

PROJECT MANAGER

INTERVIEW

QUESTIONS &

ANSWERS GUIDE

FIRST EDITION

By Alvin the PM

Creator of AlvinthePM.com

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PROJECT MANAGER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & ANSWERS GUIDE

WELCOME!

Hey friend, Alvin here. Thank you for trusting in me and downloading my Project Manager Interview Questions & Answer Guide.

If you're planning to make a career switch to Project Management, or you're starting to apply to jobs to become a Project Manager (*Entry, Mid, and Senior-level PM Roles*), then you're in the right place!

When you're preparing for your Project Manager Interview, **it's all about how you sell yourself and craft each of your stories to build a connection with your interviewer.**

This guide will outline my own sample answers to several of the Top Interview Questions you may expect to see when you're interviewing for jobs related to Project Management.

These are the strategies that I've personally used to pivot and ace my own interviews so I could become an Engineering Project Manager, and I'm confident you'll gain a lot of value out of this!

Simply put, this is the Question & Answer Guide I wish I had when I was applying for jobs several years ago to be a Project Manager.

Brief disclaimer – *if you follow my interviewing tips, you can certainly impress your interviewers and craft your stories so that you can sell your personal brand and position yourself to be the best candidate for the job you're applying for.*

The first goal is to read through these questions. Use this as inspiration to craft your own responses to each of these sample interview questions. Once you've done that, start practicing your answers and preparing for your interview.

And, don't forget... make sure your resume is polished and refined so that it speaks project management lingo and the keywords related to the Job Description.

Sounds good? Cool, let's get started!

Good luck,
Alvin



Question 1. Tell me about yourself.

Alvin's Sample Answer:

"My name's Alvin and I graduated with my Engineering Degree from the University of California San Diego. I'm a Certified PMP Project Manager, and a Professional Scrum Master, with over 10 years of project management experience, with implementing Agile and Waterfall projects in the software, hardware, and product focused domains.

From my time at Company A, I've managed new product launch initiatives and led a global team of more than 15 team members to launch our product to market on-time within 3 years, with a budget of \$1M.

My experience has grown to manage an entire Program of more than 10 complex mechanical design projects. I love leading and motivating teams towards a vision, overseeing projects from beginning to end, and that's why I'm so excited for this opportunity as a Project Manager."

Alvin's Interviewing Tips:

- This question is NOT meant to be tricky. Do NOT give your entire auto-biography here.
- Think of this question as your '*mini-elevator*' pitch – keep your answer to less than 3 minutes long.
- My recommended answer format:
 - 1. Brief introduction
 - 2. Highlight(s) of your experiences & accomplishments
 - 3. Sell your personal brand and story
- Practice your answer to this question repeatedly, until you can say it very easily and with 100% confidence.

Question 2. What skills make you a great Project Manager?

Alvin's Sample Answer:

"What makes me a great Project Manager is my drive to connect with others and to really understand who each person is on my team. I want to better understand who I'm working with so that I can motivate and lead them towards accomplishing our project's goals.

Since I'm no longer the person doing the physical work itself, I like to spend my time talking with my team, understanding what issues are arising, and how I can help tear down any roadblocks so they can do their work even more effectively.

While it's great to have a plan in place, plans do change, and I've found that it's so much better to be able to sit down with my team and have that transparent communication with

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Alvin's Sample Answer:

them so we can accomplish something that's even bigger than us. And that's moving everyone towards one goal and one clear vision."

Alvin's Interviewing Tips:

- To stand out among your competitors, do NOT talk about how you're an expert in the "hard skills" of project management or from the PMBOK® Guide.
 - While it's important to understand the technical skills of project management, this is NOT what you want to emphasize in your answer to this question.
 - *Why?* Everyone who is being interviewed likely already knows the SAME or has a HIGHER proficiency at the Project Management Technical Skills. To stand out, focus on how you can engage people, integrate with the team, and lead everyone towards accomplishing a vision.
 - Emphasize your experience with communicating and leading others.
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Question 3. Why are you the best person for this job?

Alvin's Sample Answer:

"I am the best person for this role as a Project Manager because of not only my technical engineering background, but also my proven track record with leading cross-functional teams to manage projects for launching new products to market on-time and within budget, which have all generated more than \$1Million to this date.

As a Project Manager, even though I have the word "Manager" in my title, I completely understand that it's all about being able to lead others without having that formal authority. And, over the years, I've learned to craft and refine my skill at building relationships with those around me and with Leadership, as well as communicating and understanding who the team members are on my project.

It's very important to me that I spend the time getting to know my team and motivating them so we can create the best and highest quality product that meets what our customers are looking for."

