



## Interview Questions

### Most Common Interview Questions:

#### **1. Tell me about yourself / Describe yourself.**

*Sample Answer: "My background to date has been centered around preparing myself to become the very best financial consultant I can become. Let me tell you specifically how I've prepared myself. I am an undergraduate student in finance and accounting at \_\_\_\_\_ University. My past experiences have been in retail and higher education. Both aspects have prepared me well for this career."*

#### **2. Why should we hire you?**

Be prepared for this question because this answer will sell your story. Know clearly what you bring to the organization such as your knowledge, skills, experience, education/training and personal qualities that demonstrate why you are the best person for the job. Be able to show how you add value to the company. Always qualify your answers with quantifiable results you have achieved in previous jobs or assignments. This will add tremendous credibility!

*Sample Answer: "I think I am a great match for this position. My degree in management coupled with more than 10 years of experience managing 100+ employees and delivering top notch training, helped me to improve staff productivity by 30% and reduce employee turnover. I believe that I can do the same for your organization and would be a great addition to your team."*

#### **3. Why do you want this job? / What about this job interests you?**

The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you've given this some thought and are not sending out resumes just because there is an opening. Be clear about why you are interested in the job and the value you can bring to their organization.

*Sample Answer: "I've applied to companies where I know I can get excited about what the company does. Your company is one of my top choices. This job is really attractive to me"*



*because it combines my interest and experience in logistics and security with work in a more global business environment.”*

#### **4. What are your strengths? / How will your greatest strength help you perform?**

This is one question that you know you are going to be asked so be prepared! Concentrate on discussing your main strengths. List three or four proficiencies such as your ability to learn quickly, determination to succeed, positive attitude, your ability to relate to people and achieve a common goal, etc.

*Sample Answer: “My strength is my flexibility to handle change. As a front line manager at my last job, I was able to turn around a negative working environment and develop a very supportive and productive team.”*

#### **5. What is your greatest weakness?**

Most career books tell you to select your strength and present it as a weakness. Such as: "I work too much. I just work and work and work." Wrong. First of all, using strength and presenting it as a weakness is deceiving. Second, it misses the point of the question. You should select a weakness that you have been actively working to overcome.

*Sample Answer: “I have had trouble in the past with planning and prioritization. However, I'm now taking steps to correct this. I just started using a pocket planner...” then show them your planner and how you are using it.”*

Talk about a true weakness and show what you are doing to overcome it.

#### **6. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? / What is your long-range objective?**

The key is to focus on your achievable objectives and what you are doing to reach those objectives, be honest and specific about your future goals.

Take into account: A hiring manager wants to know a) if you've set realistic expectations for your career, b) if you have ambition, and c) if the position aligns with your goals and growth. Your best bet is to think realistically about where this position could take you and answer along those lines. And if the position isn't necessarily a one-way ticket to your aspirations? It's OK to



say that you're not quite sure what the future holds, but that you see this experience playing an important role in helping you make that decision.

*Sample Answer: "Within 5 years, I would like to become the very best mechanic your company has on staff. I want to work toward becoming the expert that others rely on. Hopefully, this will allow me to take on greater responsibilities with the company if the opportunity arises. I am also working towards additional certifications in the field to enhance my career potential."*

### **7. How do you handle pressure?**

Sample Answer: "When dealing with pressure and stress, I take a moment to prioritize what I have going on. Pressure to perform well is a good kind of pressure as long as I do not allow it to become negative stress. I prioritize what is truly most important and focus on getting that done and done well."

### **8. What are your salary expectations?**

Do your research and know your bottom line. Research the industry standard for the positions you are applying for in your geographic area. Whenever possible, try to defer the salary question on the first interview so that you don't under or over sell yourself. If pressured, be prepared to give the employer a salary range.

*Sample Answer: "I'm sure that your company offers a fair, competitive salary for someone with my education / training, skills and experience. I am also willing to negotiate for the right position."*

*Sample Answer: "I will need more information about the job and the responsibilities before we can discuss salary, but it would be great if you could give me an idea of the salary range you have budgeted for this position."*

### **9. Do you prefer working in a team or alone?**

Trick question. Either way, the answer is wrong and the correct answer is actually both.

*Sample Answer: "I have worked alone and in a team and I enjoy both challenges. My preference is governed by which method provides the best solution to the task on hand."*



*Although in my experience, joint efforts produce better results than an equal number of mutually exclusive staff.”*

#### **10. What influenced you to choose this career?**

*Sample Answer: My past experiences have shown me that I enjoy facing and overcoming the challenge of making a sale. Without a doubt, once I have practiced my presentation and prepared myself for objections, I feel very confident approaching people I don't know and convincing them that they need my product. Lastly, I like sales because my potential for success is limited only by how much of myself I dedicate toward my goal. If any profession is founded on self-determinism, it surely must be sales.*

#### **11. How would you deal with criticism?**

Another trick question with only one right answer – you can take criticisms. But you don't have to sound like a complete pushover.

*For example: “I try to look for the positive inside any criticism. I find constructive criticism a way of objectively analyzing at my work with a view to finding and correcting any problem. Unjustly criticizing people in a hurtful manner is a practice which I see very differently. It can demoralize people which can affect every part of their lives. Good morale is essential for any team to work at their best.”*

#### **12. How has your education prepared you for your career?**

This is a broad question and you need to focus on the behavioral examples in your educational background which specifically align to the required competencies for the career. Talk about your intern experiences and the projects you have worked on in college & university.

