

Common Interview Questions

Interviewing is a learnt skill that improves over time with practice. Below are some of the most common questions that interviewers often ask and how best to answer to put your best foot forward.

1. Tell me a bit about yourself?

This question is often a hard one to answer. How much do I tell? What are they asking me? The expectation is an explanation of your experience and background as it aligns with the role, along with your education. This is not a complete employment history job by job. Keep your answer short and relevant.

2. What do you know about our company?

This question assists the interviewer in uncovering whether you have taken the time to research and understand the organisation and its values and culture. Before the interview, you should always view the company's website, social media accounts or any other marketing material to fully understand the organisation and its products or services, opportunities or difficulties in the market, and recent news or headlines. Ensure that your answer is an overview and that you don't quote the website.

See Preparing for an interview - Researching the Organisation.

3. What interests you about this job? / What made you apply for this role? / Why do you want to work for our company?

This question can be a question asked either via telephone or face to face. This question gives the interviewer an idea of if you are looking to work for them, the type of role they are offering, or if you are looking for any job. This is where you can demonstrate that you have undertaken some company research, why you want to join the company, company culture and values and how you see this role as an opportunity.

See Preparing for an interview - Researching the Organisation.

4. What Are Your Greatest Strengths?

Before attending the interview, know who you are and what you are good at. This question provides the perfect opportunity to provide 2-3 skills or qualities relevant to the position. E.g. if the role is a reception role, you maybe be required to have strong communication skills and be customer-focused.

See Preparing for an interview - Researching Yourself.

5.What Do You Consider to Be Your Weaknesses?

Don't raise any major red flags. Instead, you should demonstrate and gauge your self-awareness and honesty. Always choose a quality or skill you struggle with but one that you can improve and provide an example of how you might work towards improving the skill or quality. Turn a negative into a positive. See Preparing for an interview - Researching Yourself.

6. What did you like and dislike about your current/previous job?

The interviewer is looking to determine whether your cup is half full or half empty. It is always best to focus on what you like rather than what you don't like. Always talk about the culture and the organisation in a good light.

If you do answer dislike, ensure that it is something that can be improved easily or is not in the next role. Do not negatively discuss your current workplace.

7.Why are you looking to leave your current position?

This question can give a lot away about you. Ensure that you look forward to the new opportunities rather than negatively discuss your current workplace.

8. What is your salary expectation for this position?

This question can be a question asked either via telephone or face to face. Interviewers are trying to understand and gauge your salary expectations and whether they align with the role on offer. Be honest about the salary range you are looking for.

Should your salary expectation not be within the range of the interviewer's expectations, e.g. significantly higher than what the role is paying, then continue to look for a job that aligns with your expectation and skillset.

9. What have you learned from your mistakes? / What could you have done better in a particular situation?

Remember, nobody is perfect; it is customary to make mistakes. This question shows your ability to reflect and look at how to improve and the ability to move past a situation.

Be honest about one or two mistakes or particular situations and what you would change or improve for the next time.