

GENERAL JOB QUESTIONS

Questions start the minute the interview does, and to show that you are an exceptional candidate, you need to be prepared to answer not only the typical questions, but also the unexpected. You can expect questions regarding your qualifications, your academic preparation, career interests, experience, and ones that assess your personality.

Tell me about yourself

The most often asked question in interviews. You need to have a short statement prepared in your mind. Be careful that it does not sound rehearsed. Limit it to work-related items unless instructed otherwise. Talk about things you have done and jobs you have held that relate to the position you are interviewing for. Start with the item farthest back and work up to the present.

What experience do you have in this field?

Speak about specifics that relate to the position you are applying for. If you do not have specific experience, get as close as you can.

Do you consider yourself successful?

You should always answer yes and briefly explain why. A good explanation is that you have set goals, and you have met some and are on track to achieve the others.

What do you know about this organization?

This question is one reason to do some research on the organization before the interview. Find out where they have been and where they are going. What are the current issues and who are the major players?

What have you done to improve your knowledge in the last year?

Try to include improvement activities that relate to the job. A wide variety of activities can be mentioned as positive self-improvement. Have some good ones handy to mention.

Are you applying for other jobs?

Be honest but do not spend a lot of time in this area. Keep the focus on this job and what you can do for this organization. Anything else is a distraction.

Why do you want to work for this organization?

This may take some thought and certainly, should be based on the research you have done on the organization. Sincerity is extremely important here and will easily be sensed. Relate it to your long-term career goals.

What kind of salary do you need?

A loaded question. A nasty little game that you will probably lose if you answer first. So, do not answer it. Instead, say something like, That's a tough question. Can you tell me the range for this position? In most cases, the interviewer, taken off guard, will tell you. If not, say that it can depend on the details of the job. Then give a wide range.

Are you a team player?

You are, of course, a team player. Be sure to have examples ready. Specifics that show you often perform for the good of the team rather than for yourself are good evidence of your team attitude. Do not brag, just say it in a matter-of-fact tone. This is a key point.

What is your philosophy towards work?

The interviewer is not looking for a long or flowery dissertation here. Do you have strong feelings that the job gets done? Yes. That's the type of answer that works best here. Short and positive, showing a benefit to the organization.

Explain how you would be an asset to this organization

You should be anxious for this question. It gives you a chance to highlight your best points as they relate to the position being discussed. Give a little advance thought to this relationship.

Why should we hire you?

Point out how your assets meet what the organization needs. Do not mention any other candidates to make a comparison.

What is your greatest strength?

Numerous answers are good, just stay positive. A few good examples: Your ability to prioritize, Your problem-solving skills, Your ability to work under pressure, Your ability to focus on projects, Your professional expertise, Your leadership skills, Your positive attitude .

Tell me about your dream job.

Stay away from a specific job. You cannot win. If you say the job you are contending for is it, you strain credibility. If you say another job is it, you plant the suspicion that you will be dissatisfied with this position if hired. The best is to stay generic and say something like: A job where I love the work, like the people, can contribute and can't wait to get to work.

Why do you think you would do well at this job?

Give several reasons and include skills, experience and interest.

What is more important to you: the money or the work?

Money is always important, but the work is the most important. There is no better answer.

Tell me about your ability to work under pressure.

You may say that you thrive under certain types of pressure. Give an example that relates to the type of position applied for.

What motivates you to do your best on the job?

This is a personal trait that only you can say, but good examples are: Challenge, Achievement, Recognition

Are you willing to work overtime? Nights? Weekends?

This is up to you. Be totally honest.

How would you know you were successful on this job?

Several ways are good measures: You set high standards for yourself and meet them. Your outcomes are a success. Your boss tell you that you are successful

Would you be willing to relocate if required?

You should be clear on this with your family prior to the interview if you think there is a chance it may come up. Do not say yes just to get the job if the real answer is no. This can create a lot of problems later on in your career. Be honest at this point and save yourself future grief.

Are you willing to put the interests of the organization ahead of your own?

This is a straight loyalty and dedication question. Do not worry about the deep ethical and philosophical implications. Just say yes.

How do you propose to compensate for your lack of experience?

First, if you have experience that the interviewer does not know about, bring that up: Then, point out (if true) that you are a hard working quick learner.

What qualities do you look for in a boss?

Be generic and positive. Safe qualities are knowledgeable, a sense of humor, fair, loyal to subordinates and holder of high standards. All bosses think they have these traits.

Tell me about a time when you helped resolve a dispute between others.

Pick a specific incident. Concentrate on your problem solving technique and not the dispute you settled.

What position do you prefer on a team working on a project?

Be honest. If you are comfortable in different roles, point that out.

Describe your work ethic.

Emphasize benefits to the organization. Things like, determination to get the job done and work hard but enjoy your work are good.

Tell me about the most fun you have had on the job / college.

Talk about having fun by accomplishing something for the organization.

Do you have any questions for me?

Always have some questions prepared. Questions prepared where you will be an asset to the organization are good. How soon will I be able to be productive? and What type of projects will I be able to assist on? What is the interviewer's educational background? Let him describe the working environment.