Jeff & Mike The Interview Guys

Tell Me About Yourself

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : These are not tailored answers, and should only act as a guideline for you to begin your preparation. As the blog article said, you need to include Qualities and support them with examples. (If this is unclear please re-read the tell me about yourself article on the blog.)

Scenario 1 General Answer (Good For Most Candidates)

A

I'd describe myself as a hard-working and enthusiastic person who works well with others and takes a lot of pride in completing tasks both on schedule and at an elite level.

Further to that, I think the best way for me to describe myself is in a word: _____ (Quality from your research that aligns with the company's needs).
Over the last _____ years, my work as a(n) _____ has allowed me to cultivate this quality through many different experiences.
Specifically, I _____ (insert success story from your past that demonstrates you having the quality listed above).

I believe this experience makes me an ideal candidate for this position and more importantly, will allow me to achieve the goals you have set for the incoming hire for this position.

Scenario 2

No Work Experience

A

Well as you probably saw in my resume, I'm what you might call a "newbie" when it comes to having a traditional full time job. Having said that, rather than look at that as a negative, I truly believe that I am a "clean slate" when it comes to my work habits, meaning I am really looking forward to being molded into the ideal employee for your company.

More importantly, I feel that my experience in _____ (academics/athletics/charitable work/etc.) will help me carry out the duties required for this position, as it specifically taught me how to _____ (skill/knowledge/ability). I believe that the high level of achievement that I demonstrated in this activity shows that when I apply myself to an endeavor I can be expected to excel, and this is what I plan to do for you if hired for this position.

Scenario 3

Changing Industries

A

In a nutshell, I'm extremely excited to be embarking on a new journey as I make a much needed change from _____ (industry 1) to _____ (industry 2). While some might see it as an unorthodox move, I have felt for some time that my true skills, abilities and (most importantly) passion are best served aligning with the _____ industry.

Not only that, there are several qualities that I have developed over time that will be a huge advantage in successfully completing the daily tasks laid out in the job description, including _____, _____, and _____ (3 applicable skills and abilities). Specifically, my work in _____ (example from your past that supports the 3 skills) shows that I have practical experience in applicable tasks and that I can be counted on to complete these tasks at an elite level.

Scenario 4

Just Graduated

A

I think the best way to describe myself would be to say that I'm a recent graduate of _____ who is eager to apply the knowledge and skills I've learned in a work environment, specifically in the _____ industry. I strongly believe that the high marks I received in _____ exemplify that I have both a firm knowledge and the skills necessary to be an asset to your company, and that my free time spent _____ shows the hard work and dedication that I bring to every activity that I set my focus on.

What You Should Do Next:

Congratulations!

Now you're prepared for the dreaded "tell me about yourself" interview question.

Having said that there are over 100 possible OTHER interview questions you could posibly face!

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Jeff & Mike The Interview Guys

Why Do You Want To Work Here

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : Here are some more great answers for both the **"Why Do You Want To Work Here"** and **"Why Do You Want This Job"** interview questions.
These are some wonderful responses to model your own answers after, but **make sure that you edit them** to highlight your own **Qualities** (skills and abilities) and experiences.
And remember, tailor tailor tailor! Try to focus your answer around Qualities that are important to the company you are interviewing with. And be sure to back up any of your Qualities with examples of you demonstrating the Quality. **Good luck!**

Example 1 Why Do You Want To Work Here?

A

"I have to be honest, the reputation your company has as not only a fair employer, but a leader in workplace education has played a huge part in my decision making process. When I take a job, I want to make sure that I'll be able to not only do my absolute best every day but continue to improve as well. I believe in rewarding hard work and dedication so the idea that I can take a job with a company that will continue to push me to become even more than I am right now is incredibly exciting."

NOTES

Nicely played there! This answer is great because again it shows that you've done your research. It also demonstrates that you're in it for the long haul but that you're not content to stay at one level. A good hiring manager wants to hire employees who are not only dedicated to the work they do, but who are constantly looking for ways to improve themselves...and the company over all!

Example 2 Why Do You Want To Work Here?

A

After reading a few articles online about your new CEO, I was really impressed to hear how she was tackling the environmental issues surrounding manufacturing. I want to make sure I am working for a company that is not only a leader in the global marketplace, but does it in an environmentally responsible way.

