

Slam Dunk Answers To The

Top 10 Interview Questions

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Sound Professional

Give Perfect Answers Everytime



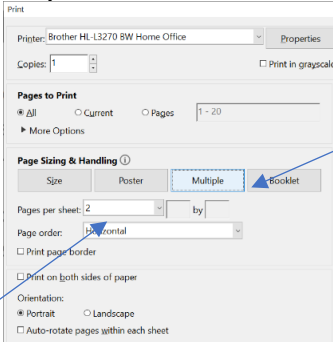
DON GEORGEVICH

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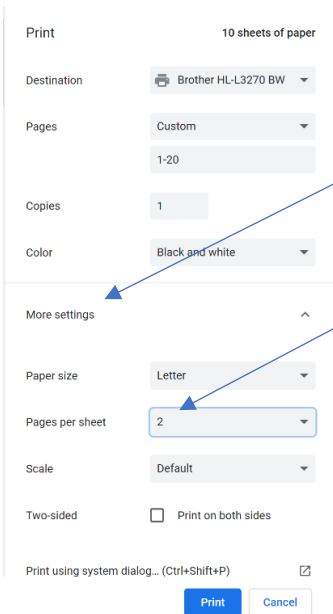
By Don Georgevich

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My dear friend,

It is my sincere pleasure to share with you this top 10 interview questions guide because I know it will help you to answer the most common interview questions on your next interview. So you can land your dream job. It will also help you improve your confidence so you feel less nervous.

When you learn how to correctly answer these questions, you'll feel more confident in your ability to answer other interview questions. When this happens, you'll feel better about yourself, your confidence will soar and interviewers will see you at your best.

Sharing this guide is the very least I can do for you and it is my hope that when you land your dream job, you feel nothing less than pure excitement and exhilaration. I hope that it helps put you on a fulfilling and rewarding career path, one that allows you to provide for yourself and loved ones for years to come.

Once you study the questions in this guide and the strategy behind them, you'll quickly grasp my answering technique and be able to apply it to other interview questions. This guide is not designed for you to memorize my answers, but more importantly, to give you the right interview language to use through a variety of examples.

As a result, you'll learn to think on your feet so when you are asked a question you're not prepared for, you'll be in stronger position to answer it.

Repetition is the mother of skill. To get the most out of this guide, practice your answers while saying them out loud, but don't memorize them. Instead, become comfortable with them so you can tell the same story different ways, but the end result remains the same.

Keep your answers short while aiming for a minute or less. It's okay to have some answers be 30 seconds long, others might be 55, and some might even be 90 seconds. But more than anything, be natural in your responses, direct, and to the point. Interviewers don't like it when

candidates babble on endlessly.

You own the free PDF version of this guide of which I'm certain you will find extremely helpful. Some people only give you half the answer and charge you for the rest, but not me.

Even though this guide is free, I'm not holding back on the content of the questions and answers inside. The actual value of this PDF guide is about \$35, but considering what this guide can do for you, you might place a significantly higher value on it.

As with most things that are free, they are loaded with adverts and advertisements to the point where they become a nuisance, but not this guide. Though I do have a few product suggestions inside, they are all good ones that can only help you go farther in the interview process and your job search.

Even though we've never met, since you downloaded my guide, I feel I have an obligation to help you pass your interview and land your dream job. I want you to feel that you received immense value from this free training and that I truly delivered on my promise to give you the best answers to the top 10 interview questions.

If I failed you at that, then I have done a great disservice. My sole purpose in sharing these top 10 answers with you is that they will help you to be prepared for some of the most common interview questions you will face in your next interview.

When I started interviewing for jobs many years ago, nothing like this guide was available and I had to figure out everything on my own. These were very difficult times for me. I went on interview after interview and failed every single one. Maybe you know how that feels.

I didn't know why I failed and there was no one who could tell me why. It literally took me nearly 10 years to figure out the right way to interview for jobs, but it didn't have to be that way. Had I had access to this simple little interview prep guide, I could have reduced my learning curve by 1000%, but I didn't, and instead I struggled for years.

But the good news is, you don't have to struggle like I did. You can compress years into days simply by studying this guide for a few days before your interview, or a few hours if you like waiting until the last minute.

But either way, this guide will cut your learning curve down to nothing and you'll be well-prepared to answer these 10 questions before your next interview.

My goal is nothing shy of helping you to prepare for your interview, but whether I helped you or failed to deliver on my promise, I invite you to share your comments and interview results using the TrustPilot link below.

<https://www.trustpilot.com/evaluate/jobinterviewtools.com>

I sincerely wish you the very best on your next interview and should we meet face to face someday, at an event or seminar, I would enjoy hearing your story.

Sincerely,

Don Georgerich

Introduction

No matter what kind of job interview you have coming up, it's likely they will ask you several of these questions, if not all of them. So, I want to share with you my best tips for answering these top ten interview questions.

These are the ten most common questions a hiring manager, recruiter, or interviewer will most-likely ask you on a first, second, or even third job interview. To make answering these top ten questions easy for you, I'm going to break down each question into all the ***Do's*** and ***Don'ts*** followed by the necessary steps to create your answer. My goal is to make it as simple as possible to answer these questions as well as, how NOT to answer them.

Since these are the most popular interview questions, you've probably seen or heard of them before, and you may think you know how to answer them. These questions have been around for a long time and interviewers have been asking them since people started interviewing for jobs.

Even though they are old questions; one thing has changed, the best way to answer them for the current times. Back in the 90s, your answer to any of these top ten questions would have been different than the way you would answer it today in the 2020s. And I'm going to show you how to answer these questions for today's difficult interviews.

There are many other questions you will be asked, such as competency, skill and experience questions, but these top ten are the root questions. You need to know these first, but you can be certain they will ask you more than ten questions; trust me.

Once I show you how to answer these top ten questions, you might want to prepare yourself for other difficult questions, too.

For those, I strongly recommend *The Complete Interview Answer Guide* which job seekers have been using to land their dream jobs for over fifteen years. This guide will provide you with a complete list of other common interview questions, such as behavioral, with a detailed breakdown of each question and multiple answers for each one.

The Complete Interview Answer Guide is available in eBook, audio/video or hard copy from <https://www.jobinterviewtools.com/>.

So, let's get started.

How This Guide Works:

Each question is divided into six sections.

Section 1: Introduction and meaning of the question.

Section 2: Guidelines **you should** follow.

Section 3: Things you **should not** do or say.

Section 4: Step-by-step framework to creating your answer.

Section 5: Don's personal advice for answering.

Section 6: Several sample answers.

Special Notice: Keep in mind that the following answers are examples. If I suggest or tell you to say or do something that does not hold true for you, then I don't intend for you to do it. I'll never tell you to lie or speak untruths. I'm simply giving you strategies and ideas that you may or may not be able to use.

Now that that's out of the way, let's move on to the Top 10 Questions...

Tell me about yourself

This is probably one of the oldest interview questions ever, but I guarantee it will come up at every interview for the rest of your career. It comes in different forms, like: Tell me about your background, or, how did you get started in your career?

It's not just for job interviews. I've been asked this question in sales meetings, luncheons, and even while shopping for a new car. How you answer it depends on the context in which the question is asked. Obviously, I'm going to cover it as it will be asked in a job interview.

Take your time and practice your response because your answer to this single question could easily set the stage for your entire interview. Giving a great response that resonates with your interviewer could easily tip the scales in your favor, even if you provide less than stellar answers for other questions.

The reverse is also true. A botched response could trigger a nervous streak where you never recover and deliver a poor interview performance.

Even seasoned professionals who have been interviewing for over twenty years still fumble their answer which is why you want to be prepared.

Interviewers generally want to hear about your journey into your career, how you got started, what you like about it and where you see yourself going. Stick to that framework and you'll be in great shape.

When you practice your answer, don't read it from a script. This is your story and you shouldn't need to read it off a piece of paper to tell it. Practice telling short and long versions in front of a video camera and then watch yourself to see how you look and sound.

DO THIS

- Talk about your journey in life and what brought you to your career.
- What was that initial spark that made you become interested in your career and what did you do to nurture it?
- Keep your answer to no more than sixty seconds. If they want to know more, they'll ask you. Just don't assume they want to hear your life story.
- Keep your answer related to your career and the position but tell the story of how you got started because your story will sell them on you. People never forget a good story.
- Practice your answer in front of a camera without a script and then watch yourself and make necessary corrections on delivery, pitch, tone and body language.
- Become comfortable saying your answer a variety of different ways so you sound natural.
- Create a long version of your answer and rehearse it until it becomes a part of you. Then create a short version.
- Having two versions gives you flexibility. If you only prepare a long version, you'll get stuck if your interviewer is short on time. In those instances, you want to give them the short version.

