Career Explorations – Part 8 Interview Question and Answers

32 Points

Directions – You need to prepare answers for the following interview questions. The quality of your answers will control the number of points you will receive. The answers you give should reference specific events or qualifications you have achieved (or will have achieved).

1. Tell me about yourself.
   1. Be brief and to the point.
   2. Talk about your professional life, not your personal life.
   3. You can include significant moments in your life that shaped you for the job you are applying.
   4. Don’t tell your life story.
   5. Don’t talk about unrelated skills or previous jobs.
2. Why should we hire you?
   1. Show that you are uniquely suited to filling this position.
   2. Be the candidate that can solve their problems.
   3. Mention specific needs/facts about the company in your answer.
   4. Use a “success story” to prove that you have the qualities to do the job.
   5. Don’t be discouraged if the person interviewing you mentions “lots of well qualified applicants”.
   6. Don’t be modest, but don’t brag. Support your claims with examples.
   7. Don’t answer “why” you want the job. Answer “why you are the perfect fit”.
3. What would you say is your greatest strength?
   1. This open-ended question lets you guide the interview. Use this opportunity to mention you most impressive success story.
   2. Be sure to highlight a strength that is crucial and relevant to the position.
   3. Do company research to find what qualities the company values and try use one of them.
   4. Don’t mention a strength that you can’t back up with an example or fact.
4. What would you say is your greatest weakness?
   1. Don’t dodge the question and claim that you don’t have any.
   2. Don’t pick a weakness that is core the job you are applying for.
   3. Show that you are aware of the weakness and mention steps that you’ve taken to overcome it.
5. Why do you want to work for us?
   1. Talk about things you like about the company.
   2. Be complimentary. This is a chance to talk about the positives of the company that most attracted you.
   3. Connect your strengths with the company culture and job position.
   4. Don’t mention money or using this job as a “stepping stone” to the next big thing.
6. Why did you leave your last job?
   1. If voluntary (not fired) mention a specific characteristic that the company you are interviewing for has that your previous company did not.
   2. If fired (let go), be honest and explain the situation. Explain what you learned from your experiences.
   3. Don’t bash your last company and/or managers.
   4. Give a positive reason for why you wanted new employment.
7. What is your greatest accomplishment?
   1. Pick a professional accomplishment that exhibits how you will be a perfect fit for the company and for the position you are interviewing for.
   2. Try to show genuine passion in your response.
   3. It’s not about you. It’s about them. Better to connect a small accomplishment to their company that an unrelated big accomplishment.
8. Where do you see yourself in five years?
   1. Be sure to demonstrate a commitment to the position you are interviewing for. They don’t want you to be a temporary addition.
   2. Stress your interest in a long-term career at the company.
   3. Don’t say you want to the CEO or I want to be in YOUR seat.
9. How do you handle stress?
   1. Mention how stress is helpful or how you perform well under pressure.
   2. You prefer a challenging environment vs. doing something easy on a daily basis.
   3. I prefer to call stress FOCUS. I often do my best work when put in tough situations.
10. What questions do you have for me?
    1. “Nope”. Worst possible answer.
    2. Ask about something you’ve discovered in your company research.
    3. Ask if there is any reason the hiring manager wouldn’t hire you.
    4. Don’t ask questions you could easily find the answer to.
    5. Don’t ask about salary, benefits or time off.

Similar Questions – Use strategies from above answer to prepare for these questions as well.

1. Tell me about a time in your life that you overcame an obstacle?
2. Tell me about someone in your life that inspired you.
3. Would you consider yourself to be a leader or a follower?
4. Are you willing to travel/relocate with this company?
5. Why should we hire you over our other applicants?
6. Why do you want this job?

**Answering Tips**

1. Keep your answers brief and to the point. Don’t ramble on.
2. Be specific to your work experience and/or education.
3. Be prepared for any of the above questions.

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