**Resume Based Questions – Reading Material**

**Overview**

So you've written an excellent resume and you've landed a job interview. What should you look out for at the interview? Successful interviewing will be essential in order for you to lock in an offer. This topic helps you to construct your responses to the Resume based interview questions in such a way that they are clear and filled with confidence.

**Objectives:**

This reading material is designed to help you:

* Answer resume based questions with confidence

**Introduction**

Each interview takes on a life of its own, but there are certain standard questions that arise. By reviewing them in advance, you can arrive confident and ready to articulate your skills and qualifications.

Among other things, the interviewer asks questions based on your resume. Resume-related interview questions are the most common type of questions asked in an interview. It is mainly:

1. To get more information on your background
2. To get an idea about how suitable you are for the job opening
3. To check if you have provided accurate information on your resume, or whether you have lied/exaggerated
4. To clarify hazy areas in the resume – like why you have a gap in work history, or why you have been let go from a previous company.

There are two sources from which a fresher will be asked questions.

1. Resume
2. Self-Introduction and his/her answers to the questions that the interviewer asks.

This is the most common form of interviews for most jobs. The interviewer goes through the candidate’s resume and asks her questions on her education or prior work experience. The objective is to determine fit between the candidate and the position/company.

The interviewer knows the skills/qualities required for the job he is recruiting for. All he has to do is to ask questions to determine if the candidate has those skills or demonstrated ability to handle similar situations. It is a very straightforward interviewing technique. A thorough preparation with great amount of practice is all you need to pass these interviews successfully.

You should take care of the following while appearing for resume based interviews:

* + Know exactly what you have written in your resume from top to bottom, every point in detail, every number should be memorized
  + Have a consistent and concise story for every point on the resume.

Here are some frequently asked questions that are based on your resume:

1. **Tell me about yourself or “walk me through your resume”** – This question is one of the most commonly asked questions in job interviews. Avoid giving your life history – keep your answer related to your profession, and most importantly, don't deviate from the information you've given in your resume.

Come with three stories that give examples of your strengths and skills

* Complete these statements:
* I have always been glad that I have the ability to…
* My greatest achievement this year was…
* One of my skills that I hope to use in my work is…

1. **Career Objective**

If your resume has a vague objective or has too many difficult words or clichés you may be asked to explain your objective.

Example of an objective that may require an explanation:

**Career Objective:**

Ardent to uplift myself as an intellectual maverick in a salubrious competitive ambience matching my Educational Cognizance and Quality skills where I can also be financially stable.

Wow! This is a mouthful...

Tip: Keep your career objective simple and short. Include a) Position applied b) Functional area c) Industry wanted. This way you will not have problems explaining the career objective.

1. **Technical or Professional Skill set**

The interviewer knows the skills/qualities required for the job he is recruiting for. All he has to do is to ask questions to determine if the candidate has those skills or demonstrated ability to handle similar situations. It is a very straightforward interviewing technique. A thorough preparation with great amount of practice is all you need to pass these interviews successfully.

Example:

Professional Skill Set:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Programming Languages | C,C++, .Net(c#)JAVA |
| Database | SQL Server 2008. |
| Scripting Languages | HTML |
| Operating Systems | Windows, Ubuntu |

If the above table represents your skillset you may be asked the following questions

* Programming Languages – Questions in C, C++, .Net(c#) and JAVA. You may be even asked to compare Java and C++ or .Net and Java.
* Database – Questions on SQL Server 2008 ( questions on stored procedure , trigger, Normalization may be asked)
* Scripting Language – Questions on HTML (questions on tags, image map etc... may be asked)
* Operating Systems – Questions about the latest version of Windows or you may be asked to compare Ubuntu and Windows.

Tip: Only include skills that you possess not something that you would like to possess. Come well prepared to answer knowledge based and skill based questions related to your Technical/Professional skills.

1. **Education and performance based questions**

There seems to be a gap of about a year in your education or a gap after that a year or so before this interview... - Be honest. It is easy to explain if you had taken the break to recover from a sickness, to nurse a sick person, or for maternity/paternity leave. If you had been doing voluntary work, or had taken a break to travel – even that is fairly easy to explain. But it might not be so easy if you had just not felt like studying or working or you were finding it difficult to get a job. In such cases, instead of saying what you had not been doing, say what you had been doing. If you can include how you benefited by that break, both in personal or professional terms that is excellent. Basically, you mustn't give the impression that you had been sitting around in your pyjamas watching television!