DON'T DO THIS

- Don't bring up unrelated work experience. It's pointless, unless you are changing careers and tying in transferable experience.
- Don't talk on endlessly (sixty seconds at the most).

- Don't sound rehearsed, which means don't memorize your answer.
- Don't explain every job and accomplishment you've had throughout your career.
- Don't give them too much information because it doesn't leave any opportunity for follow-up questions. Plus, too much detail will likely put them to sleep.
- Don't end your answer with a question back to the interviewer. Some people think this makes them sound smarter, but it doesn't. I think it's a poor strategy unless a follow-up question presents itself naturally.

Steps to create your answer:

Step 1:

Tell your interviewer how you got started in your profession and when you first realized you were interested in [what you do].

Step 2:

Talk about what you did to nurture that desire and what fueled your passion. This could be anything.

Step 3:

Mention where you went to school while touching on one or two relevant highlights or things you learned.

Step 4:

Gloss over one or two key jobs or internships where you continued to nurture your career. You can even mention a relevant key accomplishment and things you learned.

Step 5:

Wrap up your answer with what you like about your profession and where you see yourself heading. You can even tie that into the position you are interviewing for.

Don's advice for you:

- Practice your answer in front of a video camera without a script and cover these points:
- Talk about your journey and how you got started doing what you do.
- Talk about what you learned along the way with the jobs you've had. If you only have college experience, then talk about that or better yet, your internships.
- Talk about what you are looking for and where you see your career heading. Employers want to know what you are looking for so they can put you in a role that not only plays to your strengths, but your goals and desires.
- Get your answer down to thirty to forty-five or sixty seconds at the most.
- Record yourself and keep watching your video and polish your answer until you can deliver it flawlessly. When I say flawlessly, I don't mean from memory, but deliver it naturally. It should sound slightly different each time you say it.

Before your interview, carefully read the job description to discover their needs and if possible, weave in those elements into the fabric of your answer. That way, you'll sound exactly like the person they are looking to hire.

NOTE: The following sample answers are meant to serve as a framework to get you started with your story. Don't make your story fit these answers. Write your own answer and then refine it. Start by writing a long version of your answer and then rewrite it to simplify it.

Sample Answers to: Tell Me About Yourself:

Answer 1

I became interested in business at an early age having started my first business at age ten – it was a lemonade stand. I remember saving-up enough money to buy a new video game and it was at that moment that I knew I loved business.

From there, I had several other small businesses throughout high school where I made mini websites for students and teachers. After graduation, I went to Harvard to study business where I received my degree in business. Over the summers, I worked as an intern at Hearst publishing company.

Working in the publishing industry is fascinating. I really enjoyed the challenging, face-paced environment, which is something that appeals to me about the idea of working here.

Down the road, I'm hoping to be in a position where I'm responsible for growing a sales territory or expanding a department.

Answer 2

I grew up in a small town and I've always been interested in manufacturing and how things work. All throughout high school, I was in robotics clubs and placed in the top five state championship robotics competitions.

I pursued a mechanical engineering degree at Ohio State where I graduated at the top of my class. I interned at Tesla Motors in San Jose where I worked in their advanced electric motor division.

The things I learned at Tesla about electrical motors were light years beyond anything I studied in college and working there further cemented my desire to work for a company whose mission was closely tied to a greener planet.

Today, I'm looking to build on my knowledge of mechanical engineering and electric motor design, but with a company who is creating products that do not burn fossil fuels. And based on my past experience, I strongly believe I can add a lot of value to your company.

Answer 3

Since a very young age, I've always enjoyed helping animals. When I was eight years old, I found a baby rabbit that was without its mother and I nursed it to where it could be set free in the wild.

From that moment on, I knew I wanted to help animals for the rest of my life. During high school, I worked at the local animal shelter to help abandoned animals and I even took in more than my fair share of strays. From there I went on to become a veterinarian and received my degree from The University of California.

And today, I'm looking to work in a small animal hospital or petting zoo that treats strays and house pets. My plan is to expand my animal healthcare skills and eventually become an animal surgeon.

Answer 4

Ever since I was a little kid, I was good with math. I could always add and subtract numbers in my head. They just came to me, but it was until my sophomore year in high school that I enrolled in my first accounting class.

And wow, once we started using Excel and playing with numbers, I had an epiphany moment and it's like something clicked for me. I instantly fell in love with creating Excel formulas, charts and graphs.

I continued on with Accounting II and totally immersed myself in it. It was by far my favorite class. I tutored other accounting students and often stayed after school and worked with my teacher on more complicated formulas that weren't being discussed in class.

It was at that point I knew I wanted to be doing something with numbers for the rest of my life. I enrolled at Miami University in Ohio where I majored in Finance. During my time there, I was the president of the finance club where we were given a small amount of money to invest. We made some mistakes, but in my three years as the president of the club, we grew our portfolio by 6.25%. It was the best return the club ever recorded.

I had a few internships with Charles Schwab that really helped me cement my goals in finance and it was then I decided that I wanted to be a portfolio manager one day.

Today, I'm looking for a junior financial analyst role with a large financial corporation that has a lot of opportunity for growth, one with the potential that will allow me to work toward becoming a senior financial analyst and eventually a portfolio manager.

Answer 5

At a young age I became interested in business. I think it started when I sold candy bars for the Boy Scouts. I actually held the record in my troop for having sold the most bars.

During high school I loved my business classes and enrolled in all of them. I went to Ohio University to study business and interned as a business analyst with BMO Capital Markets and was later hired as a process specialist.

The role encompassed the responsibilities of a business analyst, tester,

and Operations/Process specialist. I loved everything about the role and could see myself going far.

After five years with BMO, I moved on to Citibank as a Project Leader to start a new support desk for the commodity desk. As at the time I joined, the department was undergoing a complete overhaul. I was brought-in to help streamline the QA processes and encourage the adoption of best practices.

Unfortunately, my department was later outsourced to Mumbai and I was laid off and moved to TD Securities where I worked as a Business Analyst and worked on regulatory compliance projects.

Then I moved on to Scotiabank as a project delivery manager where I was the liaison between the project team and business stakeholders. Due to COVID my contract was cut, and I moved on to the Employment Development Service of Canada as a business analyst.

And today, my goal is to help organizations drive innovation and implement strategic solutions to meet their technological advancement. This is one of the reasons I was drawn to this job. It seems to align with my core values and experience. I am very excited about it and I'm certain you will not be disappointed with me on your team.

DO YOU WANT EVEN MORE QUESTIONS?

Upgrade to the Complete Interview Answer Guide eBook because it includes over 140 interview questions and answers, just like these. You will also get over 40 behavioral questions because employers always ask candidates scenario questions and you need to be ready for those. Get started with the Complete Interview Answer Guide today.

<https://www.jobinterviewtools.com/>

Why did you leave your last job?

Unless you're still working, you are going to get asked this question. Even if you are working, they will ask you why you want to leave. But more often than not, if you're not working, chances are that you were laid off, terminated, or quit. You just have to let them know the reasoning behind why you are not working at your most recent job.

If you left on your own free will, then explain why you left and what your plans were in doing so.

If you were fired for performance reasons, a simple explanation is all that is needed, but make sure this will not affect the requirements for this new job.

If you were laid off, let them know several other members of your team were laid off due to the economy and slowing product sales. That way, it won't sound like you were the only one who was laid off. But warm that up a bit and put it into your own words so it tells a true story that makes sense.

DO THIS

- If you left of your own free will, tell them why you left and reflect positively on your former employer. Tell them it was a hard decision to make but you felt it was the right choice for you.
- If you were fired, be as brief as possible in your explanation and accept responsibility for what happened. Accepting responsibility shows courage and that you are taking ownership of what happened to you and that you deserved it.

Maybe you felt you didn't deserve to be fired but explaining that to a prospective employer is futile. Besides, you're not there to explain getting fired, but what you can do for them. Less is more

with the questions. Just own what happened to you and you'll be respected for it.

