful.

**Example:** Our Company is a multinational technology service provider for various business majors in USA and Europe. The management had some proposals of bringing some onshore technology projects to India to reduce the cost though not very confident finding the suitable resources in India. I personally took lead to handle one project designing sensory devices for factory. The duration of the project was estimated to be 2 years by the customer where we had to start from scratch. Everyone felt that I was trying to take a big risk as if I was not successful, it would send wrong signals to the management for future decisions.

I worked closely with the customer and the in house HR team in identifying and training the resources for the project and lead towards the successful completion of the project.

How do you make the team members emotionally committed to the overall goals & priorities?

Team management is very important for any leader to achieve the set goals. The team should be aware of the macro picture of the project and what each every individual is contributing to. This makes the team feel enlightened and helps them understand how important they are for the accomplishment of the project. This helps in making the team emotionally committed to the goals. Conducting project review meetings and discussing the way forward ensures no one being lost in the

mid and motivates them to finish the tasks given to them on time.

What is your strategy in sharing the work among your team members?

One can understand the strengths and weaknesses of the each team member by working closely with them. The strategy then becomes simple in sharing the work such that the strengths of individuals are rightly tapped. Also providing continuous on the job training to work on the weaknesses to everyone and thus building a strong performing team.

What support and assistance do you provide to your team?

A leader can only gain confidence and respect from the team members when he/she does not mind getting into their shoes and lend a helping hand when required. Understanding the work of every individual team member and providing comfort and necessary support when they are stuck at some point is very important for success. In short the leader should become a shoulder on which the team can rely on when they are in trouble be it at work or in personal life.

How do you handle the situations like "One of your team members has not performed on the agreed tasks"?

Yes. Leading a team will not be a cake walk and at many instances people would not perform their tasks as committed due to various reasons. I have faced many such instances personally and it would be like nothing but firefighting. The strategy that I follow is to quantify work and share it with other team members and perform a close review.

You can illustrate a situation... During the last project, one of the team members X met with an accident and was hospitalized. The project deliverable being within the next 15 days everyone was totally occupied with their own work but knowing the fact that the project is incomplete without X's work. The entire team worked extra hours each day to both learn the work and perform. This involves a great amount of team spirit and my role as team leader became very crucial in coordinating the entire team and meeting the target delivery of the project.



A leader needs to be empathetic with the team members. Do you agree?

Yes. Empathy touches the soul of any individual. I feel it is merely misunderstood by many that being empathetic is being lenient. Empathizing with the problems one is facing consoles the individual and gives a feeling that people care for him/her. We spend more than 60% of our time at office and developing good relations with peers, superiors and subordinates is very important. Organizations will surely be benefitted with the leaders being empathetic with the team members.

Change is inevitable and there will be resistance for change; give us an example of one such instant where you handled change successfully.

Change is essential with the improving science and technology in the modern day world. But there will be resistance to move out of the comfort zone which is human psychology.

You can illustrate a situation where you anchored and lead the change. A narration for example, I faced a strong resistance when wanted to move from the existing Six Sigma methodology to a Lean Six Sigma methodology where both quality and process speed are taken care of. My team was reluctant and I had to persuade them a lot to get started with the new process. I had to wear the hat of an autocratic leader to get the work done as it is good for the organization in the long term. Even the team members who were resistant initially are happy now.

How good are you in time management and how frequently you work beyond working hours?

Time management is very important and drawing a line between office and personal time is very much required for rejuvenating the mind for fresh thoughts. In fact long working hours culture should not be encouraged unless there is a pressing need or a deliverable to be completed. Planning, setting deadlines and proper execution of the tasks becomes the key.

### **50 HR interview questions and answers**

**Assuming that you are selected, what will be your strategy for next 60 days?**

If I am selected for this position, I'll use my initial 60 days in understanding my role carefully in terms of the contribution to the business and increasing the overall profitability. I'll sit with my line manager and other juniors to understand what has already been done and what its impact has been. From there on, I'll formulate my strategy to growth in close conjunction with managers and see that it is properly implemented.

improve-performance-HR-interview.png

**How would you improve upon our product/ company?**

Since I'd be coming from an altogether new environment, I am bound to possess a new perspective towards everything here including the company, product, customers, environment, strategy etc. This will enable me to constructively question things which anyone else here might not do. This will help in improving the things and making the product & company better.

Having worked closely with product development team I understand how the research for product development is carried out and how is customer requirement analyzed; I'd be able to provide a value addition there too.

**Don't you think, you are overqualified for this position?**

You might feel that I possess more degrees than you require for this position. But, I believe that I grow everyday when I talk to my staff, customers and superiors. So, basically the learning process continues throughout the life – I don't think I am over qualified.

**Have you ever had a problem with your peer? Can you give us an example?**

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Yes, it happened once. I was quite friendly with a colleague of mine from the other department. While talking to him during the lunch hour, I casually told him about the new marketing strategy that the marketing team was thinking about. He mentioned it to his boss and that caused a lot of confusion between the two departments. This taught me a lesson that you must not discuss any departmental strategies with anyone from other department unless you have been authorized by your boss.

**I see, there's some gap in your work history. Why?**

Yes, I was feeling exhausted after years of non-stop work. So, I decided to take a break and spend some time with my family on a rejuvenating vacation. I am happy to have returned fully recharged.

**Can you tell us something about your previous boss?**

All my bosses possessed some skills worth learning. I have always tried to learn something new from them including my previous boss.

**Is there anything that you do not like about your last or current job?**

I was quite enthusiastic while joining my last job. Towards the end, the number of challenges and opportunity to grow further started diminishing. A challenge loving and growth oriented person like me doesn't enjoy this.

**Have there been instances, when your decision was challenged by your colleague or manager?**



Yes, there have been many such instances. I like people who challenge my decisions rather than following me blindly. This keeps me ensured that I am surrounded by thinking brains rather than just a set of dumb followers.

**When someone challenges your decisions, you are bound to rethink over it and the chances of reaching the best option are brighter.**

**If you are allowed to change one thing about your last job, what would it be?**

I have been working at a senior level since last many years. These roles have always needed me to make real time decisions. Sometimes the facts, figures and other information in real time cases are not complete & still we have to make a decision. In such cases, there exists a probability of making inaccurate decisions.

Knowing this, I usually run down my old decisions to see the outcome. It makes sure that I don't repeat a mistake ever again in future. While carrying out one such exercise, I realized that the product promotion strategy that I recommended would have been different, if I had had the complete data and figures but there was no way to get them in real time.

**How long can you commit to work with us?**

I like new challenges and a chance to grow. As long I keeping getting these, I don't think I'll need to switch over. I'd like to believe that this relationship lasts for many years. However, I haven't set a time limit as such.

**Tell me something about yourself. Why does this role interest you? Or why have you applied for this job? Why do you think should we take you for this**

**job? What motivates you at work? Why do you want to leave your present job or why did you leave your last job?**

**What is your greatest strength? What is your greatest weakness? What is your greatest achievement? Are you ambitious?**

**What qualities would you look for, if you were recruiting someone for this position? Are you speaking to some other companies? Or how is your job search going on? Which companies are you talking to? Are you ready to relocate? You have stayed for a long time with your last company-Why? You have switched many jobs-why?**

**Tell me about your responsibilities in your previous/current job. Which did you like most & why? Which did you like least & why?**

**What type of supervisor do you like best? Why?**

**What types of people do you like best & least? Why?**

**What type of supervisor do you like best? Why?**

**How would you describe yourself as an employee? What are your strengths?**

**What attracts you to this job with our company?**