**Unit 14**

**How to Answer 6 Common Interview Questions**

When you are invited for a job interview, there are some common interview questions that you are likely to be asked. Answering these interview questions in an honest, complete and well thought out manner can mean the difference between getting the job or going home.

The following questions are purposely open-ended and are asked in some form or another by most interviewers. Answering these interview questions correctly is a way for you to separate yourself in the interviewer's mind from the other job candidates. So use the following advice to give the best answers to the most common interview questions you are likely to be asked.

Instructions

1 Can you tell me a little about yourself?

This first interview question is the most common and will probably be asked by every interviewer you will encounter. It is also the hardest to answer without a little forethought.

This question should be answered in a manner that is concise and fairly relevant to the job you are applying for. The interviewer does not want to hear your life story, just some significant facts about you or experiences that led you to where you are now. Give a little background on your education, previous employment experiences and current situation. How you describe yourself should subtly include why you are suited for the job you are interviewing for.

For example, if you are applying for a job folding paper airplanes, you could include something like: "In my last job I worked in the paper folding department, but I decided I really wanted to move forward and focus my career on folding paper planes so I took classes on paper plane design".

2 What is your greatest strength?

This is another common interview question, but one that really gives you an opportunity to show how special you are and set yourself apart from the crowd.

When you answer this question don't be afraid to toot your own horn so to speak. You should answer confidently and positively, without being too arrogant. You are not bragging, just stating a fact about why you are so great and how your strength makes you perfectly suitable for the job.

Use the job description as your clue for what type of strengths they are looking for and focus on how your strength matches with their needs. For instance if the job describes a need for good organizational skills, then describe how you always organize yourself in a manner to get things done quickly and efficiently or that your strength is your attention to detail. If it seems like a fast paced, results driven job, then describe your strength as how well you work under pressure and enjoy having lots to do.

There are some things you should avoid when answering this question. Do not use personal strengths that are too personal or not at all related to the job. Your ability to build a bong out of driftwood or pay attention at meetings while doing sudoku puzzles are great, but they probably won't get you the job. Also, you don't want to completely lie about what your strengths are (exaggerate maybe, but not lie). There has to be some strength, ability or characteristic that you possess that will make you a good employee so reach deep down, find it and apply it to the job you are interviewing for.

A variation of this interview question is to list three of your greatest strengths. Be prepared with a few of your strengths just in case.

3 What is your greatest weakness?

This interview question is universally feared because the job interview is supposed to be about showing how great you are, not to display your shortcomings or incompetence. However, there are ways that you can answer this question that don't seem too bad or make you look like you can't do the job.

First of all, you have to answer with some weakness that you have. You cannot just say that you are all strengths and have no weaknesses. Even if you are perfect in every way, avoiding the question will just make you look like a liar or too full of yourself to be taken seriously. Another thing to avoid if possible is too obviously turning your weakness into a strength. Interviewers are generally hip to the answers "my weakness is that I work so hard it makes my coworkers look bad" or "sometimes I'm so focused on my work that I forget to eat".

The way to answer this question is with a minor weakness that is professional, but will not impact your ability to do the job that you are interviewing for. As always, you want to look at the job description and match your weakness to something that is not specifically required by the job. For example, if the job requires strong focus on teamwork your weakness could be something harmless like "my weakness is that I sometimes focus too much on the end result and not enough on the details of a project". When you answer the question, you should also include what steps you are taking to address this weakness. Continuing the example, "...so I have made an effort to increase the level of planning I do by outlining each step of a process".

By answering this question correctly you will demonstrate that you are self aware enough to know that you have faults, and that you are also proactive enough to work at overcoming them.

4 Why did you leave you last job? (Or, why do you want to leave your current job?)

There can be many reasons why you are looking for a new job from being downsized, just moving around or being grossly incompetent and fired from your last job. When answering this question you want to highlight the positive reasons that you are looking for a new job and downplay the negative reasons.

Above all this interview question should be answered positively. If this job is an upward move for you, you could say that you want to take your career to the next level to develop as a person, and that you feel ready to take on the new responsibility that this job offers. If the job is a lateral move, answer that you have the skills to do this new job and look forward to broadening your experience in the area. If the job is a step back, explain how you are qualified to do the job but this would be an opportunity to hone the skills you already possess.