- If you were laid off due to downsizing or the economy then tell them so, as long as it's true.
- If you left your last job for greater challenges, then tell them your last job lacked growth opportunities. Tell them specifically what you were looking for in your last job and that your former employer was not able to provide a growth path in that direction.
- If you genuinely hated your boss and you want to share that experience with a prospective employer (**not recommended**), then share something that does not express hatred, but dissimilar views. Expressing a dislike of your previous manager will cause employers to think you'll do the same thing if they hired you.

DON'T DO THIS

- Don't bad mouth your past company, boss or co-workers. That's the surest way to fail the interview.
- Don't say that the pay was bad, and you wanted more money.
- Don't say that the hours were terrible.
- Don't give multiple reasons for leaving or getting fired.
- Don't say that you could not get along with your manager.
- Don't say that you hated your boss or that he was an awful manager.
- Don't lie if you were terminated but take responsibility for getting fired.
- Don't defend yourself or place blame on the employer.

- Do not – do not – do not – use this interview as an opportunity to vent about your last job or manager.

Side note: Many of the reasons above might be true for your situation. Your boss might have been a horrible person, but a job interview is not the place to share your displeasure. It's far more acceptable to say something good about your past manager or the company you worked for than something negative.

Steps to create your answer

Step 1

Identify one single reason you left and focus your answer on that. Mentioning multiple reasons will cause employers to doubt you.

Step 2

Make sure the reason you left would not be a concern for a prospective employer. If you left a position to pursue greater challenges, just make sure that your need for those greater challenges was met in the next position you accepted.

And if you quit your most recent job to pursue greater challenges, make sure that the current employer you are interviewing with is capable of meeting your desire for greater challenges.

Step 3

If you were fired from a past or current position, isolate the reasons to one specific incident and accept responsibility. Even if it wasn't your fault directly, you are far better to own what happened to you. If you don't, employers will doubt you.

Step 4

If you were laid off, it's likely because of economic reasons and corporate cutbacks. If it's true, it would be beneficial to say that you were the last one on the list to go and that your boss did everything he/she could to save your job because you were very well liked and a solid performer.

Wrap it all up and tell a simple story with one single reason of why you left or were terminated.

Don's advice for you:

- Remember, you are not there to defend why you were fired. You are there to talk about what you can do for them, so it's very important to keep your answer brief when answering this question. The more you talk, the less likely they are to believe your reasons of departure.
- If they want to know more about what happened, they will ask you, but don't volunteer too much information because it will make them more cautious about you.
- More than anything, if you were fired, accept responsibility for what happened because this shows courage and then explain that they were right and you were wrong, but that you learned from this experience and are a better person because of it.
- Getting fired is not some kind of scarlet letter you carry around with you for the rest of your career. Getting fired is part of life. How you interpret and share what happened to you makes all the difference.

Sample answers to: Why did you leave your last job?

Answer 1

The position I held previously was stagnant and there weren't any

opportunities for growth within the company.

I was looking to move into a Senior Engineering position, though we already had three Senior Engineers who outranked me. There wasn't enough demand for our products to expand the department, so I left to seek a position with a company that was able to offer me the growth I was looking for.

I believe that it's important to anyone in their career to keep growing, otherwise you get stagnant complacent.

I ended up accepting a position with Keystone Engineering where I was able to work on more complex engineering projects and now after seven years with them, they are changing their corporate direction to focus on large scale engineering projects overseas, and I'm not in a position to move having just settled in with a new family, so that's why I'm leaving Keystone.

Answer 2

Print media across the country is turning to digital so my employer had to downsize, which resulted in my entire team being laid off.

They were an old family-owned print media corporation that wasn't interested in going digital, and instead retired and closed the company.

I really enjoyed my time there, my manager, and the culture. I hope to find a similar work environment with opportunities to grow in the field of digital media management.

Answer 3

I'm generally very punctual, but I was let go from my previous job because I arrived late to work a few too many times because I had a sick family member to care for.

But now, my mom has since passed away and I don't have any other morning commitments, so my tardiness is no longer an issue.

It was completely my fault and I don't blame my former employer for letting me go. I actually never told them I was caring for my mother because I didn't want any special favors. But under the circumstances, I would have done the same thing had one of my employees continually arrived late for work.

This experience has opened my eyes to the importance of making the most of your time and respecting others by showing up on time.

Answer 4

In my job at Citi Bank I was let go for low sales performance. We had a monthly quota where I had to sign twelve new customers each month to a portfolio analysis review.

I struggled with this for several months, but I just could not make the numbers. Some of it was because I just didn't believe in the product we were offering.

So, this was evident to my manager and even though she tried to help me get my numbers where they need to be, I just could not cut it, so she let me go.

Use a response like this when the new job you are applying to is not the same type of job you were fired for.

Describe a difficult problem and what you did to overcome it...

This is a problem-solving question that tests your critical-thinking skills and your overall approach.

Although the interviewer asked how “you” dealt with or solved the problem, she really wants to hear how you worked with a team of people to tackle the issue. She wants to know how you approach problem solving and the steps you take toward a resolution. She also wants to know what you learned in the process.

This is a great opportunity to show that you’re a creative and capable problem solver. You should have at least two to three of these stories ready to share.

Keep your answer related to your work experience and avoid problems from your personal life.

DO THIS

- Prove you’re capable of handling any problem that may arise in your new role.
- Your story should be one in which you were put in a tough position where you analyzed and discussed a problem, reached a conclusion, and creatively solved the problem.
- Be concise by keeping your answer to less than one minute. If your interviewer wants to know more, she will ask you to elaborate.
- Talk about the people you had to work with, what was expected of them, and how you tied it all together to reach your goal.
- Your best-selling point in answering this question is a success

story. The story you tell should demonstrate that you have everything required to excel at this job.

DON'T DO THIS

- Avoid telling a story that does not cast you as the hero.
- Don't tell a rambling story that jumps from one story to the next.
- Don't tell her how you fixed a light bulb or un-jammed the copy machine or any other simple task.
- Avoid telling a personal story unless you have nothing else.
- Avoid telling a story that is unrelated to the job or your industry, otherwise, your interviewer will struggle to relate to it.

Steps to create your answer

Step 1

Write your stories on paper because the act of physically writing it causes your brain to store or write your stories in a way that's easier for you to recall in a job interview.

Choose two or three stories from your past where you were faced with a difficult situation or problem and write a headline for each one.

For example:

1. The time my co-worker quit and left a mess for me.
2. The time a customer didn't get their order.
3. The time I missed an important deadline that cost the company some credibility.

If you feel you don't have a good story to tell, I urge you to dig deep because I think everyone has experienced some type of resistance or

problems working a job. Even if you feel your story is insignificant, expand on it and weave in some drama to make it exciting and interesting.

If you never worked a job, then pull an experience from your college years or your personal life as a last resort.

I want you to choose three stories because this will give you more content to choose from when you're in the interview and the flexibility to adapt them to a variety of scenario questions.

Step 2

Expand the details of each story by creating a framework around each one.

When does the story start? What was the problem? What did you do about it? How did it work out?

As you begin filling in the details for each of your stories, you will recall additional details of what happened and the order of the events.

Leave space between events so as you recall additional details, you can add them in the right sequence.

By getting the details worked out ahead of time, or getting your story straight, puts you in a better position to tell your story in an interview setting.

Clean up your story so it flows by removing non-essential parts because you want your story to be easy to follow.

Step 3

Assemble your story using the STAR method. Explain the Situation or Task (not both), then discuss the Action you took, and finalize your answer by sharing the Result of what happened.

You have a good story when anyone can follow it. If you tell it to a

family member or friend who has no idea what you do for a living, they should be able to grasp what happened.

Step 4

Practice. Practice. Practice.

Have a long and short version of your story so you're prepared to give extra detail when interviewers want it, but always lead with a short version that provides a brief overview of the events.

Don's advice for you:

- Think about a time you had to work with difficult people to accomplish a project or task.
- If you don't have a story because you have little to no work experience, pull one from your college years, or even use a personal one.
- No story is too small. You might feel the problem you faced is insignificant and you might be right. But skipping the question is not an option. If you have to, stretch a small story into a long story.
- Set up your answer using the S.T.A.R. behavioral method where you describe the Situation or Task, the Action you took, and the Results you achieved.

Sample answers to: Describe a difficult problem you were faced with in your career and what you did to overcome it...

