



# Common Interview Questions

The following questions are commonly asked by employers during the job interview process. You could be asked any of these questions during a telephone interview or an in-person interview. To be well prepared, be sure to become familiar with each question, why employers ask that particular question, and how to answer the question.

**Q: Tell me about yourself:** The employer is interested in knowing about your past work experience, related education or training, and other strengths related to the position. The employer is not asking you to talk about your personal life.

**A: Sample Answer:** “I have over 10 years’ of experience as an Administrative Assistant. Some of my responsibilities have included completing financial reports, organizing schedules and meeting with board members. My strengths are time management, communication and computer skills. I am an individual who thrives on a challenge and enjoys giving excellent customer service.”

**Q: What are your goals for the future?** The employer wants to know what you are going to be doing in the next few years, regarding employment or education. The employer wants to be sure your goals fit with the role and the company. Employers do not want to invest a lot of time and energy in training someone if they believe that person will be leaving soon. Be sure to give the impression that you are committed to the role and company.

**A: Sample Answer:** “My immediate goal is to get a job as a Sales Representative in a growth-oriented company such as yours. I look forward to establishing myself in the Sales Representative role, continuing to grow in my role and take on additional responsibilities over time.”

**Q: Why should I hire you?** The employer wants to know why they should choose you instead of a different candidate. Summarize your skills and experience explaining what sets you apart from the rest of the competition. Be sure to explain how you can meet the requirements for the job.

**A: Sample Answer:** “I have the skills, experience and education needed for this role including a background in sales, strong customer service skills and a diploma in marketing. My previous employers have all commented on my strong commitment to getting the job done. I would be an asset to your company because I am a hardworking team player who always gives 100%.”

**Q: Why do you want to work here?** The employer wants to know that you have thought about where you want to work. Show that you have researched the company and are convinced the company is a good fit for you.

**A: Sample Answer:** “Based on the research I’ve completed, this company is an industry leader with exciting plans for the future. I also understand that the company has about 40 employees and I enjoy working in a place where I can get to know people on a first name basis. For these reasons, I would be excited about an opportunity to work here.”

**Q: Why did you leave your last job?** The employer wants to know if you quit, were fired or were laid off from your last job. It is important to stay positive, regardless of how you left. Do not say anything negative about past employers and be sure to talk about what you learned while working there.

**A: Sample Answer:**

**If you quit:** “After five years with X YZ Company, I felt I had gained all the skills and experience possible from that role. I am now looking for a growth opportunity where I can take on more responsibility and add value to a company.”

**If you were laid off:** “Unfortunately after several rounds of layoffs in my last company, my job was eliminated and I was laid off. I really enjoyed my time there because I was able to use my strong skills in customer service, sales and negotiation.”

**If you were fired:** “Being let go was difficult, but it has given me an opportunity to explore jobs that better suit my skills and interests. I am confident that this position with your organization will benefit both of us.”

**Q: What are your salary expectations?** The employer wants to see if your salary expectations are different from how much the company is willing to offer. Try to avoid giving a specific salary amount by saying that you would be willing to accept the going rate for this type of position or by giving a salary range.

**A: Sample Answer:** “I am sure we can agree on a reasonable amount for the role. What range do you typically pay someone with my skills and background?” In other cases, the employer will insist you give a specific dollar amount. Make sure you have completed research ahead of time on typical pay for similar positions in your area. Know the minimum amount of money you will be willing to accept and don't say anything lower than that. To create a realistic salary range, start with the lowest amount of money you will accept and go upwards from there.

**Hourly Rate:** “Having completed research and considered my background, I feel a fair salary range for the Warehouse position would be between \$16 and \$18 an hour.”

**Salary:** “Considering my background in the field, I believe a fair salary range for the Food Services Manager would be between \$42,000 and \$45,000 a year.”