Even if you were fired or downsized, answer like you were planning to move on anyway and being let go from your former job was just an opportunity to do so. Interviewers want to hire someone who genuinely wants the job, not someone who is desperately trying to take whatever comes their way. If you were fired, you should give a brief explanation, but try to focus on the circumstances rather than whose fault it was. This is not the proper time to rant about how mean your old boss was or the politics of your former company; no employer will want to hire a self-professed malcontent.

Another thing to remember when answering this interview question is that this is really not the place to talk about money. Increasing your income may be your motivation for applying for this job, but this question is not the place to discuss how you are just applying to this job for more money. There will be discussions about salary at some point so be patient. Employers are looking for someone who will be fulfilled and dedicated to the job, not just in it to make a buck.

5 Why do you want to work at (this company)?

The answer to this interview question will really depend on research you have done on the company before your interview. Before going to the interview, be prepared with some background on the company, and even the department or area where you are applying if possible. Some basic information to find out can be what exactly the company does, how big it is, what is its position in the industry, how it is viewed by the public or competitors and what its future looks like.

Your reasons for applying to this company could be varied, but your answer to the interview question should focus on why you think the company would be a great place to work, and how the company would benefit from having you. Describe what positive aspects of the company you like and why. Talk about how this company is perfectly suited for you in regards to your career goals and life plans. Be specific about the details of how well the company fits your plans, and how your abilities will fit in with the company's future. This tells the interviewer that you have done your homework and that you have really given some thought on where to apply.

6 What kind of salary are you looking for?

This is probably the most problematic interview question to answer. It's a classic catch-22 situation. If you go too high you might price yourself out of a job offer, but if you go to low then you are cheating yourself out of fair compensation. Answering this question, like many others, will require a little bit of preparation on your part.

If the job description does not come with a defined salary, then there are other resources you can use to find a range of salaries to base your answer on. Web resources such as salary dot com can be used to find what others are being paid for similar positions in that particular industry. Another resource is a Google search of the job title and salary. You could also look at other classifieds for comparable jobs that might have the salary expressed in the ad. The purpose of your research is to get an idea of what they consider an appropriate salary, what you deserve and what you might get.

When you answer the question, indicate that you have done some research and have a salary in mind. If you feel confident that you know what that salary should be and that you will get it, go ahead and say so. Be direct, "based on the job description and my research into the position, I feel that $XX would be an appropriate salary for someone with my experience". If you are not quite so sure what the exact number is, answer the same way but with a range of salaries you feel comfortable with based on your research. Make sure the range is not so wide that you sound ridiculous or so small that there is no room for negotiation. Plus or minus 10% on either side of your expected amount should give a comfortable range to work with.

Read more: How to Answer 6 Common Interview Questions | eHow.com <http://www.ehow.com/how_4861262_answer-common-interview-questions.html#ixzz1vzKJ5BuW>

Fun Questions to Ask Friends

http://www.askdeb.com/blog/love/80-fun-questions-to-ask-friends/

**Fun Questions About Movies to Ask Friends**

Everyone watches movies these days, so here are some fun questions to ask you friends about the movies.

1.What’s your favorite movie of all time and why?

2.What was the best movie you saw this last year and why?

3.Who’s your favorite director and why?

4.Do you like black and white movies? Why or why not?

5.Do you read movie reviews? If so, which reviewers do you enjoy? If not, why?

6.What’s the scariest movie you’ve ever seen? Do you like horror movies? Why or why not?

7.Who’s your favorite actor and why/

8.Do you cry at movies? If so, which movies make you cry?

9.What’s the funniest movie you’ve ever seen?

10.Would you rather see a movie at the theater or at home on DVD? Why?

Fun Questions to Ask Friends About TV

Even more people watch tv than go to the movies. So here are some fun questions to ask your friends about tv.

1.What’s your favorite tv show of all time and why?

2.How many hours a week do you spend watching tv?

3.What’s your favorite tv station and why?

4.What was your favorite tv show when you were growing up?

5.Who’s your favorite actor on television and why?

6.Would you rather watch a sitcom, a reality show, a police drama, a legal drama, or a medical drama? Or something else? Why?

7.Has a television show ever moved you to tears? If yes, which one and when?

