

## Common Interview Questions

In order to sell yourself during an interview, you need to match your qualifications and skills to the position.

- What are the key ongoing responsibilities of this position?
- What are the key technical problems to be solved and challenges to be met in satisfying these ongoing responsibilities?
- What technical and/or professional knowledge must a person have in order to successfully solve these problems and meet these challenges?
- What are the specific objectives for this position for the current year?
- Where are the key technical challenges that must be met and problems that must be solved if these objectives are to be successfully achieved?
- What technical and/or professional knowledge must a person have in order to successfully solve these problems and accomplish these objectives?

You must address these issues to convince the future employer that you are right for the job.

- Good eye contact establishes rapport and shows that you are attentive and interested. It also enables you to better judge the effects of your presentation.

Some further suggestions for a successful interview include:

- Conduct yourself with optimism and enthusiasm from the moment you walk into the company
- Know exactly who will be conducting the interview.
- Always respond to an interviewer's questions with positive answers.
- Postpone salary discussions if at all possible. If you are pressed to give your salary, avoid naming a figure. Instead give a range based upon your total compensation.
- Bring several copies of your resume and a list of questions that you intend to ask. From an interviewer's perspective, a list does not reflect negatively on anyone.
- Before concluding an interview, make certain that you leave no question unanswered. Know, if possible, what other steps are to be taken and when, what the timing is for filling the position.
- Dress Code remember to dress to the nines, I know that you already know this but this is a drill I go through with every candidate I am presenting to a client, so bear with me. Most often our male candidates dress in a black or blue suit, a white shirt, non-descriptive tie, black shoes and black belt.
- Carry in a portfolio with a pad of paper to write things down, questions you have prepared for the company and extra copies of your resume
- Arrive 10 minutes prior to the interview; if you get there early just grab a cup of coffee.
- Always have six well informed questions to ask the hiring officials. One question I definitely want you to ask them is "What is expected of me the first six months on the job?" That way you can tie your experience into the position and show the type of value you can bring to the table immediately.
- If the salary question comes up just say "I am currently making \_\_\_\_ and I will consider any reasonable offer you are prepared to make me." Stay away from any vacation, benefit, etc questions. If by chance during the interview they answer all your questions before you have a chance to ask them, ask the interviewer questions about themselves; such as "How long have you been with the company?"; "Why do you like working at \_\_\_\_\_?"; "Where did you go to school?"; etc.
- Good eye contact
- NO NEGATIVISM; if they ask you why you are looking keep it positive
- Initiate dialog, no lengthy rambling answers and no one word answers
- Always indicate your interest in the position when closing with each person you meet (if that's the case). Tell them you're excited and that this is the type of role you are looking for and that you hope to hear back from them soon. People want people that are excited and want the job!



The following list is representative of commonly asked questions. Prepare answers and say them aloud to an honest friend to be sure that you have internalized the response. This will enhance your confidence in the interview and you will be able to listen rather than having to concentrate on formulating your best response.

1. What do you know about the company?
  - a. Be prepared with some information about such things as products, size, income, reputation, image, goals, problems, management talent, management style, people, skills, history and philosophy.
  - b. Don't say you don't know much; indicate that you would like to know more.
2. Why do you want to work for us?
  - a. Mention a company project you would like to take part in or a company problem you think you can help solve.
  - b. Describe some contributions you think you can make to specific company goals.
3. What can you do for us that someone else can't?
  - a. Relate past success in solving previous employer problems that may be similar to those of the prospective employer.
4. What do you find most attractive about this position?
  - a. Mention the challenge of the assignment and the opportunity to achieve results.
5. Why should we hire you?
  - a. Cite a need you can fill. Refer to your relevant skills.
6. What do you look for in a job?
  - a. Include opportunities to use your specific capabilities and to increase and develop your skills.
7. How long would you stay with us?
  - a. Meaningful answers do not have to include time periods of months and years. For example, you might reply "As long as....."
8. What is your management style?
  - a. Refer to your abilities to set goals, objectives and action plans, and mention that you encourage participative management by getting input from your staff.
9. As a manager, what did you look for when you hired people?
  - a. Refer to skills, initiative, adaptability.
10. What do you see as the most difficult task in being a manager or an executive?
  - a. A good answer might be: "Delegating."
11. What important trends do you see in our industry?
  - a. If you are a novice in the industry; don't fake it.
12. Why are you leaving your present job?
  - a. Give a nonpersonal, but factual answer when possible.
  - b. Stick to one response; don't change answers during the interviews.
13. Have you helped reduce costs? How?
14. Do you like working with figures more than with words?
15. What do your subordinates think of you?
16. What are your five most significant accomplishments in your current or last position? In your career so far?
  - a. Memorize these.
17. What do you think of your supervisors?
18. Would you describe a few situations in which your work was criticized?
  - a. Demonstrate how you can turn criticism into an opportunity to learn and improve.
19. Tell me more about yourself.

- a. Identify and structure key areas and influences of your background to form a coherent answer; do not ramble.
  - b. Turn it back with “What else would you like to know about me?”
20. What other types of jobs and companies are you considering?
- a. There’s no need to be too specific here.
21. How would you describe your own personality?
- a. Be balanced, but essentially focus on the positive.
22. Are you a leader?
- a. Give examples.
23. What are your goals?
- a. Avoid statements such as “I would like the job you advertised.” Instead, give long-range goals.
  - b. Relate your answer to the employment rather than giving a self-serving reply – “In a firm such as your, I would like to be....” not “I am so capable, I should be...”
24. What are your strong points?
- a. Present at least three.
  - b. Relate them to the interviewing company and job opening.
25. What are your weak points?
- a. Do not say you have none.
  - b. Turn a negative into a positive answer. For example, “I am sometimes impatient and do the work myself when we close to a deadline.”
26. What position do you expect to have in five years?
- a. Respond in terms of objectives (responsibilities, accomplishments) rather than job titles. For example, “A job in which I can....”
27. What are you doing, or what have you done, to reach those objectives?
- a. Give yourself credit.