



Interview Questions You Need To Know How To Answer

"Tell me about your strengths"

Think about this now. Write down what you do best. Become conscious of what you like to do. Don't downplay your positive attributes. The interviewer will only hear about the good things you do if you tell them. If you keep it to yourself you're only doing yourself harm.

"Tell me about your weaknesses"

Be honest with yourself. Do play the game and try to think of something that you've been improving or could improve, but be honest. All of us have strengths and all of us have weaknesses. If you find yourself hiding from the truth (like you hate kids but are applying to be a school teacher) question whether you should really be interviewing for this position.

"What did you enjoy most about your last position?"

Be positive. Never say, "Oh, I can't really think of anything I liked now you mention it." (I have been given this answer when interviewing and it kind of reflects badly on the person). Beyond being affirmative and upbeat, try to think of something you liked to do in the position that is part of the new position you are applying for (i.e. "I really liked working with the public" when applying for a Customer Service position).

"What did you least like about your last position?"

Every one of these questions should be answered honestly but try to steer away from saying anything that sounds too negative or makes a comment on the kind of work you will be doing. If you realize that you disliked an aspect of your old job that is a major component of the new position you're applying for, consider a career change. You'll be a happier person if you find work you like to do.

"Where do you see yourself in five years?"

This question is asking you to think about your future with the company. Prior to your interview, think about and write down your answer to this question. Where do you hope to be with the company in five years. Don't hedge too much, don't say, "Well, it's difficult to say. Five years is a long time away." Use the question to target the interview. Your answer should be different every time you interview with a different company (unless they are competitors in the same industry with identical corporate structures).

"Do you like to work alone or as part of a team?"

This question waits in your path like a mine waiting to take your leg off, but the answer is not always obvious. Some jobs require you to spend a long time alone on projects. Other companies have a total commitment to the team building idea of running a business. Target your answer depending on (a) what you really, truly prefer and (b) on what the interviewer seems to be looking for (knowing the company culture will give you your answer). Most people answer with a nod to both - they're flexible. Be careful of sitting on the fence. Whatever you answer, sound like you mean it.

"How would you describe your work style?"

This question is perfect for targeting the interview. Knowing what you know about the company and the industry, you should be able to describe your work habits, illustrate

them with examples from school or work and tailor them to fit the way the company you're applying for works.

"How do you react under pressure?"

This question is best answered with a concrete example of how you handled a stressful situation from your past work history. Referencing a real example will give greater validity to your answer. For example, you might say, "In my last job I wore many hats and a lot of stress occurred around deadlines. I eased the stress by planning out a schedule which I sent to everybody on my team. That way we all were responsible for finishing a particular job on time."

If you can't refer to a specific example where you handled stress - think how you would do so hypothetically. You might say, "I would handle a stressful situation by looking at my workload and seeing if it was reasonable. If I couldn't get the job done in the time required, I might seek help from my co-workers or advice from my manager."

Or finally, reference a personal example of stress management. For example, "When I was stressed by exams at school, I would break down the tasks I had to do into more manageable components then tackle them one by one."

"Why do you want this job?"

This question is a gift although sometimes it can seem overwhelming. When preparing for your interview, you should study the job description and make a bulleted list of what aspects really appeal to you and play to your strengths.

"Why should I hire you?"

Sound like a difficult question? Does it make you feel like crying or just apologizing for turning up, followed by a burning desire to jump out the window? Don't do it. The question is so easy! Turn it around. It is offering you a chance to list off several ways that you suit the position, i.e. you like advertising, you're a computer guru, you've got a proven track record in sales behind you. Use the question to identify yourself with the position. Make the interviewer think, "Why wouldn't I hire this person?"

Other questions to think about:

- "How do you feel about working overtime?"
- "Would you relocate if need be?"
- "Would you be willing to travel?"
- "Why do you want to work for this company?"
- "What are you most proud of?"
- "Give an example of a problem you have solved?"