

FREE
GUIDE

TOP 20 INTERVIEW ANSWERS

Simple, effective example answers to
difficult questions





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1

What attracted you to our company?

“ A number of things attracted me to ABC Industries. I did some research into the company prior to my interview and I was really impressed with what I found. Not only is this an industry leading company but I checked review sites and there are hundreds of terrific reviews from happy customers.

Additionally its really clear you are rewarded if you exceed expectations here, I noticed a high number of managers are promoted internally and have been here a long time from looking at LinkedIn, and you are a Sunday Times Top 100 Company to work for - which is a great accolade for the company to have under it's belt. ”

2

What are your biggest Strengths?

“ I requested feedback from my manager recently as I'm always interested in how I can improve and I take an active approach to this.

His feedback was that he felt I'm extremely dependable, therefore clients of the company know that when they come to me with an issue, I will resolve it even if it means going outside my duties on occasion. He also noted that other team members have commented on my positive attitude and clients on how approachable they feel I am, which has translated to a high level of service. ”

3

What is your greatest weakness?

“I hold myself and my work to a very high standard so sometimes I get caught up in the finer detail to the detriment of speed and deadlines. I identified this through self-analysis and seeking out feedback.

What I've done to combat this over the past 18 months is put in place a system of checkpoints and set earlier deadlines.

This allows me to see how much detail I'm adding to simple tasks and projects - and allows me to ensure that I focus on the necessities of each task. I can still add detail with any time left over, and then I stop when it's time for me to move on to the next task.

After practicing this for over 18 months, I can now confidently say that I meet my deadlines with ease, and work much faster naturally, without as much focus on time limits.”

4

How would you describe your work ethic?

“I would describe my work ethic as very strong. I believe that if you have chosen to work in a role then it should be something you are passionate about, and intend to give your best to. I believe that when you care about what you do and the quality of work - it's easy to be motivated to have a strong work ethic.

For example over the past year I have had 100% attendance at work, and I have met all of my objectives for the past two quarters and am on track to meet my remaining objectives for the rest for this year.”

5

How do you stay organized?

“I utilize multiple tools to keep myself organized. To keep track of appointments and meetings I use my calendar and in-build scheduling tools such FindTime in Outlook

I also use note-taking tools such as Evernote if I'm on the go.

But most importantly I find the best way to stay organized is to have your set goals, and a schedule for your week / month / year, and check in regularly to ensure you are on track, so you don't get side-tracked and caught up too far in day-to-day short term activities.”

6

How do you handle pressure at work?

“I've found that by staying organized, using my calendar, reminders and to do lists, it minimizes the number of pressured situations as I'm generally more prepared.

However there are times when unexpected situations occur. For example if a customer or colleague comes to me with an issue and they need a quick resolution this could cause pressure depending on workload and what the issue is - I try to see things from their point of view and use a collaborative approach to resolve the issue and keep it from escalating.

If necessary I'll ask for help to ensure things are resolved within a timely manner.”

7

Describe a difficult situation at work and how you handled it.

“The best example I can think of is when I had a member of my team who was underperforming on a consistent basis. I had a conversation with the team member to see how we could resolve this.

We agreed on a performance plan, which included some re-training exercises. I also discovered through that conversation, that there were underlying personal issues at home. I was able to work closely with this team member and give them the space and time they needed to bring their performance back up to speed. As they were a high performing team member I knew that while the temporary under-performance was difficult to manage - with a bit of patience and closer supervision in the short term I could likely resolve the issue.”

8

What are your long term goals?

“Although my ultimate goal would be to progress to Head of department or more senior position, I feel quite strongly that this needs to be within the right company.

I want to find somewhere where I can contribute and be of value, somewhere that is aligned with my personal values, and this is what initially attracted me to this company. The reason those things are important to me is because I intend to find somewhere I can stay long-term.”

9

What is your current salary?



Personal Note: There are many schools of thought on how to answer this question. In some countries it is illegal to ask for salary information, in many countries it isn't but it is still an uncomfortable question to answer for many people. If you don't want to share your salary, my advice is to be up front and say:

- “ I would prefer not to share specifics if that's okay, but I'm happy to discuss more about what's on offer.”

As a Recruiter this would be an acceptable answer - you should never feel pressured into giving of salary information if you don't want to, as what you currently earn is personal.

10

Give us an example of a time when you solved a problem

- “ While working in my previous role as a customer service rep I came across a customer who was very upset as he had been chasing a refund and had been passed around to different teams multiple times before he had a chance to explain the background of his situation. To solve this problem the first thing I did is listened to his query in full. It was a long issue that was not his fault - by listening carefully and showing empathy this not only calmed him down, but I identified that his payment details had changed since he originally made his purchase.

I identified this by going step by step through the process to see where it fell down. I was able to go directly to the right team who processed his refund that day and sent an email confirmation so he had peace of mind.”

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Why should we give you the job?



Personal Note: This answer is highly dependable on the position you are interviewing for - the example I've used below was created during a coaching session and used by a recent client to secure a Sales position.

- “ I have 3 consecutive years of industry experience, and a lot of useful transferable skills. A combination of key skills I hold that I feel are essential to succeed in this role include New Business Development, Client Relationship Development and being able to consistently deliver in a sometimes pressurized and challenging environment.

I have strong clear communication skills with an approachable and flexible selling style so I can adapt to each customer - if they want to get straight to the numbers, I won't ask attempt small talk, and if they talk about their dog, I won't miss that opportunity to build a personal connection with them!