NOTES

This one is short and sweet. You're not only showing that you've done your online research, but that you value what the company values and you're also complimenting their leader. Bonus!

Example 3 Why Do You Want To Work Here?

A

"I have to be honest, before I sent in my resume for the position I reached out to a few of my friends who already work here and asked them about how they liked their jobs. Everyone I spoke to had nothing but positive things to say not only about the company but about the work environment as well. In fact my good friend who is in the department I am applying for told me herself that the only reason the position is available is because the person who was originally filling it was promoted out. A company that not only has such happy employees, but also promotes from within is a company I would love to be a part of long term."

NOTES

Oh wow, we're blushing! What a genuinely sweet thing to say about a company. Not only does this person demonstrate that they're willing to dig into the position and the company overall, but that they want to be a part of the culture surrounding the position.

Example 1

Why Do You Want This Job?

A

"When I saw your ad looking for help with your marketing department I was curious about what the position would entail. One of the things I love about my job is continuing to explore new and emerging technologies and when I saw that your team is developing apps to help streamline the company client interaction I knew I had to apply. With my background in programming and computer software I've always been interested in app building and I look forward to the opportunity to work with a department actively developing their own program."

NOTES

This is a great answer because not only does it show that you've done your research but that you bring a unique set of skills to the table that could be incredibly valuable to a new area the company is developing.

Example 2

Why Do You Want This Job?

A

"I've always had a firm desire to be a part of a company that is in its infancy, so that I'd be able to help build the company from the ground up and be a part of its history. Knowing that your firm is currently only a few months old and as you said, has only a handful of employees, I feel like my personality type would complimentary to the culture you already have in place. Similarly, I love the plan that you've laid out for career advancement within your organization because it will allow me to create actionable goals for both my short and long term future. I plan to use my skills a C++ programming expert to help grow this organizations reputation into the most well respected software company in the industry."

NOTES

This answer works very well because it does two very important things: identifies an element of the company's culture that is appealing to the applicant (referencing the size of the company shows an awareness of the culture that will be in place and acknowledges the applicant has the personality to succeed in that environment) and more importantly, demonstrates a Quality that the applicant has that will directly add value to the company (being a C++ programmer, which was clearly a requirement for this position).

Jeff & Mike The Interview Guys

What Are Your Strengths & Weaknesses?

Cheat Sheet

DO'S:

- Take the time to prepare your answer. You know this question is going to be asked so there is no excuse not to be ready with a laser-focused answer
- Make a list of the strengths that you have, and then ask a few coworkers or colleagues to tell you what your strengths are (and make another list). Compare the two lists and decide on which strengths you want to put forward in your answer to this question
- Tailor your answer to the position you are interviewing for. Choose to discuss strengths that are relevant for the position. Decide if the strengths you came up with in the previous step apply.
- Carefully analyze the job description to discover the strengths that the company is interested in and make an effort to project them in your answer.
- Support each strength with concrete examples of you demonstrating that you have the strength.

DON'TS:

- Think you can walk into the interview and "wing" the answer to this question. Anything less than a perfect answer is a missed opportunity
- Offer up any strengths that are not related to the position you are interviewing for
- Be too cocky or overconfident
- Stuff your answer with too many strengths, especially strengths that aren't relevant to the position you are interviewing for
- Think you can be clever and offer up a weakness disguised as a strength (i.e. being a workaholic or "caring too much")
- Make claims that you can't back up with concrete examples

Scenario 1

Applying for a sales position

A

I think my biggest strength is that I am an excellent communicator, having always been able to quickly and easily convey ideas and concepts to others while making them feel comfortable and unthreatened at the same time. I've found that this has helped me become an elite sales associate because it allows me to build trust with my clients, which leads to the exchange of information. This information then helps me identify the right "buttons to push" and ultimately paves the way to the final sale. This was most evident in my closing of the X-Tel Wireless deal, where the strong rapport I built with the CFO lead to a quick and easy close at 25% over asking price. It's this same communicative style I hope to use to my advantage as Executive Sales Manager for Turner and Associates.

