



Blue Moon

Communications

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

This is usually the opening question and, as first impressions are key, one of the most important.

Keep your answer to less than five minutes.

Refer to our 'How to Prepare for Interview' PDF on the Free-Information page for a full break-down of how to answer this question.

WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS?

Tell them:

Your top 3 'job specific' skills.

This shows that you can do the job well.

Your top 3 'transferable' skills.

This shows that you can bring added value to the job.

Your positive personality traits.

This shows that you are hard working or creative or whatever other positive things you decide to tell them which would make you a good choice for the job.

WHAT ARE YOUR WEAKNESSES?

Choose a job specific skill or a transferrable skill that is 'currently' weak for you and show how you are prepared to address it, perhaps through advanced reading material or night classes. Or, discuss a weakness that you used to have and say that you like to deal with any weaknesses head on, which means that you tend to deal with them as soon as you have identified them.

NEVER say that you do not have any weaknesses, as it will make you seem overly confident and lacking in self awareness.

NEVER say “I have a tendency to work too hard” as this is seen as an avoidance tactic or a lie.

Do discuss a skill that **used to be** a weakness but that you have already rectified and your initiative will be perceived as a strength.

WHY SHOULD WE HIRE YOU?

An interviewer wants you to tell them what combination of skills sets you have that make you unique in terms of what you will bring to the job.

Remember the skill sets that were written in the job advertisement and confirm that you have these.

Tell them about your transferable skills and the value they add.

Tell them about your biggest achievements and show how those skills are valuable to this type of business.

Tell them about your positive personality traits and how they would make you a good fit for the company.

Tell them that given the opportunity you would work hard to ensure their company’s success.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS TIME?

A. If This Is Your Dream Job

Tell them that this is your dream job.

Tell them that in five years time you would like to be working within their organisation and be a valuable part of the team.

B. If This Is NOT Your Dream Job

Show that you have short term and long term goals.

Tell them what you would eventually like to achieve in your career.

Tell them the steps that will take you there and how you see this position as being the right place for you right now and that you would work hard to be as successful in this position as possible.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK HERE?

The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you’ve prepared properly for the interview. You should have a good inside knowledge of the company’s values, mission statement, development plans and products and show that you are a good fit.

Never say “I just need a job.”

NAME THREE POSITIVE THINGS YOUR LAST BOSS WOULD SAY ABOUT YOU

Third party recommendations always carry value. So this gives you a good opportunity to say how great you are!

Include:

One thing that shows your ability to do the job.
One thing that shows another skill that they would find valuable.
One personality trait that would help you to fit in with their team.

EXAMPLE:

“My last boss told me that I am the best office manager he has ever had. He knew that he could always rely on me, and he liked that I got on so well with our customers.”

WHAT ARE YOUR SALARY EXPECTATIONS?

If the company has provided a guideline salary with the job description, you could mention this and say it's around the same level you're looking for.

You could say that you would be prepared to start at a low salary until you have proved that you are a valuable asset and then say what your expectation is over the next three years.

You can prepare by researching in advance what the going rate might be for your skills by taking the lowest and highest figures.

You could say that you are open to negotiation.

Try not to specify numbers in the heat of the moment as this could put you in a poor position when negotiating later on.

IF YOU WERE AN ANIMAL, WHICH ONE WOULD YOU BE?

It is completely irrelevant what type of animal you choose provided that you explain how the animal has the required skill-sets for the job you are interviewing for.

For more information on how to write a great CV and Cover Letter or for tips on doing a great interview take a look at the TV programmes 'Get That Job' created by Carol Anne Lowe www.bluemoon.ie/recent-news/