

Sample Interview Questions

Here are some sample interview questions with explanations of how to answer them. Preparation is key for any interview. Practice your answers beforehand and stick with the truth. An experienced interviewer can spot the lies straightaway.

Common Interview Questions:

1. **Tell me about yourself**
2. **What are your strengths and weaknesses**
3. **Why do you want to leave your present job**
4. **Why should we hire you?**
5. **What do you know about this company?**
6. **Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?**

Answers

1. Don't start by boring the interviewer with where you live, where you hail from, or whether you're the 1st or 3rd born in your family and so on. An employer would be more interested to know about your personality, hobbies, interests, aspiration, your likes and dislikes, any association you're a member of.
2. When asked what your strengths are, employers are looking out for any skill, ability that might be particularly useful to their organization; e.g. I'm a people person. This connotes to having good team working and interpersonal skills, which are very useful qualities that are sought out for when hiring. When asked about your weaknesses, again saying things like: I find it hard to get out of bed in the mornings is telling an employer that you're a definite late comer. Remember that your weakness could be an advantage to an employer; e.g. I am a perfectionist, I could be quite possessive (taking your job to heart), or I put others' interest before mine. To say that you don't have any weakness is deceptive because as human beings, we all flawed.
3. It's considered unethical to talk evil about your company or superiors because your interviewer might be familiar with them, besides you might do the same to them if they hired you. Don't be subjective, but be objective. You could say that you want a change of career, or you want a more challenging position. Again, stay away from monetary talk.
4. Most applicants go for interviews not prepared for this question and they start looking up at the ceiling when this question is asked. There are more than a dozen applicants waiting to be interviewed and the interviewer being completely human cannot make up his mind as to which to pick amongst the 'very interesting' resumes. So, the only alternative is to determine 'who' actually stands out (not the CV this time around).

"Because I believe am the best candidate for the position" would be an appropriate response. This response shows confidence and self assurance; you don't know the other applicants yet you say you're the most superlative. That is a sheer assertion of your competence!

Your answer has to hit the bull's eye; save the interviewer the stress of listening to your "superman abilities".

Now that you have labelled yourself the best of the pack, the interviewee will yearn to know why you think you're the best, so he follows up with questions like '...so what makes you think you're the best?', 'The best? So what makes you tick?' The interviewee can then at this stage elucidate on acquired skills, accumulated experience and exceptional qualifications and degrees.

5. Applicants should ensure that they make all the necessary findings about the company they are about to be interviewed for. Of course, such findings must be the positive influence of such companies to the environment, community or the nation as a whole. The job seeker must be able to say constructive things about the company.

'ABC Limited...' note that you do not start your answer with "this company". Calling the name of the company in a precise manner shows that you at least have basic familiarity. 'ABC Limited is a leader in the insurance sector in Nigeria offering life and general insurance services'. This answer is an affirmation of the fact that the company is a leader in the industry and you have an idea of their packages...this is a lump of concise information that should bring out the interviewer's smile.

- 6 When an interviewer asks this question, he is asking career-wise. A lot of candidates make the mistake of tabling their "good-life dreams". 'Living in a mansion with my family', '...riding my own car' or a ludicrously answer like '5 years older' would definitely nauseate the interviewer.

If you are an Accountant, then you should be able to tell the HR consultant how you would have improved yourself come 5 years time in Accounting packages and exams. If you are an IT person then you should list the number of certifications you would have acquired. The candidate must convince the interviewer of his intentions to better himself in the same discipline he has applied for erasing any form of deviation.