Scenario 2

Applying for an office administrator position

A

Being a high-level multitasker has allowed me to quickly advance from being an entry-level part-time filing assistant to a full-time switchboard operator, and then on to administrative assistant for the CEO in my last role as Peterson Corp. In being able to balance and fulfill several tasks at one time, I've become a valuable commodity in the office environment who is known for being reliable, efficient and composed under the pressure of moving deadlines. I believe my strength in multitasking will greatly assist me in the position of Office Manager with JB Holdings and will help facilitate making improvements to the processes you mentioned in the job description.

Scenario 3

Applying for a restaurant manager

A

If you took a poll of my last three employers regarding my strengths, i believe they would all unanimously say that my greatest strength is my versatility. At all three restaurants I was hired for a single role, and at all three I finished my time having done nearly every job in the restaurant (and been given much more responsibility). I've bussed tables, been a waitress, been a hostess and a bartender. I've also been a shift manager, and a food and beverage manager, helping place the food orders for the restaurant and keeping track of budgets. There is no task that is too small for me, and I take price in being able to be counted on when my manager sends me. In hiring me to be a manager with the Crystal Lounge and Bar, you would be hiring someone that is well versed in all aspects of the restaurant business who can be depended on to get the job done, regardless of how big or small the job is.

What's Your Greatest Weakness?

Cheat Sheet

Jeff & Mike The Interview Guys

DO'S:

1. Admit Your Weakness Honestly

• Don't try and outsmart the Hiring Manager…be honest! (See the #3 "Don't" below to make sure that you don't make the wrong choice though)

2. BUT Demonstrate How You Conquered

• It's ok to admit a weakness if you demonstrate the steps you've gone through to correct it

• Use a Success Story from your past to show how you conquered your weakness

3. Be Ready For A Follow Up Question

• This question can often be followed up with a question like "How can I be sure your weakness won't be a detriment to my company?"

• You need to be prepared for any follow up question to be thrown at you

DON'TS:

1. Think You're Perfect

• "I don't really have any weaknesses," is not an acceptable response. This will get you crossed off the list immediately.

2. Use a Strength As Weakness

• "I work too hard," "I'm a perfectionist," and other similar "weaknesses" are also not acceptable.

3. Choose a Core Competency

• As we said in the "Don'ts" section, you need to be honest. But be careful not to choose a weakness that is important to the job you are applying for (ex. A "core competency". Don't say you are bad at typing if you're applying to be an administrator)

4. Place the Blame

• Blaming your old boss or another coworker for your weakness is a surefire way to get a "pass" from the hiring manager. Own it!

Scenario 1

If Your Weakness Is: Shyness

A

"I think my biggest weakness is that I am a shy person, which can sometimes prevent me from speaking up in important meetings (or in front of large groups of people) or having one-on-one discussions with authority figures. I became aware that this weakness was affecting my ability to do my job at the highest level, so I began taking Toastmasters workshops and also had a few sessions with a psychologist. Both of these resources have helped me come out of my shell and have made my shyness less of a hindrance in the workplace."

Scenario 2

If Your Weakness Is: Working In Groups

A

"Coming from the computer science industry, I've grown accustomed to working long hours on my own with little need for working in a group dynamic. Because of this, I have found it challenging to work effectively in a group setting. Since so many companies rely on group work for problem solving and completing tasks, I recognized the need for myself to improve in this area. So I started by making an effort to spend more time socially with the colleagues I was asked to work with, something I had never done in the past. During this time, I communicated with them that group work was something I struggled with in the past, and asked that they offer advice and tips where necessary. Finally, I focused on keeping an open mind throughout the process and focusing my energy on how best I could utilize my skills for the betterment of the group. This strategy allowed me to become a much better communicator and more importantly, has given me the experience necessary to better understand how to succeed in a group dynamic."

What You Should Do Next:

Congratulations!

Now you're prepared for the dreaded "Greatest Weakness" interview question.

Having said that there are over 100 possible OTHER interview questions you could possibly face!

That's why you really need to get our 3-step method to answering ANY other interview question perfectly....

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What Makes You Unique?

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : In this cheat sheet, we are going to provide you with example answers to this question from three different perspectives or situations. Chances are you fall into one of these categories! Your answer will change slightly depending on the type of position you are interviewing for, whether it be entry-level, middle management or an executive position. Keep in mind that the hiring manager's expectations for the answer will be different depending on the role as well.

