



## Job Interview Technique

First answer the typical job interview questions and then compare your answers to the advice given after each question.

### Personality Questions

Interviewer: Describe yourself.

Remember, this is a job interview, not a psychological or personal interview. The interviewer is interested in the information about you that relates to your qualifications for employment, such as education, work experiences and extracurricular activities.

Good adjectives to use are: balanced, fair, friendly, honest, outgoing and reliable.

Interviewer: What are your strong points?

Present at least three and relate them to the interviewing company and job opening.

Tailor your answer to meet the needs of the employer e.g. "I see myself as a goal-oriented individual who in my previous role achieved above projected results."

Interviewer: What are your weak points?

Don't say you haven't any.

Try not to cite personal characteristics as weaknesses, but be ready to have one if the interviewer presses.

Try to transform your response and the question into a strength. "I'm the kind of person who likes challenges and gets involved. Some people may see that as butting in, but I'm sure it could be looked at as a strength because I like to make sure the job gets done correctly."

Interviewer: Do you like working with figures more than words?

Be honest but positive.

Make it clear that you are confident and comfortable working with both.

Don't say "depends on the figures -nudge nudge wink wink!"

Interviewer: What was the last book you read? Movie you saw? Sporting event you attended?

Talk about books, sports or films that represent balance in you life.

Stick to something fairly mainstream or classic.





## Achievements

Interviewer: Have you helped increase sales? Profits? How?

Imply that you have done so on many occasions, then concentrate on describing one in detail.

Quote facts and figures.

Interviewer: Have you helped reduce costs? How?

Same as above.

Interviewer: How much money did you ever account for?

Be specific and recount a particular contract with facts and figures.

Interviewer: How many people did you supervise on your last job?

Be specific - the more the better, but don't exaggerate.

Interviewer: In your current or last position, what features did you like the most? Least?

Relate your response to what the new job can offer.

Don't dwell on the negative aspects.

Interviewer: In your last position, what were your five most significant accomplishments?

You could refer to the key accomplishments already identified in your CV.

Keep it brief and use statistics if appropriate.

## The Job

Interviewer: Why should I hire you?

Stress what you have to offer the employer, not how nice it would be to work there or what you want from the employer.

Interviewer: Why do you want to work for our company/organization?

Not having an answer is a good way to get crossed off the candidate list, and is a common pet peeve of interviewers. Research the employer before your interview; attempt to find out about the organization's products, locations, clients, philosophy, goals, previous growth record and growth plans, how they value employees and customers, etc.

Interviewer: What do you expect to be doing five years from now? Ten years from now?

The interviewer is looking for evidence of career goals and ambitions rather than minutely specific descriptions. The interviewer wants to see your thought process and the criteria that are important to you.

Interviewer: Don't you feel you might be better off in a different size company

Depends on the job - elaborate slightly.

Reiterate how your skills, qualifications and previous experience lend themselves to the job you are applying for with this company.





## Your Work Style

Interviewer: Can you work under pressures, deadlines, etc.?

Yes. Quite simply, it is a way of life in business

Interviewer: In your present position, what problems have you identified that had previously been overlooked?

Keep it brief and be sure to say how you overcame the problems.

Interviewer: How do you resolve conflict on a project team?

First you would discuss issues privately and tactfully. If the problem is not resolved then action would need to be taken which, in a severe case, could mean removing a member of the team.

You would operate within the company's disciplinary policy.

Interviewer: What was the most difficult decision you ever had to make?

Attempt to relate your response to the prospective employment situation.

Do not mention trivial issues e.g. the time you had to choose between Emmy Lou and her twin sister Scarlet O'Hara. Or whether to wear the blue or red tie to the interview.

## Salary questions

Interviewer: How much are you looking for?

Answer with a question, i.e., "What is the salary range for similar jobs in your company?"

If they don't answer, then give a range of what you understand you are worth in the marketplace.

You could also use your current salary as a base and say that you are looking to improve on this but be careful in case that lowers the wage they offer.

Interviewer: How much do you expect, if we offer this position to you?

Be careful; the market value of the job may be the key answer e.g., "My understanding is that a job like the one you're describing may be in the range of .... "

Interviewer: What kind of salary are you worth?

Have a specific figure in mind... don't be hesitant.

Avoid joking and saying that they couldn't afford it!

You should also be prepared to answer questions about your health, more technical questions related to your qualifications, research or current job and any interests you have mentioned on your CV or application form.

References:-

<http://www.jobsite.co.uk/articles/candidate/c1/s12/a2490.html>

<http://www.career.vt.edu/JOBSEARC/interview/questions.htm>

