



Q1. Tell me about yourself?

TIPS...

- **Concentrate on telling them about your work-related skills as opposed to your home life. They are not interested in your home life.**
- Download a copy of the person specification for the job and focus on telling them how your skills and attributes match the document.
- **Use “power words” in your response, such as: motivated, enthusiastic, loyal, flexible, committed, honest, hard-working, adaptable etc. These will resonate positively with the interview panel.**

Sample Person Specification

Job Title: Customer Care Assistant

Skills	
Requirement	Essential/Desirable
Effective verbal and written communication at all levels	Essential
Positive customer focused approach	Essential
Listening and questioning	Essential
Accuracy	Essential
Team work	Essential
Problem solving	Essential
Organisational, planning and co-ordination	Essential
Consultation and negotiation	Essential
Ability to speak/write a second language besides English	Desirable
Ability to communicate using British Sign Language (BSL)	Desirable
Counselling	Desirable

Q1. Tell me about yourself?

First and foremost, I am a hard-working, loyal and enthusiastic person who understands how important work is to my overall happiness. I take my work very seriously and I am always looking to improve my skills and qualifications so I can work to the highest standards possible in my role.

I genuinely believe there are 2 types of employee: the first is someone who turns up to work and does their job so they can just pay their bills. The second employee type is someone who puts their all into their job, is totally committed and does all they can to help their employer achieve their goals. I am the second employee type, and I believe my previous track record and strong appraisals demonstrate that.

Q1. Tell me about yourself?

I have excellent communication skills and fully understand how important it is to deliver outstanding customer care – after all, without the customer, there would be no business and I would not have a job. I also have very good organisational skills and always plan my weeks' work in advance to make sure I perform to a high standard.

Having studied the person specification for this job in detail, I strongly believe I can perform the role to a high standard and would very much appreciate the opportunity to work for your company. If I am successful today, I can assure you that I will bring a great deal of experience, loyalty and positive qualities to your team.

Q2. Why do you want to work here?

TIPS...

- **Tell them about the preparation work you have done in the build up to the interview.**
- Focus on the person specification, the job description and information you have gleaned from the company's website and also the literature you have studied during your research.

Q2. Why do you want to work here?

Having studied the person specification and job description for this role, I feel I have the skills, qualities and attributes to carry out the job to a very high standard. I also feel the role will give me a new, fresh challenge; something which I have been looking for for sometime now.

Having also studied your company in detail, there seems to be a very positive approach to the work you carry out and I also very much like the way you strive to deliver a high standard of customer care. High levels of customer care are not common nowadays, and I certainly want to work in a company that looks after its customers as I enjoy seeing positive customer interaction, feedback and testimonials within my job.

Q2. Why do you want to work here?

Also, during my research I managed to speak to two current employees who work for you, and they had nothing but positive things to say about your company. Both of them have worked for you for quite a few years now and they appeared very happy in their work. If I am successful, I plan to stay with you for a long time, so it was good to see that you employ happy, positive people within your team.

Finally, after reading the job description I understand there will be opportunities to both train, develop and take on further qualifications within the company – this is something that is very much appealing to me as I always like to grow and improve as an employee.

Q3. What are your strengths?

TIPS...

- **Again, focus on the person specification for the role you are applying for.**
- Say something different that makes you stand out from the other job applicants. Give an example of why you are better than the other applicants and try to make yourself RELATABLE and REAL!

Q3. What are your strengths?

I have many positive qualities and attributes to bring to this role, but I believe my main key strengths are:

- ✓ I have a hard-working nature;
- ✓ I have an enthusiastic demeanour;
- ✓ I am always looking for the positives in every situation;
- ✓ I am a great team player;
- ✓ I like to support and help develop others;
- ✓ I am dependable.

One thing that I feel makes me stand out from the majority of employees is that I am always looking for ways to improve the way I perform at work.

Q3. What are your strengths?

For example, following an appraisal last year, my line manager identified that she wanted me to develop my negotiating skills.

As soon as the appraisal was complete, I searched online for a distance learning negotiating course and studied hard in this area to improve my skills.

Once I had completed the course, and I had the opportunity to put into practice what I had learnt, my line manager commented that she had noticed a significant improvement in this area and congratulated me for taking the positive approach to the feedback she gave me at the appraisal.

Q4. Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?

TIPS...