8.Do you watch the news on tv? How often?

9.Have you ever been on tv?

10.If you were a character on a tv show, which one would you be?

Fun Questions to Ask Friends About Books

This one is a little tougher, because a lot of people don’t read books anymore. But here are 10 fun questions to ask friends about books anyway:

1.Has reading a book ever changed your life? Which one and why, if yes?

2.Do you prefer to read fiction or nonfiction? Explain your choice.

3.If you could be a character in any novel you’ve ever read, who would you be and why?

4.Has reading a book ever made you cry? Which one and why?

5.How many books do you read each year?

6.Have you ever written (or started to write) a book?

7.Name one book you had to read but hated, and explain why you hated it.

8.If someone wrote a book about your life, what would they title it?

9.If you could pick a book you’ve read to make into a movie, which one would you choose?

10.What was your favorite book as a child and why?

**Fun Questions to Ask Friends About Money**

Money is a less sensitive issues than sex with some people, but others might find it even more personal. Here are 10 lighthearted and fun questions about money you can ask a friend:

1.What would you do if you had a million dollars?

2.Are you a spender or a saver?

3.How much money do you save on a regular basis? (As a percentage of your income?)

4.Do you have a personal written budget?

5.When you go to a meal dutch, would you prefer to itemize the receipt or just split it in half?

6.When you’re on a date, do you think the man should pay or not?

7.What’s the most expensive gift you’ve ever given someone?

8.What’s the most expensive gift you’ve ever received from someone?

9.If someone offered you a million dollars for a night of sex, would you do it? Would it matter if the person were good looking or not?

10.Do you invest in the stock market? What kind of investing strategy do you use if you do?

**Fun Questions to Ask Friends About Music**

Almost everyone listens to music. Here are a few fun questions about music you can ask your friends:

1.What’s your favorite kind of music?

2.Who’s your favorite singer or band?

3.What’s your favorite album?

4.What’s your favorite song?

5.Do you like to sing karaoke?

6.Are you a good dancer?

7.Do you like musicals? (movies or theater)

8.Has a song ever made you cry?

9.If your life was a song, what would the title be?

10.If you could be a particular singer or musician, who would you be?

**Fun Questions to Ask About Games**

All of us played games of some kind growing up, and some of us still play games now. Here are some fun questions on the subject:

1.What was your favorite game to play as a child?

2.Do you play video games now?

3.What’s your favorite gambling game?

4.Do you prefer card games or board games?

5.Do you ever play drinking games?

6.Are you good at Chess?

7.Have you ever played Dungeons & Dragons? Did you like it/

8.Do you ever play solitaire when you’re bored?

9.Are you good at Trivial Pursuit?

10.Have you ever been on a game show? Which one?

**Dilemmas**

Dilemmas are questions you have to think about. Thinking aloud about your answers with your friends can be a lot of fun, and it can shed a lot of light on why your friends are the way they are.

1.Would you rather be rich or healthy?

2.Would you rather be good looking or rich?

3.Do you believe in the death penalty? Why or why not?

4.Have you seen Sophie’s Choice, and if so, do you think she made the right choice or the wrong choice?

5.Would you like to know the day you’re going to die ahead of time? Why or why not?

6.Would you rather have super strength or super intelligence?

7.Would you rather have the power to be invisible or the power to read minds?

8.Would you rather spend the rest of your life without a significant other, or would you rather have a partner who is extremely difficult?

9.Would you rather spend life in prison or be executed?

10.Should marijuana be legalized? Why or why not?

And that’s that. 80 fun questions to ask friends. Hope these break the ice at your next party or first date.

**Asking Private Questions**

By Val McQueen

I believe that a person's perception of a personal question is different compared to others. Person A might consider it as personal while person B may not.

Talking about private things about one's life can be as easy as breathing to some. They can have a free flowing of conversation anytime, anywhere. While on the other side, there are people who are so timid to even let anyone know any minute information about them.

It is actually a better idea to learn how to keep your private life confidential. However, this doesn't mean that you will be too reluctant in answering queries. Just try to leave out some things that you don't want to share.

It is inevitable to avoid those people who are just too nosy and would really get into the core of you to answer some of the most distressing questions.