*Sample Answer: "My education has focused on not only the learning the fundamentals, but also on the practical application of the information learned within those classes. For example, I played a lead role in a class project where we gathered and analyzed best practice data from this industry. Let me tell you more about the results..."*



### **13. Are you planning on having children?**

Questions about your family status, gender (“How would you handle managing a team of all men?”), nationality (“Where were you born?”), religion, or age, are illegal—but they still get asked (and frequently). Of course, not always with ill intent—the interviewer might just be trying to make conversation—but you should definitely tie any questions about your personal life (or anything else you think might be inappropriate) back to the job at hand.

### **14. Have you ever had a conflict with a superior or colleague? How did you handle it?**

Almost everyone has been in this situation. If you say no, interviewers will usually dig deeper until you can give them an answer. The key is to show how you reacted to the conflict and what you did to resolve it.

*Sample Answer: “I think that everyone at some point has had a conflict at work whether it’s with a supervisor or co-worker. I’ve found that when I’m in a difficult situation, it helps to communicate with the other person, understand their perspective and try to work out a collaborative solution whenever possible.”*

Focus your answer on the behavioral process for resolving the conflict and working collaboratively.

### **15. If I were to ask your bosses to describe you, what would they say?**

This is a threat of reference check question. Do not wait for the interview to know the answer. Ask any prior bosses or professors in advance. And if they’re willing to provide a positive reference, ask them for a letter of recommendation.

*Sample Answer: “I believe she would say I’m a very energetic person, that I’m results oriented and one of the best people she has ever worked with. Actually, I know she would say that, because those are her very words. May I show you her letter of recommendation?”*

*So be prepared in advance with your letters of recommendation.*

### **16. What qualities do you feel a successful manager should have?**



Focus on two words: leadership and vision. Then tell of how that leadership and vision translated into your personal delivered results.

*Sample Answer: "The key quality in a successful manager should be leadership—the ability to be the visionary for the people who are working under them. The person who can set the course and direction for subordinates, keeping them focused on what is most important for delivering the highest priority results. The highest calling of a true leader is inspiring others to reach the highest of their abilities. I'd like to tell you about a person whom I consider to be a true leader..."*

Then give an example of someone who has touched your life and how their impact has helped in your personal development.

### **17. What can you offer us that someone else can not?**

Sample Answer: "I believe that my unique blend of experience, problem solving skills and people skills differentiates me from most other candidates. Past training and job experiences have allowed me to take on and complete projects and assignments of high importance and increasing difficulty while on time and under budget. And now, I want to be part of your team and solving problems for you."

*Sample Answer: "In my last job, I helped increase third quarter sales by 30% and this increase was a direct result of my ability to work with our customers to find out what they need that we as a company were not providing to them. I am motivated, disciplined and focused and am willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done."*

### **18. What is your dream job?**

The job you are applying should come close. Otherwise, hiring managers will likely think twice about giving you the job.

*Sample Answer: "I feel that this job ticks most of my dream job boxes. It is a challenging role, requiring a significant amount of skill and ability, which I feel I have. Having always excelled in a stimulating environment, I relish the task of working for a cutting-edge company. This position represents an exciting opportunity for me to realize my potential."*



**19. What would you look to accomplish in the first 30 days to 90 days on the job?**

Start by explaining what you'd need to do to get ramped up. What information would you need? What parts of the company would you need to familiarize yourself with? What other employees would you want to sit down with? Next, choose a couple of areas where you think you can make meaningful contributions right away. (e.g., "I think a great starter project would be diving into your email marketing campaigns and setting up a tracking system for them.") Sure, if you get the job, you (or your new employer) might decide there's a better starting place, but having an answer prepared will show the interviewer where you can add immediate impact—and that you're excited to get started.

**20. Please describe the ideal job for you following graduation.**

Sample Answer: "My ideal job is one that incorporates both my education and practical work skills to be the best I can be. Namely combining my education in finance with my working knowledge of customer-service operations, entrepreneurial abilities, computer skills, and administrative skills. I want to utilize my analytical expertise to help people meet their financial goals. This is exactly why I am convinced that I would be a very valuable member of team."

**21. Give me an example of how you met a tight deadline?**

Detail the steps you took to help the project meet the deadline.

*For example: "My team and I were often tasked with time critical and difficult jobs. I found effective planning to be an invaluable aid by saving time later in the task. A good overview of the project ensured I could assign result-focused responsibilities to the team and formulate backup plans should anything go wrong. Good organization also helps with dividing a large project into smaller more manageable tasks, which helps with project monitoring. My team never once failed to meet a deadline."*

**22. Why are you looking for a new job?**

**23. What are three things your former manager would like you to improve on?**

**24. Are you willing to relocate?**

**25. Are you willing to travel?**



- 26. Tell me about an accomplishment you are most proud of.**
- 27. Tell me how you handled a difficult situation.**
- 28. How would you deal with an angry customer?**
- 29. Give a time when you went above and beyond the requirements for a project.**
- 30. Who are our competitors?**
- 31. What are some of your leadership experiences?**
- 32. What's your management style?**
- 33. Why was there a gap in your employment?**
- 34. Can you explain why you changed career paths?**
- 35. What strategies would you use to motivate your team?**