Answer 1

In my last job at ABC Corp., my team lead was promoted to a different division and I was asked to step into her role and take over as the new team

leader for the consumer products group. After being in the role for just a few weeks, one of our customers questioned some of the work we delivered.

After some investigating, I learned that two of my co-workers had been dishonest with our clients. They were over-charging them and even charging them for incomplete work. It was a terribly embarrassing moment for me and our company.

I took the complaint to my superior and he discussed it with both co-workers. They admitted wrongdoing and were terminated.

It was then my job to make things right with our client. I met with them on several occasions to review the entire project to make sure everything else was done correctly.

After much deliberating, we agreed to complete the work with a huge discount and vowed an event like this would never happen again. They were not pleased with the events but took us at our word and are still a client to this day.

Answer 2

Our company was scheduled to deliver a presentation on a new product to one of our best clients. This was a boardroom style meeting with their CEO and executive management team. I was the product manager and worked with our sales team who would be delivering the presentation.

On the day of the presentation, I was called into my manager's office who proceeded to tell me that Jim Lance, our presenter had laryngitis and was out for the week.

My boss casually told me to deliver the presentation. I wanted to tell him that I wasn't prepared for such a high-level meeting, but I just sucked-it-up and started cramming with only a few hours before showtime.

The big moment came, and we all sat down in the client's boardroom. I dove right into the material and I was very nervous at first, but as I eased-

in to the meeting, I developed a comfort level with my audience and started to believe that I could pull this off.

And I did it. After two and a half hours, our clients were thrilled with the presentation and products benefits. As a result, they signed the contract at the end of the day.

Answer 3

I was on the board for Case Western Reserve University. I had to work with John on funding allocation for a few projects, but his educational ideology was vastly different than my own.

Our opposing ideas created a lot of tension where discussions often became heated arguments. This left both sides feeling personally attacked, and the board struggled to approve certain projects. But I knew I had to find a way to work with John.

I realized that with my intention to have my ideas heard, I was closing myself off to listening to opposing ideas. So, I toned-down my reactions and tried to present my ideas without a defensive edge.

I made it a point to just listen to John and to allow him to be heard, completely.

As soon as I started listening more and disagreeing less, he responded in kind. It's like both of us realized we were on the same side and this immediately allowed the board to make quicker decisions that resulted in acquiring funding for much needed projects.

While the ideas of my colleague and myself were still often opposing, we became more adept at listening and calmly discussing each side of the problem.

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What are your greatest strengths?

Employers want to know what you're best at doing as it relates to the job you are applying to. The key to answering this question is to align your strengths to the requirements outlined in the job description.

Carefully read the job posting and extract what you feel is most important to them and then ask yourself how you see yourself fitting in and doing these things. Look for overlapping skills and abilities from within the job posting. When employers repeat certain skills or experience, that's an indication its highly important for anyone in this position.

You want to align your greatest strengths to their most critical needs. Whatever you are best at doing, give the interviewer the top two or three things you excel at as they're related to the job.

- Are you a good leader?
- Are you a skilled time manager?
- Are you a great communicator?
- Are you a detailed planner?
- Are you good at convincing others?
- Are you resourceful?
- Are you the type of person who can get things done on time?

DO THIS

- Research the job description to find out what they are looking for and leverage your strengths to match.
- If leadership is something they're looking for, talk about your experience as a leader and projects you have led successfully.
- Align your strengths to the requirements of the position.
- Talk about your strengths as a solution to their problems.

- Tell them why these are your strengths and how they became your strengths.
- Be prepared to give several examples of your strengths.

DON'T DO THIS

- Don't rattle off a list of strengths that are out of context with the job.
- Don't list personal strengths like being a good parent or that you keep a neat garden.
- Don't list strengths that you are unable to articulate through work experience.
- Don't tell them you don't have any or that you're not sure.
- Don't be modest because this is an opportunity to sell yourself and provide the interviewer with details on how you can do the job.

Steps to create your answer

Step 1

Carefully read over the job description to gain a deep understanding of the key strengths they are looking for in candidates.

Step 2

Ask yourself how and why you feel your strengths are aligned to their needs. And be honest with yourself.

If you're struggling to articulate your strengths, think back to some past projects you worked on or even problems you were faced with. What did you have to do to complete the project or solve a problem?

The things you did that pulled you through are likely your strengths.

Step 3

Write down several of your strengths and rank them from strongest to weakest.

Don's advice for you:

- Don't overthink this question and don't feel that you don't have any strengths.
- Everyone is good at something and you are, too. You might be very good at something, so good in fact that you undervalue yourself. When someone becomes so good at something, they tend to feel that it's not a strength because it's so easy for them.
- For me (personally), there are many things I can do well, but I tend to discount my abilities because these things come to me naturally. So, it's hard for me to see them as a strength. I'm sure you sometimes feel the same way.
- If you're still stuck, think about what your past co-workers or boss would say are your strengths. Even ask your co-workers what they feel you are best at doing. Their answer might surprise you.
- Being dependable might be one of your strengths, but since you undervalue it, you might not bring it up in a job interview, thus damaging your candidacy.

Sample answers to: What are your greatest strengths?

Answer 1

I'm very good at getting things done because I know how to create a plan. I always begin with the end in mind. When given a task I start by

reviewing the long-term goals of the project or task and then work backwards from there to build a plan or strategy.

This small effort provides clear insight on everything I need to do to accomplish the task. Beginning with the end has allowed me to be a very successful project leader in previous roles.

In my last job, I developed a bit of a reputation for getting things done and everyone always wanted me to lead their projects.

I didn't always used to be a good planner, but after working on so many projects, I became frustrated with myself for being disorganized so I forced myself to change. Now I feel it's so simple to do, yet so many people just don't know how to create a plan.

Answer 2

I take punctuality very seriously. I make it a habit to arrive ten minutes early to every appointment. Even today for this interview and though this is a virtual interview, I still arrived ten minutes early in the queue.

Early in my career I used to be late for meetings all the time until being late had cost me a huge opportunity with a client, so from that moment on, I was never late again.

Another strength I possess is making the most of my time. At the end of each day, I set clear expectations for what I want to accomplish the next day and dedicate every minute of my day to getting the most important things done and delegating everything else.

Answer 3

One of my best strengths is communication. I love people. I love talking to people and I love getting to know them. Not superficially, but for real. I genuinely care about other people's lives. In high school I was often called chatty Catty.

But as a software sales rep in elementary education, this helps me to

create lasting relationships with my clients in elementary schools, and as a result, they keep coming back to me year after year.

And because they know that I care about them, they tell all the other school systems about me and as a result, that's how I've been able to exceed my sales quota each year for the last ten years.

Why do you want to work here?

Your interviewer genuinely wants to know what you like about their company, its products, industry reputation or its culture.

What is driving you to want to work for them? Have you always had a lifelong goal of working at Google or Goldman Sachs?

This is your chance to express why you want to be a member of their team and most importantly the contributions you feel you'll make as a loyal employee.

This question helps weed out desperate job seekers who are just looking for a job, not a lifelong career.

Employers ask this question to make sure their opportunity will meet your own goals. They don't want to hire you for a job you'll be unhappy with or you'll quit to find your ideal job elsewhere.

DO THIS

- Tell them what you like about their business and why you like it. Is it their products, reputation, or services? Whatever it is, express your genuine interest.
- Telling them what you like is not enough, so you want to give them real reasons of why you want to work there.
- This is a great time to compliment them on their products or reputation but be genuine. Fake compliments sound fake.
- Dig deep to find out what it is that attracts you to them and express yourself.
- Be prepared with an answer that shares one simple reason of why you want to work there.

DON'T DO THIS

- Don't wait until the last minute to decide why you want to work there.
- Don't tell them you like their location.
- Don't tell them you heard that they pay well and have great benefits.
- Don't tell them because you heard it's a great place to work.
- Avoid telling them they were listed as one of the best places to work in America unless combined with other reasons.
- Don't tell them because your friends work there.
- Don't give them a long list of reasons, just one.
- Don't tell them you want to work here to gain some experience.
- Don't tell them you don't know.
- Don't hem and haw and say, *well, let me think about that for a minute.*

Steps to create your answer:

Step 1

Think back to what attracted you to want to apply to this job and write the reason(s) down.

- What about the job posting intrigued you the most?
- Was it the type of work itself?

- Was it their company mission?
- Was it tied to their industry or type of products?
- Was it their contribution to the environment?
- Was it their location or the customers they served?