Other Possible questions

* + 1. If you have a declining trend in your mark sheet, your least being your degree marks
    2. If you have gaps in education or arrears.

Tip: Answer truthfully and tell the interviewer how to learnt from your mistakes and the corrective measures you have taken.

1. **Project Details**

The emphasis in this question is on a project that you have successfully completed. It’s a perfect opportunity to blow your own trumpet.

Make the very most of this question to highlight your skills and abilities which led to the successful completion of the project – being careful to pick those which are most of relevance to the job for which you are now applying. Make your contribution to the project clear. What role did you have to play in its success?

Unless the interviewer specifically asks you for a project for which you had sole responsibility, it is reasonable to assume that they are happy with you talking about a project you worked on as part of a team – which is the case for the majority of projects.

1. **Hobbies and Extra Curricular Activities**

When thinking about which hobbies to mention, it should go without saying that answers like “going to all-night raves” or “spending money playing poker online” aren’t going to paint you in the best light – so avoid anything that could be frowned upon or viewed as something that could affect your performance in work like drinking or gambling.

Also, avoid any generic, boring hobbies like “watching TV”, “listening to music” or “keeping fit” – these don’t really mean anything and add no value to you as a candidate.

Sport is always a good hobby to mention – so if you’re involved in any sort of sport or fitness competition, this is a good way to promote your people skills to your prospective employer.

If you play a sport regularly with a team – whether it be a 5-a-side football at the weekend or a monthly netball tournament – mention it because this shows that you work well within a team, are results-oriented and love a bit of competition – all positive traits in the workplace!

Also, if you genuinely do go to the gym regularly, instead of saying that you like to “keep fit”, explain how you go to the gym three times a week and follow a strict fitness plan to improve your strength/stamina etc. This is a more detailed answer and shows off your dedication and self-discipline, rather than giving off the impression that you’ve just made your hobbies up on the spot.

**Other important questions:**

What are your career goals?

Remember what you have written as your job objective, and weave your answer in with what you want to do in this company. Don't sound too pompous or pretentious, and make sure you don't talk about wanting to be the director in five years – be modest, but confident.

What are your greatest strengths?

From this list of common responses, think of examples from your work experience and/or academic achievements that you can use to back up your answer.

If you have already written an Achievement Oriented Resume, you can simply take those examples and expand on them during the interview.

Detail oriented

Quick learner

Team player

Interpersonal skills

Creative

Analytical

Efficient

What are your weaknesses?

DO NOT respond with “I work too hard.” This response is now considered cliché.

DO respond with areas where you used to have problems, but have since fixed them.

Example 1: If you used to be disorganized, tell the hiring manager what steps you took to create new habits and processes to keep yourself organized.

Example 2: If you used to work inefficiently, tell the hiring manager how you increased your work output by learning new skills or asking for help from more experienced team members.

If the hiring manager presses you for areas where you are currently weak, try to talk about an area where you might have a knowledge deficit, and outline the steps you are currently taking to get yourself up to speed.

Why are you interested in working for us?

You’ll need to research the company you’re applying for to competently respond to this question. Here are a few general reasons why you may be interested in working for a specific company:

You believe in their mission

You have an interest in the industry

You like their brand

You believe your skill set can help the company succeed

Where do you see yourself in 5 years, 10 years?

This question may seem tricky, but it’s actually fairly simple to answer. The hiring manager asks this question to figure out if you’re going to use the company as a stepping-stone, or if you have long terms plans.

No one really expects you to have a 5-10 year plan. Your answer should follow these parameters:

You hope to increase your skills and learn more about the industry.

You aren’t sure exactly where you’ll be in 5 years, but you’d like to have worked your way up into a management position.

Avoid saying that you do not know the answer.

Why should I hire you?

In actuality, you’re answering this question the entire time you’re being interviewed. But, if you hear this question directly, this one is easy to answer.

* Tell them how your history and work experience makes you an ideal candidate.
* Reference the skills, abilities, and knowledge you have that is either directly applicable to the job, or transferable in some way.
* Tell the interviewer that you hope to make their job easier by taking on as much responsibility as possible.

Before the interview, you should research what role you’d be filling in the company. Have responses that directly respond to how you’d be the best candidate to do the job.

**Conclusion:**

Before you attend the interview, do read your resume from end to end – one, it boosts your confidence, and two, it pays to be familiar with every detail, and know what exactly you have written, and where. You must be able to justify every statement, and have a supporting statement/story for any point that might be raised.

Read up on the company, its performance, and the job opening before the interview, so your answers at the interview can be tailored to present yourself as an asset to the company.