- **Don't tell them you plan to have moved on from their company, either internally or externally.**
- Loyalty is very important to the vast majority of employers. Remember, they have to spend time, money and resources training you up in the role, so they will want to see a return from their investment.
- **Don't tell them you want to be sat where they are!**

Q4. Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?

If I am successful today, the first thing I plan to do is get competent in the role as soon as possible. I have no idea how long this will take; however, based on my high levels of enthusiasm, I aim to get trained up very quickly.

Once I am trained up in the role to a good standard, I would like to consolidate my skills and become experienced within the team. It is very important to me to be accepted and respected by my work colleagues and peers and I also want to do well in my appraisals.

Q4. Where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?

So, I guess the short answer to this question is that I want to become good at my job, be accepted by my team and line managers and also enjoy my work as much as possible.

If the opportunity presents itself for me to progress within the organisation, that would be amazing. All in all, I plan to stay with the company long-term if I am successful at interview.

Q5. What are your weaknesses?

TIPS...

- **Anyone who tells the interview panel they have no weaknesses is telling porkies! We all have weaknesses.**
- Don't give a weakness that is one of the key requirements of the role. For example, if punctuality and good timekeeping are important, don't tell the panel you struggle getting out of bed in the morning! 😊

Q5. What are your weaknesses?

I do have one weakness, and that is I sometimes get slightly irritated when people don't carry out their work to a high standard.

Because I set myself high standards, I expect others to have them too, and this is not always the case. Although it can irritate me at times, I have learnt to just focus on my own job and do it to a consistent high standard.

Q5. What are your weaknesses?

Having said that, I have recently been trying to turn this weakness into something positive by helping other people within the working environment to improve. So, if I notice a member of the team struggling, or not performing to the required standard, I will always offer to help them improve, which I feel can only serve to have a positive impact on the organisation and its goals overall.

Q6. What makes a good team member?

TIPS...

- List the qualities I am going to give you in the sample answer that follows.
- Back up your answer with a specific example of when YOU have worked well as part of a team using the STAR technique.

✓ **SITUATION**

✓ **TASK**

✓ **ACTION**

✓ **RESULT**

Q6. What makes a good team member?

Effective teamwork is vital in any organisation and I feel what makes a good team member is:

- Having a dedicated leader;
- An ability to focus on the end goal;
- Great communication amongst the team members and its leader;
- A comprehensive initial brief so that every member of the team knows what they are doing to achieve the task;

Q6. What makes a good team member?

- Being supportive of the other team members;
- Learning from any mistakes that were made during the task so that things can improve for next time.

A team is only as strong as its weakest link and it is important that everyone within the team works together and helps each other.

Q7. Can you give an example of when you have worked well under pressure?

TIPS...

- Try to give an example of when you have carried out a difficult/pressurised task under strict time constraints.
- Give a specific example and don't forget to use the **STAR technique** in your response.

✓ **SITUATION**

✓ **TASK**

✓ **ACTION**

✓ **RESULT**

Q7. Can you give an example of when you have worked well under pressure?

Yes, I can. I am often required to carry out time sensitive tasks under pressure, but one particular incident springs to mind. I work in a large retail shop just outside of town. One Friday a few weeks ago, my manager called a team meeting and he explained to us all that a large delivery was due to arrive within a couple of hours' time. Unfortunately, the delivery was a week early and he'd not had time to prepare. We were understaffed and it was already 4pm on Friday, so we only had one hour after the store had closed at 5pm to get the stock take accepted, loaded in store and checked for accuracy.

Q7. Can you give an example of when you have worked well under pressure?

He asked all of us whether we would volunteer to help him out with the delivery. I immediately put my hand up and volunteered to help. I could see that he was slightly flustered and he clearly needed help from the team. Unfortunately, only myself and one other member of staff offered to help. However, we were both determined to do a good job for our manager and we immediately started planning how we were going to get the stock unloaded, checked and placed in store within the one hour timeslot allocated.

Q7. Can you give an example of when you have worked well under pressure?

We decided to play to each others strengths. I would utilise my organisational and accuracy skills to check the stock as it came off the lorry, whilst my colleague would carry it all to the stock room, as he was physically strong and extremely fit. As we progressed with the task we communicated with each other to make sure we were working to the required standards and time frame. The end result was that we completed the task thoroughly with just 6 minutes to spare. This gave us time to report back to our manager who thanked us for volunteering and working hard to achieve the goal.