

# Top 10 Interview Questions (...And How To Answer Them)



## 1. "Tell Me About Yourself..."

This classic opening question should probably be put out to pasture but it's still one of THE most common interview questions you'll face and it still seems to trip up a ton of job seekers every year. (Plus I doubt it's going anywhere soon, so you need to prepare for it.) You can check out our article on [tell me about yourself](#) for more in depth info.

### DO:

- Keep your answer **succinct** and **to the point**.
- **Be work specific** and tell the hiring manager about where you are now professionally, what you have **learned from your past work experiences** and then talk about what makes you excited about this specific opportunity.
- Do your company research and find out exactly what **strengths** and **qualities** this specific company is looking for and in your answer try and show the hiring manager you possess them (You can discover these strengths or qualities in the job description or on their website.)

### DON'T:

- **Don't dive into your life story.**
- The hiring manager doesn't want to hear about you "growing up on 28th avenue down the road from the Trader Joe's and how it was a coincidence because you had a brother named Joe! (etc...)".
- Don't go on about experience you may have that isn't related to the job you're interviewing for.

## Jeff's Tip

At the end of your answer **try segueing into an insightful question for the hiring manager** that shows you understand exactly what issues or problems the company is for looking for you to solve.

## 2. "Why Should We Hire You?"

This is another incredibly common question and it gives you a great opportunity to stand out from the crowd and really show the hiring manager how you can help the company.

The key thing to remember here is: **be specific**.

Leverage your company research and the job description to find exactly **why** the company is hiring someone for this position. What problem/pain points does the new hire have to solve? You need to show that you are the perfect candidate that can solve those problems/pain points.

We have written an in depth blog post on [why should we hire you here](#).

DO:

- Show the hiring manager that you are **uniquely suited to filling this position**. Be the candidate that solves their “problems”.
- Show you know some significant details about the company and their general practices because you have researched the firm and are prepared.
- Tell a “success story” that highlights how you have the ‘qualities’ needed to fill their **specific needs**.

DON'T:

- Don't get discouraged if the hiring manager mentions that “they have lots of very well qualified candidates...” before they lead into this question. (It's a common “lead in”)
- Don't be too modest. This is your chance to shine. Make it count.
- On the flip side don't go too overboard and sound too arrogant.
- Don't be “wishy-washy” or too general with your answer.
- Don't answer with “why” you want the job. Answer with “**why you are the perfect fit**” for the job.

Do you want a **word-for-word sample answer** to this question? Well, you're in luck! We've prepared a Job Questions and Answers PDF Cheat Sheet that will give you perfect sample answers to Why Should We Hire You as well as the other questions on this page. [Click Here To Get It Now](#)

## 3. "What Is Your Greatest Strength?"

This is a fairly straight forward question to handle. Talk about a “strength” that you know the company puts a lot of value in.

We have written an in depth blog post over at: [What are your strengths and weaknesses?](#)

DO:

- **Grab hold of the opportunity this question gives you**. This question really lets you guide the interview where you want it to go. This your chance to relate your most impressive success story, so take advantage!
- Highlight a strength that is crucial to the position. (As I mentioned earlier)
- Find out from your company research and from the job description what strengths the company puts a lot of

stock into.

**DON'T:**

- Don't make claims that you can't illustrate with a brief example or fact.
- Don't be overly modest but don't claim to be Superman or Superwoman either.
- Don't name a strength that is irrelevant to the job at hand.

## 4. "What Is Your Greatest Weakness?"

This classic question freaks people out but it shouldn't. As long as you pick a weakness that **isn't a key competency** for the job and you show that you have taken steps to "work on it", you will be fine. Don't try and sidestep this question.

**DO:**

- Show that you are aware of your weakness and what you have done to overcome it.
- Show that you are "self-aware" and that you have the ability to take steps to improve yourself.

**DON'T:**

- Don't you **DARE** answer with the cliché "I'm a perfectionist" answer or any other such answer that the hiring manager can see right through.
- Don't highlight a weakness that is a core competency of the job. (Know the job description "inside and out".)
- Don't dodge this question.