I'm used to working to and exceeding KPI's and targets. For example last year I bought in 50k revenue per quarter, exceeding my target by 20%. ”

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What would you do if we didn't offer you this job?

- “ I would first ask for feedback, so I can understand why I was unsuccessful, it would give me a chance to also address and maybe resolve any concerns that we hadn't discussed in the interview so I could be reconsidered in future. I could also be better prepared for future interviews.

Then I would continue to look for a similar role in this industry as I am passionate about moving into this type of position. ”

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What would your current manager say about you?

“My manager has told me that she feels she can always rely on me, so I would say my manager considers me to be very dependable.

I'm often assigned projects that require working with others or putting together a team, even though my day-to-day role is very much a stand alone position where I work independently, so as she made the decision to hire me into my current position, and to assign me to those projects, I feel this indicates that she considers me to be quite a flexible worker, with the ability to work both independently and in a team.”

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How did you prepare for this interview?

“I focused my pre interview preparation in a way that might give me some insight as to what the company might be like and what questions I might have.

I researched the companies history, looked at what you were looking for in this role and how my relevant experience could advance the business. I also had a look at Twitter for current events, Linkedin and the company website.”

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What for you is the key to building a great relationship?

“In my experience communication, and listening on a regular basis is the strongest foundation for building a great working relationship because this allows for check-ins, sharing of ideas and understanding things from different perspectives which can be used to adjust your approach for a more collaborative outcome.

For example while working on a recent project with another department we realized that by adding a simple additional layer to our process it allowed their team collect crucial tracking and budgeting information they needed in a much easier way, which they were grateful for, and this made it easier for us to work together with them in future.”

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What is your biggest achievement

“I was recently tasked with arranging a large event and was responsible for many of the key achievements during the project. It was the largest scale event that I have assisted with in my career to date.

I drew up an outline for a project timeline, and set up a budget tracker so I could keep track of how much was being spent. I sourced and contacted vendors for promotional materials, arranged catering and collected dietary restriction details. I rounded up volunteers and arranged most the logistics for the day. After the event I also followed up to get feedback from attendees.

The MD of the company thanked me in a quarterly meeting and shared really positive feedback from attendees, which I felt very proud of.”

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Give an example of a time when you have thought outside the box?

“In my current role I was sending out the same emails over and over. Due to my role I was repeating the same conversations with new clients and customers on a regular basis – I came up with the idea of setting up outlook templates. I did some research online and I was pleased to find that there is a way to do this.

I set up shortcuts so I can select the most common templates quickly.

I also set them up so that I could edit them as I was using them which saved me hours of time, usually spent writing out the same email again and again. I then shared this with my team as I know they had the same problem. ”

Discover 3 key questions you need to ask your interview panel + 1 bonus question!



DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FOR US?

NEVER- say no!

QUESTIONS ARE *CRITICAL*

3 key reasons to always ask questions are:

- You never want to waste an opportunity to boost your chance of getting the job, questions are a key additional opportunity that candidates who don't get the job often miss out on.
- Asking questions demonstrates your passion and genuine interest in the role
- This is one of the **golden** opportunities to build an emotional connection with your interviewer! The more they feel they can trust you, the more they can see themselves working with you.

THE NEXT SECTION IS FOCUSED ON QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOUR INTERVIEWER.

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What type of person works well in this team?

“This question is super powerful, because you get a clear picture of the type of person your interviewer feels will succeed and want to hire in their own words – as opposed to the formal job description. You can then add any additional information you want them to know about you that matches that profile.

This also gives you great insight into the type of team you could potentially be working in because their answer will be based on existing successful team members.”

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What would you hope to see the successful candidate accomplish in their first 90 days

“This is wonderful way to get an idea of what would be expected of you. Its one thing to get the job, but you then need to use the skills you mentioned in the interview!

They may talk about key projects or initiatives they would like you to be involved in, or what the team or department priority is, and how that ties into your role, and priorities for your first three months.

This can sometimes be a useful information to think about after the interview when you're considering whether the role is right for you, as an interview is a two-way street.

Have they mentioned they expect you to work late every night for the first 90 days? Does the workload seem realistic and manageable? Are they asking you to get involved in exciting tasks? All useful food for thought!”

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Can you tell me a little about each of your backgrounds and what you do?

“This is useful to get to know your interviewers in more detail, and open up a discussion about them, as the interview has likely been focused on you and your skills up to this point.

Generally people like talking about themselves to a person or audience who are genuinely interested, and this exchange helps to build trust and connection between yourself and the interviewer as long as you are asking questions of genuine interest. You could find that there maybe similarities you can connect with.”

21 *BONUS QUESTION*

Based on my answers so far, do you have any reservations?

“This is a key question.

It's a final opportunity to secure the job. Some interviewers are very open about any reservations they have or skills gaps they feel you have in relation to the role.

But sometimes you will need to work a little to get this information. A question like this ensures you have done everything you can to try and address any areas of concern and secure the job.

If for example your interviewer were to say something like 'well you clearly have strong experience in client management, but there are some project management skill sets you don't have'. This would be an opportunity to talk about transferable project management skill-sets you've developed that mean that you could add value and excel in the role even though you hadn't worked in a project management focused position - this of course is just an example at random, but it shows the reason this question is so important.”

DO YOU WANT TO:

- Sell yourself effectively in an interview to stand out and impress any employer?
 - Build confidence with solid proven techniques that help you to stand out from other candidates?
 - Answer any Behavioral, Situational and Competency-Based interview questions easily and nail every question?
 - Improve your memory in an interview so you can beat brain freeze and never forget key points?
-

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NAIL MY INTERVIEW