Situation 1

ENTRY LEVEL POSITION

You may think that this is an irrelevant question for someone interviewing for an entry-level position… after all, what does it matter if I'm just going to be folding t-shirts at the Gap? The reality is, this question is often more relevant for an entry-level position for a few reasons. For one, most of the applicants will have nearly identical qualifications, meaning this question acts as a way for hiring managers to separate candidates based on unique and interesting abilities. Secondly, since companies are so protective of (and always developing) their corporate culture, they like to identify future "culture carriers" at the early stages. Does this person have any unique and interesting traits or abilities that will be a positive influence on our culture as they advance through the company? So the main thing you want to do is identify unique traits that will complement the core responsibilities of the position while also showing that you will be a great fit culture-wise.

A

"While I understand that the bulk of my day will be spent standing in front of a table folding shirts, it is my belief that being an employee of The Gap (and specifically floor staff) is much more than the physical act of folding. Each discussion with a customer is extremely valuable and requires a certain skill set. What makes me unique is that I have had customer service training from a young age, beginning with my role as a summer camp counsellor at the age of 15. Then, during my college years I worked part-time as a greeter at my local supermarket, helping customers locate the goods they were looking for. I was actually awarded Employee of the Month twice for my contributions to customer service. Both of these positions taught me the value of customer interactions and that is what I hope to bring to the table at The Gap."

Scenario 2

Middle Management

Generally speaking, middle-management positions usually involve some kind of leadership responsibility. You've worked your way up from your entry-level position and are now in charge of one or more other employees. So now you need to show that you are capable of being a leader. With this question, you should be trying to highlight unique qualities that will feed that narrative. In other words, "I'm a great leader because of these unique characteristics."

A

"From the job description, I can see how much your company values leadership qualities, particularly in the position I am here interviewing for today. I think that one think that makes me unique is that I've had a lot of practical experience leading large groups of people. When I was in college, I played college football, and admittedly, I was not one of the better players on the team. However, the head coach saw something in me and made me an assistant coach for the defence… while I was still a player on the team! Not only was I expected to fulfill traditional assistant coach duties (like maintaining reports about our competition and helping organize practices), but I was also relied on to be a vocal motivator to more than 25 defensive players. That season we ranked first in our state on defence, and the head coach would tell you a played a big factor in that. It is my belief this unique experience has set me up well to manage a sales team at The Gap."

Scenario 3

Executive Management Position

Similar to the middle-management position, an Executive Management Position comes with its own unique responsibilities and expectations. When you get to this level, it is expected that you are a highly skilled an versatile individual, and while managing people is a big part of it, there is more to the position than leadership (although it is still very important). You need to have an advanced understanding of all elements of the company AND the industry it operates in, and what societal factors could affect the day-to-day operations of the company (and how to plan for the future considering these factors).Having said this, unique characteristics should reflect a sophisticated understanding of all elements of the company and how your skills are aligned with these elements.

A

"I think we can all agree that the retail sector faces many challenges with the emergence of online shopping and other global changes. I feel like i am the right person to guide The Gap through this tumultuous time because of my unique educational background. While I completed a general bachelor of business for my undergrad, I actually did a joint masters in business and information technology. I believe this will allow me to shepherd The Gap's new online sales strategy based on the current IT climate and give us a competitive advantage in our sector. "

The Interview Guys

Why Did You Leave Your Last Job

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : Below please find twenty reasons you might have for leaving your job that you can use on your applications.(Also remember that there are more reasons in the original article.) On the next page you'll find word-for-word-answers to the interview question: Why did you leave your last job. (You may have to tailor them to your situation a bit)

Good Reasons

1. I wanted a new challenge
2. My company went out of business
3. I was suffering from an illness
4. I didn't receive enough hours
5. I became pregnant
6. I was laid off
7. I decided to go back to school
8. I wanted to do some travelling
9. My company was restructuring
10. I was looking for a higher-paying opportunity
11. I was involved in a workplace accident
12. I wanted to reduce the length of my commute
13. My family relocated to a different city/state/country
14. I wanted to work in a different industry altogether
15. I wanted to reduce/increase my workload (I wanted to work part/full time)
16. My job was outsourced
17. I experienced limited growth opportunities
18. I got married
19. I had a family emergency
20. I needed to stay home to help raise my family

Scenario 1 - You Didn't Enjoy The Work

At the end of the day, I was proud to be an employee at _____ and I thoroughly enjoyed everybody on my team, including my boss. But at some point during my time working there I realized that I was not passionate about the type of work I was doing. Specifically, I want to be _____ which is why I am so excited about the opportunity to interview with this company. I believe my passion for _____ will complement this position well and allow me to grow within your company long term.