Do you want a word-for-word sample answer to this question? Well, you're in luck! We've prepared a Job Questions and Answers PDF Cheat Sheet that will give you perfect sample answers to What's Your Greatest Weakness as well as the other questions on this page. [Click Here To Get It Now.](#)

## 5. "Why Do You Want To Work For Us?"

The hiring manager is trying to get at your underlying motivations for wanting this job. Are you here just for a paycheck or do you see yourself becoming an integral part of the company and growing along with it? **You need to show them that you want to become "part of the family"**.

At the same time however, show how your "wants" coincide with their "needs".

**DO:**

- Talk about specific things you like about the company. Do your homework before and find out the needs of the company and talk about how **you're passionate about "fulfilling those needs"**.
- Be complimentary. Most people enjoy being flattered. (Just don't go overboard)
- Show how your strengths perfectly align with the job position and company culture.

**DON'T:**

- Don't come off as a "hired gun" who may be gone in a few months.
- Don't say "because I need the money." (You'd be surprised how many job seekers think this is "cute" and

actually answer this way. Don't.)

## Jeff's Tip

Bring up something specific that you've found during your company research phase and tie it in with your answer. For example, if you discovered that they **recently held an inaugural live event bringing together people from around the country in their niche, bring it up!** The event (or anything else interesting you discover) can be an example of why you admire the company and want to work for them. This tactic will help you stand out from your competitors and get the hiring manager seeing you in the job already.

## 6. "Why Did You Leave Your Last Job?"

This question can really make a lot of job seekers nervous. If you were literally fired from your last job, you're going to have to own up to it and show what you learned from the experience and what measures you have taken to address the reasons you were let go.

If you left voluntarily be sure to explain why. For example: You wanted a different challenge. **Hint:** A challenge offered by the company and position you're interviewing for



We tackle this question in more depth in [our blog post here](#).

### DO:

- If it was because you left voluntarily then **reference a specific characteristic that the company you are interviewing for has** that you are attracted to. One that your previous employer didn't have.
- If you were let go, be honest and explain the situation and own it. **Explain what you learned from the experience**, because the interviewer knows you're human, you make mistakes, and just wants to see that you were able to do something about it
- Words like "downsizing" and "budget cuts" and "bad economy" are good defenses if they are true and are the reasons for departure from the job.

### DON'T:

- Don't bash your last company or boss or anything along those lines.
- Don't say, "It's time for a career switch and I'd like to try my hand at the job you are offering" or "I'm tired of doing the same old thing." Give a pointed, Positive reason for why you want to head off in a new direction.
- Don't lie if you were fired.

Do you want a word-for-word sample answer to this question? Well, you're in luck! We've prepared a Job Questions and Answers PDF Cheat Sheet that will give you perfect sample answers to Why Did You Leave Your Last Job as well as the other questions on this page. [Click Here To Get It Now](#)

## 7. "What Is Your Greatest Accomplishment?"

This is somewhat similar to the “what is your greatest strength?” question and can be handled along the same lines. You want to **pick an accomplishment that shows you have the qualities that the company puts value in** and that are desirable for the position you’re interviewing for.

The fact is you may have several accomplishments you could pick from. Pick one that will have the most impact.

**DO:**

- Talk about an accomplishment that exhibits how you will be a perfect fit for the company and for the position you’re interviewing for.
- Try and show some genuine passion when you’re talking about your accomplishment.

**DON'T:**

- Don’t fall into the trap of thinking your accomplishment is “too small”. The fact is, relating a small accomplishment that is inline with “what the company values” can be more powerful than an unrelated accomplishment. (**Remember: “It’s not about you, It’s about them.”**)

## Jeff's Tip

If your "greatest accomplishment story" highlights skills that would be useful in the job you're interviewing for (which it should!), then you can highlight that fact. For example, if you were relating an accomplishment that centered around "**teamwork**", you could finish your answer with something like: *"...which is why I'm so excited for the possibility of working in this type of team environment. As you can see, I think I thrive in collaborative situations and I'd love to bring that here to XYZ company..."*

## 8. "Describe A Difficult Work Situation And What You Did To Overcome It..."

This is one of those pesky [behavior interview questions](#) and is one of the most common. You need to have a “success story” ready to go for this. Relate a story where you dealt with a problem successfully. The key here is to pick a success story that shows you exhibiting the qualities/skills required at the job and company you are interviewing for.