Step 2

Connect your reason for wanting to work there to something personal or emotional (if you can). This will help to reinforce your answer.

Step 3

Think about what you are best at doing as it relates to the requirements for the job.

Put it all together so it tells a story.

Don's advice for you:

- Personal answers that make a connection to the company, their mission, or their culture, are the strongest.
- If you are applying to a veterinary hospital or animal shelter, you might tell a story of saving an animal from harm and how it made you feel good. And since that moment on you knew you always wanted to help animals.
- Answers with a deep meaning will allow you to leave a lasting impression in your interviewer's mind. With multiple candidates to compete against, this is one of the best ways to stand out from the crowd.
- Give them one solid reason for why you want to work there

instead of a compound reason, like: I want to work there because I like this, and this, and that. Just one simple and genuine reason will be much stronger and more memorable than five reasons.

- If you are struggling to come up with a good reason, keep in mind that your reason for wanting to work there can just be that you admire what they do.
- You might be a web developer who loves animals. So, you apply for a web job at an animal hospital. Your work or job does not have to be directly related to the mission of the company. Web developers are allowed to love animals and want to work in a place that loves animals, too.

Sample answers to: Why do you want to work here?

Answer 1

Because you create amazing customer experiences.

Several years ago, I purchased a pair of shoes from your website. There was a problem with my order and your customer service team bent over backwards to make sure I not only received the right shoes, but they upgraded my order to overnight shipping.

The person I spoke with on the phone was so kind and pleasant. We actually had more of a personal conversation where she said how happy she was to work here and that it was a warm and friendly place to work. She went on to tell me how much the company cared for its employees and that wowing their customers was the company motto.

Even though it's been a few years since my purchase, I've always remembered that time and said that if I ever get the chance to work there, I know I'll fit right in because their motto is one that I've been living by my whole life. There aren't a lot of companies whose entire focus and mission is to create amazing experience for their customers.

Answer 2

I went to medical school to become a doctor of sports medicine because I've always felt a connection to helping injured athletes because I was injured playing football in high school.

But I later found out that medical school is not only difficult, it's just not for everyone. So halfway through college, I changed my major to Computer Science and became a software developer. I'm very content with what I do now, and I just love designing and creating new software programs.

I've already worked as a software programmer in a few different industries – high tech and manufacturing, but now to have the opportunity to work as a developer in a sports medicine clinic makes me feel like I can still make a contribution by working in an environment that is dedicated to helping and rehabilitating injured sports players.

Answer 3

I not only admire what your company does, but being a new start-up really appeals to me because you are running this company with a very small staff. And to do that, that means the people working here are the best of the best, the A-Players.

These are the type of people that work well together and continually push each other to grow while taking care of any problem that comes up, whether it's their job or not.

I'm the type of person who enjoys wearing many hats and working with the very best people. I love the diversity you have here, and it really suits my ideal work ethic. Working here would allow me to feel like I'm making a real an impact with a team of like-minded people.

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Why should we hire you?

This question gives you a unique opportunity to prove you are the best candidate for the job. The key to answering it is to discover the needs of the employer for this role.

The only reason a job opening exists is because an organization or company has a need to accomplish something or solve a problem. That's it.

This is your opportunity to tell them why you are the best fit. If you don't completely understand their needs, how are you going to show them you are the best person for the job?

The key to answering this question can be found in the job description because employers leave all kinds of clues of what they are looking for in there.

Grab your highlighter and a printed copy of the job description and scour it from top to bottom. Read it over and over and over while looking for patterns of problems and needs while highlighting them.

Use different colored highlighters to mark different needs. For example, use blue for every time they mention a need for management, coaching, mentorship, team lead, or project management.

Use green for every time they mention budgeting, finance, sales or anything to do with money. So on and so forth.

Usually, you'll only uncover two or three actual needs. But the key to uncovering their real needs is in how many times they mention a problem/need – look for repeating patterns of those keywords.

If they keep writing statements that talk about management, leadership, and coaching, then you can assume that leadership is at the top of their list.

If they keep mentioning cost planning, finance, budget reports, and the ability to plan a budget, then you assume that the ability to plan a budget is important to them.

Now that you know how to discover their problems, you need to prove you can help them solve their problems by using this simple, connect-the-dots formula:

Let them know that you understand their [blank] because you did [blank] in your last job, and here is how you can do [blank] for them in this job.

Where [blank] is a placeholder for their problems/needs and your past experiences. Connect the dots to show them that you understand their challenges and how your past experiences have prepared you to help them solve their problems/needs and that's why you're the best choice.

Since you'll be competing against many other seasoned professionals, you need to articulate why your qualifications make you the clear choice for the job.

DO THIS

- Prove that you understand their problems and can help solve them.
- Talk about your understanding of their business, competitors, and challenges in the industry.
- Tell them how you have been successful in your previous roles.
- Let them know that in your last job you were faced with similar problems and how you solved them.
- When you connect the dots to demonstrate your understanding of their challenges, they will see you as the obvious solution to their problems.

DON'T DO THIS

- Don't give a vague answer.
- Don't tell them: *Because I'm the best.*
- Don't tell them: *Because you're hiring.*
- Don't answer their question with a question.
- Don't be arrogant with your answer.

Steps to create your answer:

Step 1

Print the job description and use highlighters to identify repeating patterns of their problems and needs.

Step 2

Put your resume side by side to the job description and draw lines from their needs to your experiences that you could use to clearly demonstrate you are capable of solving their problems.

Step 3

Put it all together using this formula:

1. Acknowledge their problems to demonstrate your understanding of them.
2. Talk about how you solved the same or similar problems in your last job, or whatever has prepared you to take on their challenges.
3. Talk about what you would do for them in this job and why hiring

you would be beneficial to them.

Don's advice for you:

- This is a great opportunity to sell yourself and explain why you are the best person for the job.
- Get your resume and put it next to the job description and draw lines from the job description duties and requirements to your resume. If you can't see correlations between your experience and their needs, how do you expect them to see you as a solution to their problems?
- Make certain you understand the needs of the position and talk about your experience as a solution to their problems – and that my friend is why they should hire you.

Sample answers to: Why should we hire you?

Answer 1

I know that reaching your target audience in a new industry has its challenges. In my last job, I was tasked with a similar problem because our target market was becoming too competitive and we were forced to compete on price alone.

So, I had to find a new market for our flagship product, or we would be out of business. After extensive research and a lot of trial and error, we succeeded in finding a new and younger audience for our products. It was a need we never anticipated and would not have realized unless our primary market dried up.

And by bringing me on board, I can save you months of trial and error and help you to solidify a place for your products in a brand-new marketplace.

Since I've already been down this road before, my experience with

tapping into new markets will accelerate your plans to establish a foothold in a new marketplace with a new audience.

Answer 2

From what I understand, the challenges you're up against with this new accounting system will be very time consuming and take a lot of work.

In my last job, we migrated from Quick Books to NetSuite and though there are automated migration scripts you can run, they don't work very well and there is a lot of customization that needs to be done. If I had to do ours all over again, I could do it in a fraction of the time.

Since I've been down migration path before, I can help you avoid all of the common problems people face when they migrate from one accounting system to another.

It's still going to take a lot of time, but I am more than willing to put in long hours to get the job done, and I think we can get your system migrated significantly faster than you originally planned because I really know my way around both of these systems. I also developed relationships with key support staff at NetSuite, so we'll be able to get issues quickly resolved.

At my last job I was known for being the first one in the office and the last one to leave, so I will stop at nothing to see this project through to completion and to get you up and running fast.

Answer 3

Because I can get things done.

One of the biggest problems you are faced with is a low customer service rating and a big factor in your lack of repeat business.

When I worked at Citi Bank, we went through a period where our ratings dipped, and our customers showed us by not being customers anymore.

I was tasked with revamping our customer service department and what I found was that our agents were not clear on what was expected of them.

I studied customer service strategies from other successful companies and applied those to our own team and within three months we turned things around, and our ratings improved significantly.

Your customer service department is very similar to the one at Citi Bank and I'm absolutely certain I can step into this role to help you turn things around so that your customers are happy as well as the agents who serve them.

It's a win-win for everyone – your business, your customers and your team.

Where do you see yourself five years from now?

Many job seekers are afraid of this question because they don't want to give an answer that is inconsistent with the current needs of the position.