Scenario 2 - You Needed A Change

The main reason that I decided to leave my last position is that I had accomplished everything I needed to in that role and felt that I needed to be challenged. Before I made my decision, I had met with my boss and discussed how I could grow and take on more within the company, but we both agreed that the size and budget of the company would not allow me to grow further. After _____ years of hard work and dedication to my role, we both agreed that a new challenge would be the best thing for me. It's for this reason that I've applied to this position with your company, and I'm really excited to use my knowledge and expertise to tackle the challenges that lay ahead.

Scenario 3 - You Need More Money

I had been in my last position for over ___ years, and over that time, my personal situation changed quite dramatically, requiring me to earn a more substantial living. Unfortunately, the budget was limited for the position I was in and there were no direct advancement opportunities in terms of promotions that would allow me to increase my earnings. Ultimately, I loved the work I was doing but needed to explore opportunities that would help me to better support myself/my family. Having researched your company and this role thoroughly I was not only drawn to the similarity between the responsibilities of this position and my last job, but also compensation package and opportunity for advancement that you offer.

Scenario 4 - You Didn't Get Along With Your Boss

For me, the most important thing about being a member of a successful and cohesive team is to have good chemistry with the members of the team. Ultimately, while I established an elite level of chemistry with several members of my team, I didn't feel that the chemistry my boss and I achieved was at a high enough level for us to both succeed to our full potential (despite my belief that both of us were more than competent in our given roles). Knowing this, I look forward to the possibility of meeting my potential boss in the near future, and wholeheartedly embrace the opportunity to develop long-lasting chemistry with her/him moving forward.

Scenario 5 - You Were Fired

I went into my interview for my last position with a very clear sense of what the responsibilities for the role were and felt confident that my skill set was adequate enough to execute my duties at a high level. As time passed and the nature of the work for this position began to change, it was clear that it required skills that were beyond my capabilities - perhaps suited more to someone at a Director level as opposed to the entry level position I secured. For this reason, the company decided to terminate my contract in order to hire an individual more suited to the experience level required. This experience has taught me to be more vigilant in asking questions pertaining to the realistic requirements of the position in the long term (as opposed to just the short term). Having said that, I have a few questions for you… would this be an appropriate time?

Jeff & Mike The Interview Guys

Why Should We Hire You?

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : These are tailored answers using qualities picked at random for educational purposes. Be sure to discover your own qualities through your own thorough company research. Obviously the sample answers on this cheat sheet are for your inspiration only. You need to customize them to your own situation. (If any of this is unclear please re-read the "why should we hre you" article on the blog.)

Answer 1

Position: Administration
Company's Desired Quality: Multitasking

A

When I read the job posting for this position something jumped out to me that made me immediately think I would be among the top candidates for this position.

Yes, I've worked and succeeded in many office environments and cultures similar to yours, and, more importantly, had 7 years experience in your industry as an elite-level administrator.

But what sets me apart from other candidates is not only my ability to balance several complicated tasks while under the most difficult conditions (which I believe I demonstrated thoroughly during my time at _____), but also that I receive a significant amount of personal validation from being a successful multitasker.

In other words, you should certainly hire me because I am qualified for the position... but more importantly because I will bring a joy and passion to the tasks that other candidates may find mundane.

Answer 2

Position Type: Retail Manager
Company's Desired Quality: Leadership

A

I think we can both agree that because of the nature of this position, nearly every candidate is going to answer this question by claiming to be a "great leader." After all, being a great manager requires one to possess natural leadership skills. What sets me apart though, is that I can quantify my success as a leader with a few examples from my past (insert anecdote(s) with a clearly quantifiable supporting argument. i.e. "I implemented a new…", "I led my team to a 30% increase…").