If someone will ask you a question about the price of something you bought and you don't feel like answering it because you find it trivial, then better say that you cannot summon up the price or maybe someone just gave it to you. It is a gracious yet an elusive answer.

It is hard not get angry to someone whose prying too much. Do not lose your cool in situations like this. If a person crosses the line and pushes you to answer a very private question, then it is best that you just give them an answer but only a portion of it.

There are also times when some ill-mannered jerk will try to get into your nerves and ask you a question that elicits a destructive response. Again, try to get a hold of yourself and just ask them a question in return instead of giving in to the trap.

This will disturb them and they will instantly become the aim of your question. This is an effective way to let them know that you are not an easy target and they will hesitate in the future to do it again.

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# List Of Hobbies And Interests

<http://lifestyle.iloveindia.com/lounge/list-of-hobbies-and-interests-4509.html>

There are certain activities and hobbies that give us immense pleasure and can even make us forget the tensions of everyday life. Hobbies are considered to be a real stress buster by some, while others think of them as a nice escape from the drudgery of routine life. Hobbies, in fact, add color and substance to the otherwise monotonous life. If you want to indulge yourself in some recreational activities, then this article is the right for you. Explore the list given below and get some of the best ideas for personal hobbies and interests.

**Personal Interests & Hobbies**

**Listening To Music**

Listening to music is probably one of the most common hobbies and interests. There would be very few people in the world, who wouldn’t be enchanted to music. When you are tired after a long day at work, only music has the capacity to transport you to the world of serenity and tranquility. Different people like different types of music and whether you are a fan of jazz or classical, or heavy metal or anything light, make music your daily dose of motivation and try to learn as much as from it as possible.

**Stamp Collection/ Coin Collection**

Some very interesting hobbies and interests are stamp collection and coin collection. Whether you are novice in collecting stamps or coins and have just cultivated the habit or whether you have always been doing it, you are not alone. Thousands of people across the world have the habit of collecting stamps and coins and it you need to know that the habits of collecting stamps or coins doesn’t require the study of it, however it requires the passion and diligence in doing so. You need to know different coins of different places and the same is with the stamps too. Start with your own place and always be in a lookout for new stamps and coins. Also be ready to learn from other people who are in this habit longer than you.

**Reading Books**

The best way to acquire wisdom is by cultivating the habit of reading books. It not only opens a world of wisdom in front of us, it helps us in understanding the people and the surroundings around us. A good book can be greatly satisfying and can teach us about a plethora of subjects, which won’t be possible by just observation. The best way to cultivate this habit is by understanding that reading is a pleasure. Always keep a good book around you and set a reading goal by setting out some time for reading every day.

**Playing Musical Instruments**

Knowing how to play a musical instrument not only gives us a talent but also keeps away from bad habits. The best thing would be to develop this habit as early as possible. However, it is never too late to cultivate good habits. So if you are toying with idea of learning to play any musical instrument, now is the time to learn something new.

**Writing Diary**

Writing diary is yet another habit which many people in the world have. It is also a very good habit, it helps us to synchronize our thoughts and help us put our thoughts to paper. However, it is very important to maintain the diary on a regular basis.

**Gardening**

Gardening is one of the best habits one can cultivate. With all the global warming and pollution in the world, the least we could do is for the earth is to give it a little TLC (tender loving care). If you are a serious gardener, then you could also help other people at least your family members to develop this habit.

**The list of some other hobbies and interests are given below:**

* Photography - Wildlife, Nature, Portrait
* Dancing
* Watching TV
* Writing Poems
* Painting
* Watching Movies
* Cooking
* Collecting Antiques
* Knitting
* Sewing
* Making Crafts
* Chatting
* Playing Cards
* Doing Magic
* Watching Cartoons
* Indulging in Adventurous Sports - Scuba Diving, Bungee Jumping, Para-Gliding, Wind Surfing, Hot Air Ballooning, etc
* Collecting Pens
* Fishing
* Horse Riding
* Playing Computer Games
* Playing Sports - Football, Volleyball, Basket Ball, Cricket etc
* Going for a Long Drive In Bikes, Cars
* Playing Chess
* Collecting Postcards
* Star Gazing
* Traveling and Exploring New Places
* Flying Kites
* Drawing and Sketching