

Potential Job Interview Questions

1. "Tell me a little about yourself."

If you're the candidate, talk about why you took certain jobs. Explain why you left. Explain why you chose a certain school. Share why you decided to go to grad school. Discuss why you took a year off to backpack through Europe, and what you got out of the experience. When you answer this question, connect the dots on your resume so the interviewer understands not just what you've done, but also *why*.

2. "What are your biggest weaknesses?"

Choose an actual weakness, but one you're working to improve. Share what you're doing to overcome that weakness. No one is perfect, but showing you're willing to honestly self-assess and then seek ways to improve comes pretty close.

3. "What are your biggest strengths?"

Provide a sharp, on-point answer. Be clear and precise. If you're a great problem solver, don't just say that: Provide a few examples, pertinent to the opening, that *prove* you're a great problem solver.

4. "Where do you see yourself in five years?"

Tell about your hopes and dreams, interests and passions, the work you like to do, the people you like to work with.

5. "Out of all the other candidates, why should we hire you?"

If you're asked this question ... use it as a chance to highlight things you haven't been able to touch on.

7. "Why do you want *this* job?"

Talk about how the position is a perfect fit for what you hope to accomplish, both short-term and long-term.

8. "What do you consider to be your biggest professional achievement?"

Here's an interview question that definitely requires an answer relevant to the job. The goal is to share achievements that let the interviewer imagine you in the position -- and see you succeeding.

9. "Tell me about the last time a co-worker or customer got angry with you. What happened?"

Conflict is inevitable when a company works hard to get things done. Mistakes happen. Sure, strengths come to the fore, but weaknesses also rear their heads. And that's OK. No one is perfect. Every business needs employees who willingly

admit when they are wrong, step up to take ownership for fixing the problem, and, most important, learn from the experience.

10. "Describe your dream job."

Identify things about the job you're interviewing for that will help you if you do land your dream job someday, and then describe how those things apply to what you hope to someday do.

11. "Why do you want to leave your current job?"

Let's start with what you *shouldn't* say. Don't talk about how your boss is difficult. Don't talk about how you can't get along with other employees. Don't bad-mouth your company. Instead, focus on the positives a move will bring. Talk about ways you want to grow, about things you want to accomplish; explain how a move will be great for you *and* for your new company.

12. "Tell me about the toughest decision you had to make in the last six months."

The goal of this question is to evaluate the candidate's reasoning ability, problem-solving skills, judgment, and possibly even willingness to take intelligent risks.

16. "Tell me about a time you disagreed with a decision. What did you do?"

Every company wants employees willing to be honest and forthright, to share concerns and issues but to also get behind a decision and support it as if they agreed, even if they didn't.

17. "A snail is at the bottom of a 30-foot well. Each day he climbs up three feet, but at night he slips back two feet. How many days will it take him to climb out of the well?"

The interviewer isn't necessarily looking for the right answer but instead a little insight into your reasoning abilities. All you can do is talk through your logic as you try to solve the problem. Don't be afraid to laugh at yourself if you get it wrong -- sometimes the interviewer is merely trying to assess how you deal with failure.

18. "What questions do you have for me?"

"What do you expect me to accomplish in the first 90 days?"

"If you were to rank them, what are the three traits your top performers have in common?"

"What are the company's highest-priority goals this year, and how would my role contribute?"