Furthermore, I will also acknowledge that being a retail manager is not just about leadership, but also about organization, communication, customer service, and brand awareness. In my experience as Manager at _____ I was able to not only develop and apply these skills, but mentor the other employees on my team, and I believe this development will be a huge asset to your organization.

Answer 3

Position Type: Transportation
Company's Desired Quality: Punctuality

A

I know the importance of having drivers that are consistently able to ensure that their freight arrives at its destination on time. Over the last ____ years I have built a reputation as a driver that can be trusted to put punctuality above everything else, except for safety of course (for which I also have an immaculate record).

In my experience at _____ I drove over _____ miles without missing a scheduled delivery or compromising the cargo or my truck in any way. If hired I will apply these same principles to the deliveries I am entrusted with, and utilize the _____ miles of experience I've gained over the last several years to ensure that my deliveries arrive as instructed.

Answer 4

Position: Computer Programmer
Company's Desired Quality: Versatility

A

I think the most obvious reason why I would be an excellent hire for your organization is the fact that I have an extremely diverse skillset that I've developed over the last few years working at _____, _____ and _____.

Each of those platforms was built using a different computer language and through my experience I was able to become a master at all three. Similarly, I learned many of the complimentary support systems that these organizations used. I know one of the requirements of this position is to be able to be a "jack of all trades", and if I were hired I would be an extremely versatile asset to the organization, seamlessly being able to move between tasks, projects, and teams.

What You Should Do Next:

Congratulations!

Now you're prepared for the common "why should we hire you?" interview question.

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Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : In this cheat sheet, we are going to provide you with example answers to this question from three different situations. Whether it is an entry level, middle management or executive position,the response to the question will change depending on what the hiring manager (and company's) expectations are for the role.

Entry Level Position

For an entry level position, it is paramount that you emphasize that your plan is to master all aspects of the job you have been hired for. While doing this, it is important to also mention growth both in your role and within in the company, with the intent of becoming a "lifer" at the company… a member of the family if you will.

A *For me, my next five years will be spent learning the ins and outs of this position, the company, and the core business we are involved in. While I spend time mastering every detail of the role we are discussing today, i also want to assimilate myself within the culture of this company with hopes to grow along with my fellow team members and other employees, while also working with my supervisor to choose a path within the company that will allow me to add the most value using my skillset. Once I have shown a consistent ability to execute the job in question, my hope is that I take the next step toward becoming a long term member of this company.*

Middle Management Position

As you are likely going to be a leader who is responsible for employees underneath you, your answer should include some of what is mentioned above but should focus on developing and nurturing your team members as well. If your goal is to be a member of the executive at some point, you must show an understanding of leadership development and begin demonstrating it right off the bat.

A *If you were to ask me where I see myself in 5 years, I would say that my goal is to have spent my time trying to nurture and empower my team members while executing our goals at the highest possible level. It will be very important to me to lead a results-driven team of overachievers that are keen to move up through the company and have long and fulfilling careers with this company. On a personal note, I hope that through demonstrating my ability to lead my team and through achieving our goals, I will have shown myself to have the potential tobe considered for an executive position, but that will be determined by the work I put in over the next five years.*

Executive Management Position

As an executive, you may have already reached the pinnacle of your profession in terms of title recognition. Perhaps you are already a President, a CEO or a Board Member. Your value to this company is not likely your ambition (in terms of your titles, etc.) but in your contribution to the bottom line. Taking this into consideration, your emphasis should be more on where you see the company going under your careful watch. "How will the company look in five years?" might be the question they are really asking you. Specific, quantifiable numbers are a good way to impress the hiring manager in this case, but make sure you are confident that the numbers you are offering are attainable. It's also important to show that you want to affect and be a part of the culture of the company.And finally, try to add a "big picture" item that will solve a problem or concern that the company currently has (which you must try and discover through your research.

