

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & HOW TO ANSWER THEM

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

Q: "Tell me about yourself"

What they're really asking:

 **Bad answer:**

 **Good answer:**

 **Strategy:**

- Focus on professional background, not personal life
- Mention 2-3 key achievements
- Connect to the job you're applying for

Q: "What are your strengths?"

What they're really asking:

 **Bad answer:**

 **Good answer:**

 **Strategy:**

- Choose 2-3 relevant strengths
- Give specific examples (use STAR method - see below)
- Connect to job requirements
- Be confident but not arrogant

Q: "What are your weaknesses?"

What they're really asking:

 **Bad answer:**

 **Good answer:**

 **Strategy:**

- Choose a real but minor weakness
- Show you're working to improve it
- Don't mention critical skills for the job
- Turn it into a learning experience

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE

Q: "Why did you leave your last job?"

What they're really asking:

 **Bad answer:**

 **Good answer:**

 **Strategy:**

- NEVER criticize previous employers
- Focus on future opportunities, not past problems
- Be positive and forward-looking
- If you were fired, be honest but brief: "The role wasn't the right fit, but I learned from the experience."

Q: "Describe a challenge you faced and how you dealt with it"

What they're really asking:

 **Use the STAR Method:**

S - Situation: "A customer ordered 50 products for an event, but our supplier couldn't deliver on time."

T - Task: "I needed to find a solution within 24 hours or we'd lose a major client."

A - Action: "I contacted three alternative suppliers, found one with stock, arranged express delivery, and personally called the customer to explain and apologize."

R - Result: "The products arrived on time. The customer was impressed by our quick response and placed another order worth £5,000."

 **Strategy:**

- Always include the result
- Use numbers when possible
- Show YOUR actions, not just the team's
- Choose examples relevant to the job

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE JOB & COMPANY

Q: "Why do you want to work here?"

What they're really asking:

 **Bad answer:**

 **Good answer:**

 **Strategy:**

- Research the company beforehand
- Mention specific things (campaigns, values, products)
- Connect your skills/values to theirs
- Show genuine enthusiasm

Q: "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?"

What they're really asking:

 **Bad answer:**

 **Good answer:**

 **Strategy:**

- Show ambition but not arrogance
- Indicate you want to stay with the company
- Be realistic about progression
- Focus on development and contribution

Q: "What's your expected salary?"

What they're really asking:

 **Bad answer:**

 **Good answer:**

 **Strategy:**

- Research typical salaries beforehand (use Glassdoor, Indeed)
- Give a range, not a specific number
- Try to let them mention numbers first if possible
- Consider the whole package (holidays, benefits, training)

Q: "Do you have any questions for us?"

What they're really asking:

 **Bad answer:**

 **Good questions to ask:**

- "What does a typical day look like in this role?"
- "What are the main challenges facing your team right now?"
- "How do you measure success in this position?"
- "What opportunities are there for training and development?"
- "What's the next step in the hiring process?"
- "Can you tell me about the team I'd be working with?"

 **Strategy:**

- ALWAYS have 2-3 questions ready
- Show interest in the work, not just benefits
- Don't ask about salary/holidays in first interview