

# Presales Interview Questions & Answers – Part 1

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These days Presales has been providing very fascinating and promising career prospects in IT/ITeS. Maximum beginners are not aware of this career option. Here i am going to write most asked Presales interview questions and answers. Answers of few questions might vary depending on the Pre-sales domain.

Typically, presales means prepare yourself before selling your services or products. It is imperative to understand pre-sales consultants are technical person who fully understand the domain he or she decided to represent or work upon. However, in most of the cases these consultants choose their domain based on their experience for e.g. Infra Consultant, Platform consultant, product consultant, software consultant in cloud (IaaS, PaaS & SaaS).

As the name pre-sales suggest preparing yourself to present, respond and demonstrate your services in smartest way to win deal for your organization.

Essentially Sales and Presales consultant work very closely for any Request for Information (RFI) and Request for Proposal (RFP). Refer to my article on for additional information on RFI and RFP.



## Presales Interview Questions

**Question 1 – The very first question in any presales interview will always be “Tell me about yourself”?**

**Answer:** As you introduce yourself to the interviewer you need to understand he/she wish to know lesser about you more about your profile and how you can fulfil their requirements.

### Tips:

- Start with your introduction and try rapping it up in a minute.
- In Introduction give brief about your educational qualification.
- Precise introductions about your overall experience in industry or as mentioned in your CV.
- Give 2 minutes to talk about your relevant experience in pre-sales how it started and how you have grown up in this role as a consultant.

- Rap up on positive attitude about your hobbies or interest.

**Question 2 – Tell me about your current role in your organization as a presales resource?**

**Answer:** There are many roles in Presales consulting, you need to be specific and talk about your role. You must ensure you choose wisely the profile you mention as it will decide the course of interview session.

- Deal Managers (Could be different abbreviations in your firm)
- Finance Operative (Could be different abbreviations in your firm)
- Solution Architect
- Technical Architect
- Sales Consultant
- Legal Consultants

**Tips:**

1. Explain your role as a solution Architect and in what stage you get involved.
2. Explain what kinds of deals you have handled so far and you can provide generic details about the deal Size (Number of FTE's), total deal cost and domains involved but remember never to mention the client name as you need to ensure Data Privacy norms.

**Question 3 – What all area you cover in deal scope (e.g. Infra, Software, help desk, support or overall deal)?**

**Answer:** Consider below points while answering this type of questions.

- Here you need to choose the best technical domain of yours and then brief about the same.
- All Scope of work or service catalog of your technical domain or you could provide solution in a deal.
- Explain how you gather the client requirement and how you planned a solution
- Brief on documents you prepared for the solutions.

**Question 4 – Tell me something about your projects, deals which you have worked upon?**

**Answer:** Explain about your past projects where you have contributed as Presales Consultant. Explain your part of contribution.

**Tips:**

- Brief descriptions on overall experience on projects as per your CV.
- Brief on Distinct deals you handled during the tenure of your service as a presales consultant.

**Question 5 – What was your role in projects or deals you have worked upon?**

**Answer:** Specify your role as a Solution Architect or whatever suits your profile as described below along with some of your contributions to the deals.

- Deal Managers (Could be different name in your firm)
- Finance Operative (Could be different name in your firm)
- Solution Architect
- Technical Architect
- Sales Consultant
- Legal Consultants

### **Questions 6 – What’s all frameworks have you worked upon?**

**Answer:** This is very important question and need to be answered carefully with full knowledge of framework you decided to speak on. See below few frameworks for e.g.

- ITIL
- COBIT

### **Question 7 – Have you ever designed an operating model for Level 1 Support / Help Desk? Provide a brief description of the same?**

**Answer:** Consider below points while answering this question.

#### **Tips:**

- As in presales each client comes with their own set of requirements hence every deal needs different operating model.
- Prepare in advance your well versed operating model which you can explain in few minutes. It should be easy, short and quick to explain best is L1, L2 support or Help desk. You can explain the onsite off shore model here.

### **Question 10 – How good are you with Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Project, MS Word and Power point?**

**Answer:** Be honest and answer whatever knowledge you have about these applications.

#### **Tips:**

- You can rate your skills on the scale of 10 based on your expertise. These are much needed skills in presales so you can say you are well versed with these software’s.
- You can name excel functions for e.g. v-look up, If and else statements, Sum, Average, count, password protection etc.