A *Five years from now, I'm hoping I will look back on my first five years and think three specific things. Firstly, that our sales department has increased our annual revenue by 3-5% each year based on the plan I am going to put in place beginning on day one, which I'm happy to discuss in detail with you today. Secondly, that I have both embraced and influenced the culture of this company, ensuring that each employee is empowered, motivated and committed to our collective goals. I want to promote people within the company to provide the necessary "carrot" for the people who are deserving of recognition, because my belief is that a motivated workforceis a happy and effective workforce. And finally, by year five I plan to be accepting the award for one of America's 100 Greenest Companies on behalf of our company, as under my tenure we will finally achieve 100% clean energy efficiency and be a model for the transportation industry.*

Second Interview Questions & Answers

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : Below you will find 5 of the most common questions that you could be asked during a second, and an example answer for each one! Use the example answers as a guideline, but you'll want to build your answers around your own situations and experiences.

One thing to remember is that because every interview is different, some of these questions could also be asked in a screening interview or your first in-person interview, so it's good to practice them at every stage of your preparation.

Question 1

What are your goals?

A *"I'd like to work for a company where I can add value to the enterprise and where there is a chance for an ambitious and diligent person to advance the company's goals as well as my own. I notice that PrepTutor is expanding to accept more Chinese students through your "Asia-Connect" program. My parents emigrated here from Hong Kong, and I speak Mandarin. I'd love to help Chinese young people assimilate through language—it's been a goal of mine for some time to serve the immigrant community. I see it not only as a way to reach out and increase our visibility within this vibrant community, but a way to expand our ability to communicate with potential customers and business contacts both here locally and eventually globally as well."*

Question 2

What are your salary expectations?

A *"If it turns out that I'm the candidate you hire for this position, I'm sure we'd be able to reach a mutually agreeable salary as I'm willing to be flexible. Can you give me an idea as to what the budgeted salary range is?"*

OR

"I would expect the salary to be in the median range for a radiologist within this area —between $60,000 and $70,000."

Question 3

Can you start right away?

A

"Out of respect to my current employer, I'd like to give the standard two weeks' notice. I would like to help them find and prepare my replacement, though, as I took a lot of pride in my work and I would like to pass it on responsibly. On top of that I believe one of my strengths is my ability to train and teach others complicated tasks. I think this is why my employer is pretty keen on me staying the full two weeks to facilitate the transfer. I would do that as a courtesy to any employer regardless. However, I might be able to arrange to work part-time there for the next two weeks and be available to you on a part-time basis as well."

Question 4

Give me an example of a problem you face on the job and how you resolved it...

A

"I was hired by a video production company to rewrite a script that had already been shot. They were very unhappy with the product they had ended up with and were hoping there was a way to salvage what they had already done while incorporating in the new material I was expected to write. I sat down with the producer and discovered that a large chunk of what had been shot was visually stunning, but had no audio... rendering it essentially useless from a story telling point of view. Rather than telling them to scrap all the footage, I restructured the story in such a way that the main character was able to narrate over this footage, allowing us to utilize their previous work. My simple rewrite solution to their problem ended up saving the production company the cost of doing a huge reshoot. These changes also gave them a new direction to move with the storyline which ultimately allowed them to secure funding from a large and powerful sponsor who loved what we had done. I take great pride in being able to come up with smart and economical solutions to seemingly impossible problems."

Question 5

Is there anything else I should know about you?

A

"I didn't mention an interesting anecdote when I was the safety manager at SkyScraper Construction Co. I had just completed my CPR and First Aid courses, and a man on site suddenly went into cardiac arrest. My supervisor looked at me and said, 'You're in charge of safety!' I had practiced on a dummy but never on a live person. I knew I had to keep calm and simply do what I was taught. I revived him while others called 911. He later thanked me for saving his life. Although I don't anticipate such a thing happening often, the incident taught me that, no matter what happens, keeping calm and putting one's training into motion will often resolve a threatening situation. I think that was excellent training for an air traffic controller position, in addition to my FAA certification, of course."

Phone Interview Questions & Answers

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : Below you will find 5 of the most common questions that you could be asked during a phone interview, and an example answer for each one! Use the example answers as a guideline, but you'll want to build your answers around your own situations and experiences.

The great thing about a phone interview, is once you have prepared your answers you can keep them nearby to reference doing your interview. So have a look at the example answers below and start preparing your own answers!

Question 1 Why are you leaving your current position?

