



## **The 10 MOST COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Interview questions may vary but in essence they are all trying to establish the following:

- Your skills and experience to do the job
- Your enthusiasm and interest for the job
- Whether you will fit in

If you can answer these questions using real-life examples to illustrate your points, then you should be able to answer most of the questions that arise including the most common ones.

### **1. Tell me about yourself?**

This question or something similar usually starts every interview. Your answer should be well-rehearsed, confidently delivered. It should also:

- Focus on the areas of most relevance to the job in question
- Include some impressive achievements e.g. improvements made
- Convey your enthusiasm for the job
- Avoid personal, irrelevant or negative information e.g. your children, un-related jobs or anything negative

### **2. What are your key skills/strengths?**

Focus on what you know they are looking for, even if it has been a smaller part of what you have been doing to date. The job advert or person specification form will give you the information you need about their requirements.

### **3. What are your weaknesses?**

Choose a weakness that;

- Doesn't matter for the job e.g. languages for a UK firm.
- Is a positive e.g. "I like to make things happen and get frustrated if too long is spent sitting around discussing it without action"
- Used to be a weakness but which you have improved upon e.g. presentations

### **4. Why did you leave your last job?**

Your answer should be positive and upbeat even if the circumstances were difficult. If you were made redundant, depersonalise it by talking about company restructuring rather than your individual circumstance. Never criticise a previous employer no matter how tempting.

### **5. Why do you want this job?**

Your answer should reinforce why you are such a good fit for the job and then convey your enthusiasm for the role e.g.

- Good match between your skills and their requirements
- Interested in the product/market/sector
- Company's excellent reputation, exciting challenge etc.
- Do not say (even if it's true) that you just need a job, or you want it because it's local.

### **6. Describe a difficult scenario at work and how you dealt with it?**

They are testing how you cope under pressure as well as your problem-solving and communication skills. Good examples are where you:

- helped resolve or improve a difficult situation
- were resilient in adverse conditions
- showed emotional intelligence and cool-headedness
- Avoid any examples which still feel sensitive, because in a high-pressure interview situation, old emotions can easily resurface and throw you off balance.

### **7. Tell me about an achievement of which you are proud?**

Choose work-related examples that show a tangible benefit to the business. Personal achievements should only be included if they are very impressive or prestigious.

## **8.What are your career goals?**

They are checking if you are likely to stay and if so, for how long. Reassure the employer that the role you are applying for fits your career plan and your longer term commitment to the company.

## **9.What are your salary expectations?**

Salary negotiations are best handled at the job offer stage so try to avoid this at interview if you can. If forced to name a price, give a realistic but wide salary range and say that you feel that salary won't be an issue if you decide to work together.

## **10.What do you know about our organisation?**

You need to know the following:

- The company structure, finances, products and services as well as the key staff
- Their customers and competitors
- Market trends and challenges