



The most common
interview questions to get
uncommonly good
results!

Although the landscape of interviewing has changed and advanced to a large extent towards psychometric and psychological testing, the basic interview questions haven't changed over the past 50 years.

So there's no excuse to be caught off guard by any of them. As an interviewer conducting a mock interview, it helps to keep these in mind so you can prepare the candidate for the interview and build his confidence.

Go through the list below and make your own set of appropriate questions. Some pointers on what responses to expect are also listed with some questions.

1. Tell me about Yourself!

This is the most often asked question in interviews, and usually the first. This is an open-ended question and you can expect a short prepared response. Be careful that it does not sound rehearsed. It should consist of a brief summary of experience, education, skills, personal characteristics and areas of expertise. It should be work related.

2. What, according to you, makes you suitable for this job?

This is a courtship question to woo the candidate. The intent here is to understand WHY the candidate wants to do what he is good in THAT particular organization. Look for enthusiasm with focus on what they can do to contribute to the organization.

From your end, research about the organization that the candidate is applying for.

3. Why do you want to work for this organization?

Most answers to this question are researched and stereotype. Look for the candidate's understanding of his own skills, clarity on the role he or she is seeking and ensure that the answer indicates if the candidate has mapped the two.

4. Can you tell us about your biggest strength? And how did you use it to your advantage?

Candidate is expected to know these ahead of time. There is no one right or wrong answer. Just expect the candidate to stay positive.

Some answers that are good: Ability to prioritize, Problem-solving skills, Ability to work under pressure, Ability to focus on projects, Professional expertise, Leadership skills, Positive attitude.

5. What is your biggest weakness? How did you work on it.

Again, the answers can be many and specific to the individual. Everyone has their flaws. The candidate should be able to identify and express at least one real weakness that may or may not impact the job he is seeking. End on a positive note by discussing improvements made.

6. Where do you see yourself [give number of years] years from now?

This question intends to test the candidate's ambition and professional motivation. It is also one way to find out the candidate's intention of staying with the organization and to assess a possible career path.

7. What do you know about the organization you are applying to? Why do you think they should hire you?

Well researched answers given within the context are the most appropriate ones. This is also the point where the candidate should emphasize special skills and qualities. If possible, back them up with examples that helped past employers' bottom lines if they are experienced employees. Expect freshers to talk about their achievements in other scenarios.

8. Tell me more about a situation where you had to work with a difficult person. What did you do to achieve your goal?

This is a trick question to evaluate the attitude of the person. Does he criticize the person he has worked with? Or keep it positive? It is important for the candidate to acknowledge any difficulty while also stating what they have learned. Look for a positive outcome.

9. Describe some of your accomplishments.

Professional accomplishments of the candidate will help him stand out from other candidates. True stories about their achievements are far more impressive to employers than unsubstantiated statements. Encourage the candidate to give some of these specific examples when and where possible in the interview.

10. What do you consider your work style?

Often, candidates use theoretical knowledge and provide labels and common phrases used depending on who they listen to. While this may be appropriate in a specific scenario, the situational style is the best fit as this indicates that the candidate can manage according to the situation instead of to a one-size-fits-all approach.

11. Who do you consider your hero/role model? And Why?

This question is intended to give you insights into the influences the candidate has derived from people who are part of his life or celebrities or real life heroes. Look for a specific answer, may be more than one, and see how they map it to their personality.

12. Can you talk about your earliest childhood memory?

This question elicits a psychological input from the candidate that will help understand the family background, and the impact of the memory on the personality.