To use an extreme example, if someone is interviewing for an entry level web programming position, but their five-year goals are to be a financial planner, then an employer would likely question their commitment to the role, and rightly so.

But at the same time and from your perspective, who wants to be doing the same thing for the next five years?

So, you have to find a balance in your response. You need to show commitment, so the employer knows you'll be committed to the role for at least a year, but at the same time demonstrate a logical plan or desire for growth. All the while, avoiding a response that is not aligned with the role.

The best and safest answer should be aligned to the logical progression of the needs of the position. That way, you're showing them you want to do the current job at hand, but as you get better at it, you would like to take on more responsibility and grow in that position.

Even though you might be well-qualified for the role, employers don't want to put you in a role where you won't be happy or can't see yourself growing in it. If they did, they would be doing a great disservice to you and themselves.

If you don't see a future for yourself in the role, you won't take it seriously and you won't put forth your best effort.

Note: This strategy is based on interviewing for professional jobs that are aligned with your career interests. There are instances where you might be interviewing for part-time jobs while you are looking for a full-time job, going to

college, or whatever the case may be. In those cases, the strategy may not be as helpful.

DO THIS

- Your answer should reflect a commitment to the role and the company.
- Show them your plan for the position and where you see yourself going in it.
- Show them how you'll do it and the resources you'll need along the way.
- Tell them why *these* are your goals.
- Since they are looking five years into the future, allow them to visualize you in this position five years from now by showing how you plan to naturally progress in the role.
- Be realistic with your five-year plan so that it not only makes sense but is attainable.

DON'T DO THIS

- Don't tell them your plan is to use this position as a steppingstone to advance your career or they'll feel like you are using them for your own personal gain.
- Don't give them an impossible or unrealistic five-year plan.
- Don't tell them you want their job in five years – that is far too threatening.
- Don't tell them you want to work here for a while and then move to another company that is your dream job.

- Don't tell them you're not sure or that maybe you'd like to do this for a while and see where it goes.
- Don't tell them that you want to do this job for the money until you get your big break to become a movie or recording star.

Steps to create your answer

Step 1

Ask yourself *what's the natural progression for the type of work that you do.*

Step 2

Ask yourself *what's the natural progression for the position you're applying to.*

Your answer to step 1 and 2 should be aligned. If they are not, then you need to ask yourself, why not?

Step 3

List at least three to five of your short-term career goals. They can be lofty goals, silly goals, logical goals, realistic goals, etc. The key is to write them down.

What do you see yourself doing over the next one to two years? If you don't know, then guess.

Ask yourself *why this short-term goal important to you.*

Step 4

List at least three to five long term career goals. These can be harder to come up with because it's not easy to see that far down the road. But write them down.

Ask yourself *why this long-term goal is important to you*.

You might be thinking that you have no idea what you'll be doing. But if you did, what would it be?

If you're really stuck, just do a Google search for "*what is the typical career path for a [insert your occupation here]*." At least you'll learn some ideas that will help stimulate your thoughts.

You might find a whole list of potential goals that you can say NO to. Knowing what you don't want will undoubtedly help you get closer to discovering where you want to be.

Step 5

Putting it all together. Pick out the short-term goal that resonates with you the best and combine it with the long-term goal that you feel good about.

Start your answer by describing your short-term goal and why that's important to you followed by your long-term goal and why that's important to you.

The employer should feel that you have put serious thought into where you see yourself going and why that goal is important to you.

Don's advice for you:

- Create a vision for yourself before the interview.
- If you can't express where you see yourself going, employers will struggle to visualize you in the role and will penalize you for your

shortsightedness by removing you from consideration for the role.

- Adjust your vision so it's aligned with each job you interview for. Your vision should not change, just the path to get there. Where each job will offer you a different path to reach your goal.
- Start with your short-term career goal(s) for the position and then move toward the long term and explain WHY that is the direction you want to move in. If you don't say why, it becomes difficult to figure out if you are just sprouting off a meaningless answer or if your heart is really in it.
- The framework for building your answer is: *"In the short term, I plan to work as a [blank] and focus on [blank]. Then as I progress in this role, I see myself working into [blank] area."*

[Blank] is a placeholder for position title and type of work.

Sample answers to: Where do you see yourself in five years?

Answer 1

I really love accounting and I always have. My short-term goal is getting my CPA credentials.

Over the next one to two years, I plan to continue working in accounting doing *[these kinds of things]*.

And then over the next couple of years I plan to take my CPA exam. Once I achieve that, then I can see myself working as an assistant financial controller and hopefully within a few years, grow into the role where I can lead the company in making important financial decisions.

I see myself creating financial maps and models to make forecasts and predictions on cash flow and product demands based on various economic factors.

I just love working with numbers and creating financial models. The best part of it is when you make a prediction based on a model you built, and the prediction holds true. To me, that's gold. There is no greater feeling or reward.

Answer 2

I graduated with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and I went down that path because I have a fascination with how things work. I don't want to be an engineer at a drafting board, but instead a pre-sales engineer to help customers understand how a certain technology or product can help their business.

Over the next one to two years, I see myself getting acquainted with your products while working as a junior pre-sales engineer under the wing of your senior engineers.

After that, I plan to be working directly with your customers to understand their manufacturing problems and how our products can be integrated with their manufacturing processes to improve efficiency.

Within five years I would like to be on your international sales team as a pre-sales engineer. I would like to be traveling all over the world and showing your customers how we can help them overcome their biggest manufacturing hurdles with your product suite.

Answer 3

I love leadership and I've been studying it for years by reading many books on the subject.

I see myself starting off as a team leader on this project and getting my feet wet over the next couple of years by implementing project plans, delegating responsibility and coaching and mentoring my colleagues.

Within three years I think I'll be ready to take my PMP (Project Management Professional) exam to become a certified project manager.

After I become certified, I hope to lead a few small projects over the next couple of years and then within five or six years, I would like to be in charge of some of your larger \$1M+ projects. Eventually, I would like to become a Senior Project Manager and work on some of your largest infrastructure projects both nationally and internationally.

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What is your biggest accomplishment?

Not to be confused with the question, *what is your greatest strength?* That's a completely different question.

Here's why: An accomplishment is a noteworthy high-profile task or project that you worked on or completed. Basically, you accomplished something, and it may or may not have been a result of your innate strengths.

For example, your strengths might be in managing people, but your biggest accomplishment was writing a paper that was published in Scientific America Magazine. Do you see the difference?

The accomplishment question is designed to allow you to express achievements. They may as well just ask you *what your greatest achievements are*. But the trick is, they want to know about it in a way that's related to the job.

For example, let's say you're an accomplished salesperson and you know how to sell copy machines, in fact, you're the best in the business. But let's say you're interviewing for a management job in the accounting department of an ecommerce business.

In the interview they ask, "*So Don, what are some of your greatest accomplishments?*" And I say, "*Well, I'm a really great copier salesman.*" They'd say, "*Yeah. So? What's that have to do with accounts payable or accounts receivable?*"

I'm using an extreme example to make my point, but the point is, I want you to think about your accomplishments as they are related to the position.

For some people, career changers or fresh college grads, expressing a related accomplishment might not be possible. In those cases, use the next best thing. For college grads, you can use your education as an accomplishment. This works better for a master's degree than a bachelors.

For career changers, try to use an accomplishment that might crossover to a different career or industry. Management and leadership related accomplishments work well for these situations.

DO THIS

- Talk about a noteworthy accomplishment that is aligned to the requirements for the job you are applying to.
- Treat this like a behavioral question and use the S.T.A.R behavioral method to answer it. Set up the [Situation or Task], discuss what you did [the Action] and then reveal the [Results] of what you or your team accomplished.
- It is best to use a work-related story, but if you're out of good stories, consider using a personal accomplishment as a last resort.
- Come up with a few accomplishments and be prepared to share them. If you have only one, you might get caught off guard if they ask for another example.
- Use academic achievements when they are related to the type of job you are applying to. If you are applying for a computer related position, you could mention your Master's Degree in Computer Science as an achievement.

DON'T DO THIS

- Don't think you need a grand accomplishment where you saved your last company from failure.

- Don't use a personal accomplishment unless absolutely necessary.
- Avoid using an accomplishment that does not cast you as the hero.
- Avoid using an accomplishment that is not related to your career or the job you are applying to.
- Don't walk into your interview having only prepared for one accomplishment.
- Minimize the use of academic accomplishments unless you have no other choice or it's relevant to the position.
- Don't wait until the day of your job interview to decide on an accomplishment.