### **Question 11- How will you manage Shortfuse deals?**

**Answer –** Shortfuse deals are the ones with short deadline to submit solution. You can take any example where you got < 2 days for providing solution, getting approval, costing etc. and describe its challenges and how did you overcome it. Explain how you planned it.

#### **Example/Tips:**

- Get all stakeholders on call to gather requirement / scope and provide solution in power point.
- Send solution deck to all stake holders for approval and suggestions.
- Inform the Finance team in advance about costing request.
- Onboard delivery team to participate in solution approval and cost drill down exercise.
- Divide submission documents among other stake holders to finish the docs on time.
- All documents should be versioned and kept on SharePoint repository and Quick follow calls twice /thrice a day should be scheduled to wind up the short fuse deal on time.

All the above steps will allow you to manage short fuse deals but onboarding stake holders, Quick follow-up calls and Team work is mandatory for successful submission and win.

### **Question 12– Have you ever presented to client/Client Orals?**

**Answer:** Share your experience by picking any relevant deal where you presented your solution.

#### **Tips:**

- Talk about you preparatory work.
- Then describe the audience and Presentation challenges.
- Explain how your presentation provided a positive impact.

### **Question 13 – Did ever presented to CTO's or CEO what was your preparation?**

**Answer:** Share your experience if you have ever presented any solution to CTO/CEO.

#### **Tips:**

- Talk about you preparatory work.
- Explain how your presentation provided a positive impact.

### **Questions 14 – Did you ever analyze the lost deals and prepared report for the same and shared with all stakeholders?**

**Answer:** Yes, every firms do root cause analyses of lost deals. There is various factor which we analyze. Some of the factors are given below.

- Less competitive pricing
- RTO & RPO was not presented
- Lack of experience in domain
- Solution provided was not cost effective
- Solution not fit to the Client requirement

### **Question 15 – How good are you in handling pressure?**

**Answer:** I hardly feel pressure as presales is my passion and don't feel weight about it. I get excited about the dynamic which presales brings in my life. I believe if we have technical knowledge with blend of confidence and motivation there is no pressure which can oppress us.

**Question 16 – How did you manage escalation for a short fuse deal?**

**Answer:** The Short fuse deal comes with pressure and panic among all which could lend us to escalation in some cases. However, if I decided to take responsibility I ensure I complete it and I have hardly faced any major escalation in my tenure. I always plan my work in 3-way process.

1. Acknowledge the responsibility / Area of scope which I can provide solution with timelines
2. Address the concern of Sales and delivers teams in my area of scope
3. Timely sending the progress report to stake holders to avoid panic and escalations.

**Question 17 – What all certification have you done on Solution Architect?**

**Answer:** Answer about your certifications or trainings you have done to learn presales role.

**Tips:**

It's not mandatory to have Solution Architect certification however if someone wishes to excel in the same. BCS Intermediate level certificate is there or either TOGAF 8 or TOGAF 9 level 2 certificate could be useful.

**Question 18 – Do you have any experience in Upsell?**

**Answer:** In case you have any experience, you can talk about it.

**Tips:**

Basically, in this question you can showcase your sales skills. How did you analyze client requirement and able to convince them to buy proposed solution to solve their concerns.

**Question 19 – what was your role post you won the deal?**

**Answer:** You can explain about your role post winning the deal and tell about till what stage you were involved.

**Tips:**

- SOW (scope of work)
- Final contract
- Project Initiation
- Handover to delivery

**Question 20 – How good are you in preparing SOW and what all you cover in the same?**

**Answer:** You can define scope of work providing few major headings below.

- Scope of services
- Cover client requirement
- Terms and condition
- Final deliverables
- Sign off procedure
- Any legal contractual terms and conditions/Governance
- RACI Matrix
- Assumptions & Key Dependencies
- Termination/Exit Plan

**Questions 21 – How comfortable are you with travelling on short notice?**

**Answer:** I am comfortable in travelling considering the fact presales /Sales is a Travel job.

**Question 22 – How many deals you can handle in parallel?**

**Answer:** I can work on 3-5 deals in parallel depending on the size of the deal.

**Tips:**

It is imperative that you speak truth in this question. As it's like commitment so unrealistic figure can get you in trouble. With Presales as carrier 3 deal at a time is Business as usual so Be Honest here.