Alvin's Interviewing Tips:

- You're likely to get asked this question in different ways by the Recruiter, Hiring Manager and others on the Interviewing Panel. So be prepared to craft an answer that can address each of these different formats:
 - *Why should we hire you?*
 - *Why are you the best candidate?*
 - *Why do you want this job?*
 - *What makes you the best person for this role?*

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- How can you stand out from other candidates and ace this interview question?
 - Do NOT recite each of your experiences from your resume. In other words, pick **one or two experiences** that showcases your **biggest accomplishments** that are tied to the job's responsibilities.
 - *Why?* The interviewer already has your resume on their computer. So, you need to quickly identify the MOST IMPACTFUL experiences which relate to the job, and include this in your answer.
- Share your personal story and how your previous professional experiences have shaped you to be the BEST FIT for this opportunity
- Say your answer with **100% CONFIDENCE**, so you come off as the BEST PERSON that they should hire. You want the interviewer to feel impressed by your answer, and think, "Wow! This is the person I've been looking for!!"

Question 4. What is your greatest weakness?

Alvin's Sample Answer:

"A weakness of mine is the tendency to focus on the details and to not immediately see the high-level picture. As an Engineer by trade, I love understanding what's involved with the work, and what it takes to get something done.

I enjoy solving problems and learning more about the technical details. As I've grown in my career, I've learned to step back and see things not just at the task level, but also at the higher 100,000 foot level where the entire project's vision is, how this integrates with the overall portfolio, and how this has an impact on the business needs.

I understand that there is a fine balance between the two. I'm always learning from my experiences and finding ways to grow and improve myself as a better leader."

Alvin's Interviewing Tips:

- Do NOT fall for this trap. The interviewers want to get to "know" you and see if you are being truthful or not, and which areas you need the most growth in.
- Be self-aware of weaknesses in your professional career.
- If you're not sure what weakness to use, refer to your previous End-of-the-Year Reviews in previous roles and see which areas needed the most improvement. *For example: giving presentations, talking in front of large audiences, being too attentive to the details, etc.*
- Embrace your weaknesses and talk about how you are improving upon this to become an even better leader.
- Use this question as a way to build rapport with your interviewer, and focus on how you're turning this weakness into a strength by growing and improving upon yourself.

Question 5. Tell me about your past experience at Company A.

Alvin's Sample Answer:

"I worked as an Engineer at Company A, where I managed projects to launch new products to market. I was extremely hands-on with prototyping, building, and testing the designs that would be used by our customers.

Since this project was very instrumental towards building our company's portfolio and revenue growth, it was very important that I communicated and drove collaboration with our internal team, and also with our external vendors.

One of our biggest risks was delays with procurement of parts and assembly of our final product. We mitigated this risk by always having open communications with our Vendors, and having risk mitigation plans to ensure parts with long lead times can be substituted with alternate components.

With an aggressive timeline of 2 years and a budget of \$250,000, I was able to lead our team to launch our product on time to market, and within budget."

Alvin's Interviewing Tips:

- This is your time to shine and impress your interviewers with the accomplishments you delivered in your previous roles.
- To prepare for this question, make sure your resume is polished and refined, and that it's clear what results you achieved, and how you demonstrated project management responsibilities.
- **BE CONFIDENT** when you deliver your answer to the interviewer.
- Craft a unique story for each of your professional past experiences, and SELL your personal brand.
- In this answer, make sure to include:..
 - What skills did you demonstrate?
 - What was the project's budget and timeline?
 - What was the result & accomplishment for the project?

BONUS Question. How do you handle conflict with a team?

Alvin's Sample Answer:

"As the Project Manager, I like to be proactive and I directly approach the conflict to help resolve it. I do my very best to understand everyone's viewpoint and to drive collaboration with everyone so that we can make the team stronger.

I understand that the conflict is only at the surface, and there's a root cause that's much deeper than that. So I'll step in and speak with each person to understand their story.

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Alvin's Sample Answer:

I'll act as a facilitator and a mediator to better understand the root cause of the conflict and brainstorm how we can work together to find a solution that meets everyone's needs.

If this is tied to an area in the project, I'll use an Issue Log to follow-up and address the root cause. The goal that I strive for is 100% collaboration so that the conflict does NOT appear again."

Alvin's Interviewing Tips:

- Conflicts ALWAYS take place on a project, and the interviewer wants to understand how have you dealt with this in the past. Do you know how to resolve conflicts among team members?
- Emphasize that your goal is to act as a servant leader, who wants everyone to win and collaborate with each other.
 - Dig deeper into the Root Cause of the conflict, because conflicts are not what they appear on the surface.
- If the conflict is tied to an area related to your project, discuss how you use Project Management Tools (such as the RAID Log or Issue Log) to manage this and prevent this from escalating even further.

Let's help you land a job as a Project Manager!

Thank you for downloading this guide and reading it! Here's to acing your interview, and finally earning the income you deserve!

- 1) **Need help to land a job as a Project Manager?** [Send me an email by clicking here](#).
I'd love to hear from you, and I am a real person on the other side.
- 2) [Subscribe to my Youtube Channel](#) to be notified of future videos to help you land your dream job as a Project Manager.
- 3) If you found this helpful, please spread the word and share this with your friends! Help me reach a bigger audience. It's my mission to help 10,000 people advance their careers and land a job in Project Management. 😊