Steps to create your answer:

Step 1:

Write down at least five accomplishments, no matter how big or small or unrelated to the job. Just write down the title of each one.

- Improved sales process
- Developed new product
- Improved new manufacturing process
- Gave a Ted Talk presentation
- Established new market for a product

This exercise will stimulate your mind so you can remember all the really great things you have done.

Organize your accomplishments from the greatest to the least great.

Step 2:

Next to each accomplishment, write down how achieving that or contributing to that event made you feel.

Did it make you feel great? Proud? Satisfied? Honored? Fulfilled? Grateful? Happy?

And then write down why it made you feel that way.

Step 3:

Write out the details of each accomplishment. What did you do to achieve it and how did you do it?

Step 4:

Put it all together.

Describe what you did, why you did it, the impact it had on your former employer, and the result.

Don's advice for you:

- Choose accomplishments from your career that led to meaningful contributions to your former or current employer.
- Choose accomplishments you enjoyed and that made you feel good.
- Choose accomplishments that are related to the job, your career, or the type of company with which you are interviewing.

Sample answers to: What is your greatest accomplishment?

Answer 1

In my last position, there was always a lot of confusion when we would install a new sorting system for our customers.

We install special equipment that helps our customers streamline their manufacturing and packaging lines, but our own internal project procedures to manage the installation were cumbersome and confusing.

Oftentimes we didn't know where we were in the project and this caused us to duplicate our efforts or even leave out certain things.

So, I created a color-coded system within our project management software to track our progress with each project. We applied special color tags within the software and on the assembly lines.

Doing this made it super easy for anyone to check the progress of the project and to instantly know what work was completed, incomplete or not started.

After a few months my boss was so impressed by the success of the program because it reduced our implementation time by 31% and it is now used company wide.

I'm really proud of myself that I was able to contribute in this way and even though it was almost two years ago, just thinking about it still makes me feel good today.

Answer 2

As a medical devices' sales consultant, I was able to land a huge account for our company, MedTech, that ended up being a game-changer for the company.

MedTech was hurting financially and was nearing a point where they would struggle to meet payroll. We were a small company with only fifty employees. We didn't have big bank accounts like our competitors, nor did we have their reputation.

We did however have a new medical product that allowed customers to monitor their vital signs and relay them to their doctor when they reached a certain threshold.

The problem was that hardly anyone knew about the greatness of the product and our marketing team didn't know how to get the word out to the public.

So, I started a different kind of campaign where I visited hundreds of doctors' offices and demonstrated this technology to them. They were all amazed at what the device could do and started recommending it to their patients and colleagues.

Within six months of knocking on the doors of doctors, MedTech had generated over \$17M in revenue. We became cashflow positive and completely turned the company around. Now we had solidified our place in the medical device market and rank consistently in the top five companies who produce this type of device.

This one meant a lot to me because it saved countless jobs at MedTech, my own included.

Answer 3

I recently graduated from the Ohio State University with a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering. This was a very long journey for me and one of the most difficult things I have ever done in my life.

It's undoubtedly my most significant achievement, but I had the opportunity to intern with Tesla Motors for two summers where I became exposed to some of the most advanced automotive technology that exists on the plant.

Getting the Tesla internship was ten times harder than getting accepted to Ohio State's graduate program. Over 250,000 students from all over the world had submitted applications, but only twenty-five were accepted to the program and I was one of them.

I got to work side-by-side with some of Tesla's most senior automotive engineers and though I didn't design anything, being in the presence of sheer engineering greatness solidified my decision to work in the electric car industry for the foreseeable future.

Being part of an industry that is literally changing the way humans travel is mind-blowing. And being in an industry that is reducing our carbon footprint is something I can be proud of for the rest of my life.

What is Your Biggest Weakness?

Sharing a weakness with an employer seems counterintuitive. When you're applying for a job, the last thing you want to do is tell the employer things you're not good at doing. It doesn't seem to make any sense.

But you have to think about it from the employer's point of view. The interview is an exchange of information to see if the possibility exists for a potential relationship or employment agreement.

They want to know more about you, your capabilities and your weaker points and you want to know the same about them.

You want to know if their environment is one where you'll get the opportunity to do your best work. You want to know if they have enough funding so your employment will be secure. You want to know the kinds of things they're working on that makes them a leader in their industry.

Essentially, you're asking them about their potential weaker points, too.

With all that being said, most people are afraid to share a weakness with a prospective employer because doing so might derail their chances for the job.

When I interview for jobs, I don't want to appear like I know everything, and I have no weaknesses. That's absurd. We all have weaknesses. A weakness is not a fault, it's an area where we're not great at something and usually it's because we don't enjoy that kind of work.

Be fair to yourself. You might not know how to fix cars, perform surgery, cook food, or read financial reports, but if those are not related to your profession, then they are not your weak points.

Weaknesses are areas you have studied or practiced but continue to struggle as you work toward mastery.

DO THIS

- When talking about your weakness, show steps you have taken to overcome it so it's not a weakness anymore.
- Talk about a weakness that is not related to the job, but not a personal one, like your struggles with eating potato chips.
- Talk about a weakness so that your interviewer sees it as a strength.
- Talk about a job-related weakness that isn't the main focus of the job you're interviewing for.

DON'T DO THIS

- Don't say you don't have any weaknesses, personal or otherwise.
- Don't tell your interviewer that you are perfect in your work.
- Avoid sharing a real weakness that is a key component of the job without a detailed plan of how you'll overcome it.
- Don't tell them your weakness is a lack of tolerance for people who ask stupid questions.

Steps to create your answer:

Step 1:

Write down five areas where you are weak. If you can't think of any, ask a friend or co-worker. I'm sure they'll be able to come up with a few.

Thinking of five weaknesses will stimulate your mind into exploring all of your weaker points.

Rank them in order of relevance to your career, not weak to weakest. Career related weaknesses would get ranked first and borderline ones (personal/career) ranked last.

Step 2:

Choose your first weakness and write down why it's a weakness and what you have done to work toward improvement.

Continue this exercise for the other four weaknesses. It's a good idea to have a few of these prepared ahead of time in case your interviewer asks you to share a second weakness. It happens.

Step 3:

Put it all together by wrapping a story around your weakness where you talk about an area that you have struggled in and the steps you have taken to improve it.

Don's advice for you:

- Don't say that you get angry because that's extremely negative and potentially hostile. Use words like frustrated, impatient, or upsetting.
- Throw your interviewer a bone and give them a real weakness so they can see that you're not infallible.
- Your weakness shouldn't prevent you from doing the job at hand.
- Your weakness should not demonstrate that you're incapable, but instead an area that is in need of improvement and your plan for it.

Sample Answers to: What's your biggest weakness?

Answer 1

I'm not a quiet person and I'm stimulated by the conversations I have with other people. In a nutshell, I can be overly talkative, which in some cases can be a negative for my co-workers.

Sometimes they want to chat and other times they don't. Sometimes I misread them and prattle on when they are not interested in conversation.

But in other situations, people appreciate it, namely the customers I work with. I have deep conversations with them, and we talk about all kinds of things.

I genuinely enjoy getting to know them and they realize that. And that's one of the reasons they love to do business with me, and why my sales figures are always in the top five of the entire sales department.

I am mindful of my co-workers and I certainly do not want to annoy them with unwanted conversation, so that is an area I'm working on. It is challenging for me, but I'm doing a better job of reading their body language of when they've had enough and want to move on.

Answer 2

Sometimes it's hard for me to leave my work at the office. I can get so wrapped up in what I'm doing for a client that it's hard to put it down for the day and detach until tomorrow.

Sometimes this is a good thing and I have break-through ideas for the client when I'm at home, but not detaching from my work can cause me to lose focus and get bogged down in minuscule details that don't move the project forward.

This is a bit of a double-edged sword for me. I love what I do, and I take it very seriously, but at the same time the passion I have for helping my clients can be self-defeating.

To find a balance that works better for me, I pour all my energy and focus into my biggest projects in the early morning and then use the noontime break to shift my focus to other projects that don't require my highest level of energy.

So far this has been working well. In the afternoon I'll work on other projects that are not as stimulating and this allows me to disconnect from my early morning projects. And as a result, I have been able to let go from my work and truly enjoy my personal family life at the end of the day.