A

"It has become clear to me after several years that my promotion possibilities are limited and that I'm at a plateau that is not going to change. I see that your firm has several women in senior management, and I admire your commitment to diversity and fairness. In fact, one of the reasons I became so passionate about working here is because I discovered your "workplace standards initiative". I've never come across a firm that has done so much for creating such a welcoming and diverse work environment and I'd like to contribute in any way I can. "

Question 2 What are your salary expectations?

A

"If it turns out that I'm the candidate you hire for this position, I'm sure we'd be able to reach a mutually agreeable salary as I'm willing to be flexible. Can you give me an idea as to what the budgeted salary range is?"

Question 3

What is your five year plan?

A

"I know that the next five years are going to bring huge changes in technology and advances in science and I want to be a part of those changes. I'd like increased responsibilities that also bring opportunities to not only use my talents but learn new skills as well. Within five years I'd really like to be able to move into a supervisor position and in ten I'd like to see ideas that I've helped conceptualize and shape become a reality. I would hope that my time spent and dedication to whatever I am doing is considered valuable and that my desire to continually improve and succeed is encouraged. I would like to grow along with the company I'm working with and I look forward to not just a job, but a long and satisfying career.

Question 4

Why do you want to work here? Or why do you want this position?

A

"The main reason I want to work for Barrett, Fortis and Keller is that your firm aligns perfectly with why I became a lawyer in the first place: to make sure there was someone championing ethical standards in this field. As a lawyer, we often walk the fine line between winning a case and doing the right thing which is why I admire the way you have managed to balance ethics and winning so successfully."

Question 5

Do you have any questions for me?

A

This is where you definitely want to have some good questions prepared to ask the interviewer. Here are a couple good ones you can try:

What are the next steps in the interview process?

What are the performance expectations for this position?

Will I be working with a team and if I am, can you tell me a little about each of them?

Can you tell me what you love the most about working here?

Questions To Ask The Interviewer

Cheat Sheet

NOTE : Below you will find examples of effective questions you can ask the hiring manager in your next interview!

We've conveniently broken the questions into 5 different categories. You should go into your interview with at least one question from each category prepared. This will show the hiring manager that you have a well balanced understanding of all of the important elements of the position they are hiring for.

Category 1: The Position

This category pertains to questions that are specific to the position you are interviewing for, and generally revolves around the duties you will be responsible for or the skills necessary to complete the duties.

1. **What specific skills and/or experience are the most important to be successful in this position?**
2. **What does a typical day in this role look like?**
3. **What are the greatest challenges I will face in this role if I am hired?**

Category 2: The Company

"The Company" category refers to questions that are focused on the specifics of the company itself, and might contain questions about products and/or services, the history of the company, or various company policies.

1. **What do you enjoy the most about working for this company?**
2. **What are the biggest challenges this company has face in the last few years, and what are the greatest challenges it faces moving forward?**
3. **What is the company's policy on continuing education? Are there any seminars, workshops or training available to someone that would be interested in furthering their education or acquiring new skills?**

Category 3 The People/Culture

Questions in the "People/Culture" category should be easily recognizable to you. They would generally include questions about the individuals you will work with (or the team you'll work on), the way that people work (habits, policies, etc.) and the culture of the company (the "rules" and "styles" that govern daily life).

1. What are some of the different ways that employees communicate in order to facilitate the completion of their goals or duties?

2. Can you tell me a little bit more about the team I'll be working with? Can you tell me a little bit more about my direct report?

3. How would you describe the culture of the company? Do relationships stay within the company walls or do employees socialize outside of work?

Category 4 Performance

The Performance questions generally refer to your performance in the company and how you will be evaluated. Asking these questions gives you a better idea of how you can reach your goals.

1. How will my responsibilities and performance be measured, and by whom?

2. What is expected of me in terms of accomplishments in the first 30 days? 60 days? 90 days?

3. Will I have a formal performance review, and if so how many and on what schedule?

Category 5 What's Next?

Ask these types of questions to learn what you can expect in the coming hours, days and weeks after your interview. These generally conclude the interview, so it is important to make sure you leave a good taste in the hiring manager's mouth. This can be accomplished with one of the following prepared questions!

1. What is your timeframe for finishing the hiring process?

2. Will you contact all applicants whether they are successful or not?

3. Are there any other details that I can provide that would be helpful in answering your questions, or do you have any other questions that I can answer?