

INTERVIEWER'S FAVORITE QUESTIONS

Following are some favorite questions from recruiters ranging from “easy” start-of-interview questions to “behavior-based” questions that are designed to measure your competence in a variety of areas and analytical questions that show how you think on your feet.

1. Tell me about yourself.

This is a standard ice-breaker that has almost become a cliché in the interviewing world. Don't tell the interviewer your life story. Offer a brief answer that relates to the job you are seeking.

2. Which of your accomplishments has made you most proud?

Use this question to show the intensity of your involvement and commitment to groups and tasks.

3. What's your greatest strength?

Answer honestly and don't embellish. Find a way to relate your strength to the job you are seeking.

4. What's your greatest weakness?

Again, answer honestly and clearly explain how you've become more focused, organized, or assertive after working to correct your weakness. Sometimes your weakness is the “flip side” of your strength. (Ex. Being a quiet introvert may be a strength)

5. Why do you want to work here?

Keep your answer positive and enthusiastic and be sure to weave in some of the research you've done on the company.

6. Why should we hire you?

Be ready to explain how your skills and experience are suited to the job and how you would fit into the corporate culture.

7. Tell me about a time when you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do?

This behavior-based question is designed to determine whether you're willing and able to take initiative on the job. Be sure that your answer is about a specific time.

8. Give me an example of a situation in which your ethics were challenged. How did you handle it?

Make sure your answer shows both your understanding of right and your ability to use tact and discretion. The example should be specific.

9. Tell me about a time when you were participating in a team project and somebody “dropped the ball.” What did you do to help the team finish the project on time?

This question gives you an opportunity to highlight a number of skills, including time management, team work, leadership, and commitment to a task.

10. Describe a specific problem you solved for an employer or professor. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome?

Make sure you give credit to other team members while highlighting your own part in solving the problem. This question gives you the opportunity to show you can make decisions and solve problems.

11. Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?

Your answer to this question can help the interviewer learn more about your time management skills. Be sure to focus on the steps you now take to avoid such a situation.

12. Describe a situation in which you got people who don’t like each other to work together. How did you do it? What was the outcome?

Highlight your teamwork and relationship-building skills when you answer this question.

13. If you were a vegetable, what kind would you be?

This off-the-wall question is designed to show your ability to handle an unusual request without getting flustered. Any answer will do, as long as you can explain why.

14. Imagine you are in the lobby of a hotel. How many people are in the lobby with you?

You can’t answer this question without asking more questions, such as, “What time is it?” and “Is there a convention in town”?

15. How would you cut a circular cake into eight pieces, making only three cuts?

This question measures your ability to “think outside the box.” (Hint: remember that a cake is a three-dimensional object.)

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