Answer 3

I've been a team leader, project manager, and a manager. And sometimes I struggle with delegation, not always, just sometimes. You would think after being a manager for nine years that any manager would have this down, but it can make me a little uneasy.

I'm actually really good at assigning work to subordinates that I have been working with for a while, but if you've just been assigned to my team, then my comfort level drops when I have to assign project work.

This is usually a result of a lack of rapport. If I don't know that person very well or what they're capable of, then I'm reluctant to assign work to them. And, if that person has more experience than me, that can make me feel inferior in their eyes until I get a chance to know them.

To get over this hurdle, I've been making a concerted effort to spend more time with people who have just been assigned to my team. Once I get to know them and hear their stories of what they've done and what they want to be doing, it relieves all the tension I used to feel and now delegating work to them is much easier.

It's still an issue for me and probably will be for the rest of my career, but as long as I work toward getting to know them as soon as they're assigned to my team, the problem rarely presents itself anymore.

Do You Have Any Questions For Us?

This question usually hits job seekers like a ton of bricks and most of them simply say, no. Employers commonly ask it at the end of the interview, but experienced interviewers will ask it at the beginning in the form of, *before we get started, what can I tell you about this position?*

Either way, you need to be prepared with your questions and potential concerns about the position.

The worst response you can give is that you don't have any questions. It's bad because it signals to the employer that you're not very interested in this position.

From the employer's perspective, anyone who is seriously considering making a job commitment will have many questions. If they don't, then they are not serious about the job.

You should have a handful of questions already planned out before your interview. The best questions to ask are the ones that will help you qualify this company as a place you want to work.

You may not realize this, but you are interviewing them, too, and you have the right to tell them, *no thanks, I'm not interested* just as much as they do.

Avoid waiting until the end of the interview to ask your questions. Instead, ask them throughout the interview.

It might go like this: they ask you a question and you answer it. While you're on that topic, one of your questions might be related to that topic, so that would be the perfect time to ask it instead of waiting until the end of the interview.

Look at a job interview as a conversation. If you were sitting down to have a discussion with someone and they did nothing but ask you questions for sixty minutes, that would not be much of a conversation, would it? That sounds more like an interrogation.

Treat the job interview as an opportunity of discovery where you are trying to learn more about them, and they are trying to learn more about you. If one side dominates the conversation, then they've essentially done a great disservice to themselves. If that happened to you, you might not want to become employed by such an organization.

DO THIS

- Ask meaningful questions that will help you qualify them as an employer.
- Your questions should not only make sense but challenge them.
- Ask your questions throughout the interview instead of waiting until the end because you're more likely to get through all of them.
- Write your questions down on your notepad and take them in to the interview with you.
- As the interview unfolds, write down additional questions that come to mind.
- Ask questions about their goals for the position to demonstrate your sincere interest.
- Ask questions about the first-year accountabilities for the position.
- Ask questions about who you would be reporting to.
- Ask questions about how your performance will be measured.

- Ask questions about some of the things you discovered about the company through your research.
- Ask questions about the competition and potential challenges they face.
- Ask the hiring manager how they see you fitting in to their environment and if they feel you would be a good fit for this position.
- Ask about the next steps in the interview process.

DON'T DO THIS

- Never say that *you don't have any*.
- Don't ask questions about things the interviewer has already answered indirectly.
- Don't ask random questions for the sake of asking questions.
- Don't wait until the end of the interview to ask all of your questions.
- Don't Google a list of questions to ask employers and then ask all of those questions.
- Don't ask questions that are unrelated to the position.
- Don't ask about benefits unless you are wrapping up the interview or you're on the topic of discussing salary and benefits.
- Don't ask questions when you don't care about the answer.
- Don't ask questions when you already know the answer.
- Don't ask questions you found in this guide because I said they're

good questions to ask. Let me clarify. Just because I said it's a good question to ask does not mean it's a good question for you to ask. **Ask only questions that will help you decide if this position is right for you.** I cannot emphasize that enough.

Steps to create your answer

Step 1

Review the job description for this position in extreme detail so you understand everything they are looking for in the ideal candidate.

Pay close attention to specific requirements, potential challenges facing the position and key attributes they seek, like leadership or critical thinking, etc.

Step 2

Discover what is most important to you in this job. Write down five reasons you genuinely want this job and why those reasons are important to you.

Write down five reasons that would prevent you from accepting this job and why.

Write down five things about the position that you don't understand or require clarity.

For example, a reason you want the job is because it will help you grow in your career. It might allow you to work with like-minded people. It might be for a company whose mission is aligned with your own values.

A reason not to accept the job might be that it requires more than 20% travel. You might have to move to a new city.

The job posting might not have been clear on how you will be held accountable for your work or the type of work that you would be doing. If

there is a certain type of work you don't want to be doing and their description is vague, then you might ask for clarity.

Step 3

Now that you have thought through the job description in detail, create a list of questions that will aid you in deciding if you will accept this position, if it's offered to you.

Create questions around areas of uncertainty. Is the type of work described in the job description unclear?

Rank your questions in chronological order and aim to get the most important ones answered first because you may not have time to get all of your questions answered.

Write your questions on your notepad with additional notes of why those are important and take that list to your next interview.

Don's advice for you:

- Create a list of questions before the interview that will help you qualify this employer.
- Only ask questions that will help you decide if you want to work there or not.
- Make the interview a conversation and ask questions throughout the interview to avoid asking them all at once.

Sample answers to: Do you have any questions for us?

Answer 1

Can you describe your company culture and how it plays a role in the success of the company?

Answer 2

Can you describe the first-year accountabilities for this role and the metrics you would use to evaluate my performance?

Answer 3

Has a salary range been determined for this position?

Unless you are willing to work for free, don't be afraid to ask about salary, but this approach is better than asking how much the job pays.

If discussing salary makes you uncomfortable, then avoid the question. But to those of you who don't want to waste your time interviewing for jobs that pay less than you are willing to accept, asking this question early in the interview process will potentially save you a lot of time.

Answer 4

Since this is a customer service position, can you talk about the opportunities for advancement in that role?

Answer 5

In my research of your company, it seems like the future is part of your culture. What would you say is the future of the company and where do you see this company in the next five to ten years?

This question is better suited to newer companies because they have more growth opportunity than older companies, but you can make case either way.

Answer 6

What is the day-to-day routine like for this position? And if I were to come to work for you, what can I expect during the first thirty to sixty days?

Answer 7

What do you feel are some of the biggest challenges facing the person who accepts this position?

Answer 8

Who will I be reporting to and who will I be working with?

Answer 9

When do you plan to make a hiring decision?

Answer 10

Can you describe the travel requirements?

Answer 11

Do you know which projects I'll be working on and when are those expected to be completed?

Answer 10

What would you say is the most important quality an employee of this company should possess?

Answer 11

What type of advancement opportunities are there for someone in this role, say three to five years out?

Answer 12

I had a question about the job description. You mentioned that the ideal candidate must have a master's degree. Is that a requirement or just a preference? I don't have my master's, yet, but I will within the next year.

I generally don't like to call attention to areas where I don't meet their requirements, but if something is a potential concern, it's best to get it out in the open.

Answer 13

Can you tell me more about the type of work that I would be doing in this role? Is it new project work or is it maintenance?

Answer 14

If we were to come to an agreement and I were to accept this position, can you share with me how you see me fitting in around here and what would the next six months look like?

DO YOU WANT EVEN MORE QUESTIONS?

Upgrade to the Complete Interview Answer Guide eBook because it includes over 140 interview questions and answers, just like these. You will also get over 40 behavioral questions because employers always ask candidates scenario questions and you need to be ready for those. Get started with the Complete Interview Answer Guide today.

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I'm sad to say that this concludes our time together. I truly hope you found value in my guidance for each and every question because I enjoyed sharing my expertise with you.

Even though this guide is free, it was not easy to create. Over the past few years, I have put in nearly 300 hours and counting on this project. I keep improving it every year and tweaking the answers to make them even better.

If you found this guide helpful, I would like to invite you to try the Complete Interview Answer Guide with over 140 different questions and answers. You can purchase your copy from www.jobinterviewtools.com. I only recommend proven products I've created that will help you go deeper into a topic so you are well-prepared to land your dream job.

It is my sincere pleasure to serve you. I hope this is just the beginning of a long relationship and I wish you the very best on your next job interview.

Sincerely,

Don Georgevich

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