

Prime Candidate

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Top 5 Basic Interview Questions



2. Why do you want to work here?

Make certain to let them know you have researched their company. Begin by saying something like: "I've done my homework and I'm particularly impressed with..."

Name several positive aspects about the organisation:

- The latest innovations they are making in the market
- Ways they outperform the competition
- Expansion plans
- Positive press, etc.

3. What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?

This is your invitation to sell yourself. You want to highlight how your skills and experience combine to create a direct match with the position requirements. You also want to distinguish yourself from the competition by displaying the added value you will bring to the job and to the company as a whole.

Make certain you are well practiced in your responses to this question. To be a standout candidate, you need to speak to your strengths with confidence:

- Be prepared to list a minimum of 5 to 10 skills that relate specifically to the position for which you're applying
- Substantiate these targeted skills with examples of how you have used them to perform your work at its best
- Note the positive results you've achieved for your previous employers, quantifying your accomplishments whenever possible
- You can use speech softeners as sentence openers if you find them helpful. For example, "I pride myself on..." "I like to think that..." "My supervisor always complimented me on..." "People turn to me for..."

4. Give me a time when you... (the event-specific question)

These types of questions are also known as behavioural-style questions.

Study the job description and pinpoint the specific skills requested in the job description:

- Anticipate questions and prepare targeted examples
- Create a "cheat sheet" complete with trigger words that will help you remember the examples you want to use



5. Do you have any questions for us?

Yes, you do! It is critical that you come with a list of well thought out questions. Then you can pick and choose the most appropriate as the interview unfolds.

It's best to start with open-ended questions that will get the hiring manager talking about his/her true needs:

- What do you see to be the most critical components of the job?
- What needs to be done immediately?
- What are some of the long-range goals of the position?
- How can the new person make your life easier?

Also be certain to ask questions that show you've done your homework:

- I understand your company is expanding into new markets in Asia/Europe/America etc., how will this affect your department?
- With the launch of product X, what do you anticipate customer reaction to be?

If you prepare compelling and targeted responses to these five typically asked questions, you can approach the interview from a position of strength. Take pride in the skills and experience you offer a future employer, and with the right attitude, and confidence in your abilities, you just might find yourself at the top of the candidate list!

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