**DO:**

- Pick an example that shows you tackling a problem that could arise at the new company you’re interviewing for. This shows your value.
- Be specific and fairly concise.
- Use the S.T.A.R. Method (Situation, Task, Action, Result – Read our [behavioral 101 article for explanation.](#))

**DON'T:**

- Don’t bash anyone in your success story. (Coworker, boss or customer!)
- Don’t ramble.

## Jeff's Tip

To really stand out, tell a success story that not only shows you handling a problem that could arise in the position you're interviewing for, but also shows you have multiple other desired qualities you know from your research the company desires. For example, you could tell a problem solving story about you handling a **productivity problem** at your last job by exhibiting **leadership** and **your ability to handle conflict between coworkers**. (In other words, combine multiple desired qualities into one answer.)

## 9. "Where Do You See Yourself In 5 Years?"

This question catches a lot of job seekers off guard because on the surface it seems simple enough but when you dig a little deeper you'll see that there are a couple of traps you could fall into.

You **DO** want to show that you are an ambitious person **BUT** you need to show that you don't have your "head in the clouds" and are focused on the job at hand. For more in depth info on this question check out our blog post: [Where do you see yourself in 5 years](#).

### DO:

- Demonstrate when you answer the question your level of commitment to the position they are interviewing you for.
- After you have demonstrated your commitment to the role you are interviewing for, outline a realistic growth strategy that is **directly tied to the role you're in and the needs and values of the company**.
- Stress your interest in a long-term career at the company

### DON'T:

- Don't exhibit ambition to the point of seeming like this particular job is just a "brief stepping stone" for you. You need to show commitment.
- Don't say you want to be CEO of the company in 5 years.
- Don't say "Actually I want to be in YOUR seat within the next 5 years." to the hiring manager.



## 10. "Do You Have Any Questions For Me?"

Around 75 percent of job seekers will say "Nope, I think that's everything" to this question.

### Terrible response.

This question gives you a fantastic opportunity to stand out from the crowd and show your knowledge and passion for the company or organization you are interviewing for. Always have a few questions prepared and have one based around something you found during your company research phase. For more in depth info, check out our blog post: [Top 14 questions to ask during an interview](#).

### DO:

- Focus your questions on the company and what you can do for them.
- Ask about something you've discovered in your company research. This will show your passion and knowledge of the company.

- Ask if there is any reason the hiring manager wouldn't hire you. (This can be a little daunting to ask BUT can really pay off. It allows you to address something they may be thinking in their head but haven't brought up.)

#### **DON'T:**

- Never say "No, I think I'm good." **Always have questions ready!**
- Don't focus your questions on yourself and what you can get from them. (i.e.
- Don't ask questions that you could easily find the answer to.
- Don't ask about time off and benefits too early in the process.
- Don't ask how soon you can start applying for other positions in the company.

## **Jeff's Tip**

Just because the interviewer may often ask you this question at the end of the interview doesn't mean you shouldn't ask any questions beforehand. **In fact, one of the best ways to turn the interview from an "interrogation" into a "conversation between colleagues" is to ask questions throughout the interview.** Asking questions throughout will make the interviewer see you as part of the team already and it will calm your nerves (if you have any) significantly.

## **Conclusion**

Ok there you have it. Our top list of job interview questions. (Along with the Do's and Don't s on how to answer them.)

The key thing to remember is to focus on the needs of the company instead of your own when answering any job interview question. As we always say every job interview and every one of your answers to any job interview question should be **"tailored"** to the company you're interviewing with. The next thing you should download our free special report that outlines the **"tailoring method"** and gives you **sample answers to 5 of the questions we went through in this list!**

## **FREE: Job Interview Questions & Answers PDF Cheat Sheet!**

Download our "Job Interview Questions & Answers PDF Cheat Sheet" that gives you **word-for-word sample answers to the interview questions IN THIS ARTICLE** including:

- **What Is Your Greatest Weakness?**
- **What Is Your Greatest Strength?**
- **Tell Me About Yourself**
- **Why Should We Hire You?**
- **And all the rest!**

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