

Insert career
Center Logo
Here

Possible Interview Responses

Here are some thoughts to consider when crafting your interview responses.

1. Why are you interested in our company?
 - a. This is a good opportunity to show that you've done research on the organization.
 - b. State some examples about how you see yourself fitting in at the organization.
 - c. This is a good opportunity to insert your 60 Second Commercial.
 - d. This is also another good opportunity to tie your values to the company's values.

2. What kind of work do you most enjoy? ...and dislike?
 - a. The first part of this question may be easier for you to answer than the second part.
 - b. Be careful not to mention disliking aspects of the position you are interviewing for. Instead, compare your former positions with the position you are interviewing for. For example, if this is a fast paced job, you may want to say that the pace at your previous job was slower than you prefer. Never speak poorly about your former boss or company!

3. Why did you leave your last job?
 - a. Refrain from speaking negatively about your previous employer.
 - b. If you were laid off: Saying you were laid off because of lack of work is unfortunately common these days and not "bad". You can always highlight that due to downsizing your position was targeted.
 - c. If you were fired: Prepare an easily said, direct response saying what happened and what you learned. Refrain from using emotional language because you may be seen as angry or bitter. After all, who is going to hire an angry or bitter employee? Was there a change in expectation or attitude or a new boss? And **did you learn anything** from that experience that has or will help you grow and be a better employee elsewhere? For example, "I had a new supervisor in my last position that had different expectations from the former supervisor. As a result of this I was terminated. What I learned from this experience is that organizations are constantly changing and I now know how to adjust to changing expectations."

4. What are your strong and weak points?
 - a. Most of us easily state our strong points but have a difficult time with weaknesses.
 - b. The best work related weakness to highlight is one that you identified and then did something about to either conquer it or make it less significant. An example might be making a presentation to a group was difficult until you got coaching or went to a course about delivering presentations. Another example is: you were unfamiliar with some computer software such as PowerPoint so you reached out to others to learn and use it.

5. Imagine you are a product at a hardware store and this company is shopping. Which product would you be and why?
 - a. This is a good example of a question that you may not anticipate.
 - b. A good approach is to think of a trait or strength that you would bring to the job. Then describe what in that category you could use as an example of that trait. For example, if you wanted to mention that you are a good communicator you might select "telephone." You could point out that you could communicate the company's goals to others or you can market how a product would be helpful for the customer. Do you have high energy? Perhaps you'd be a rechargeable battery for a variety of tools.
 - c. Sometimes these questions are posed to see how you think, process information, or problem solve.

6. Where do you see yourself in five years?
 - a. When answering this question, try to relate your future plans to the company.
 - b. Do you see yourself being promoted? Do you see yourself training new people about the company and its methods? Can you envision yourself being cross-trained so you would be able to help the company be successful in a variety of ways?
 - c. Two common mistakes when answering this question are saying you want to take the job of your boss, or that you are looking forward to retirement in a couple years.

7. Tell me about an achievement you have had that will apply to this job.
 - a. This is where your research and preparation really pays off.
 - b. Can you introduce a better way of doing something? What have you done that would be useful? How did customers like you and did they return?
 - c. Don't just name specific strengths, give an example of how you used that particular strength in your former position.
 - d. Stories are a powerful way to convey information.

8. What are your salary requirements?
 - a. Instant interviewing proverb: "They who first mention a salary will be at a disadvantage."
 - b. A good response to this question would be to mention your interest in the company and that you would like to learn more before discussing specific salary requirements. You may also mention you are aware of the salary range based on (Labor Market Information? Conversations with employees?) and would entertain an offer within that range.
 - c. You may if pressed, mention a specific salary range, but be sure you are able to accept the lowest figure of the given range.