

# 30 MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



“Psssttt... Hey Mack. Over here. I have a secret. Most interviewers ask questions from the same cheat sheet. SHHH... Don’t tell anyone!!”

Here is a peak behind the curtain at an actual list of questions used by a real human resource person. Katherine Burik received this actual list when she learned how to interview. Now she is sharing it with you.

Interviewers often ask these questions because they are unprepared or untrained about how to conduct a good interview. Use this knowledge to your advantage.

Think about how you want to answer these questions. Write down your answers then edit them to make them sound good. This is your chance to reveal the best version of yourself. Then write down your answers so you can carry them with you and practice before the interview. Practice the answers out loud until you are comfortable and you will be prepared for your next interview!

## Basic Background Questions

Interviewers ask basic background questions to start you talking. You can include much of this information in your response to “Tell me about yourself”. Then be prepared to answer the individual questions too.

1. **Why are you leaving your present position? OR Why did you leave your last position? OR Why did you change jobs so frequently? OR Why did you stay with XYZ Company so long?**
2. **What are you looking for in a job?**
3. **What are your career objectives?**
4. **What is your biggest strength?**
5. **What is your biggest weakness? (may be phrased as “developmental needs”).**
6. **Give me 5 adjectives that describe you. Be prepared to say why and how they are demonstrated.**
7. **Other than money, what rewards motivate you?**

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Other background questions are variations on the basic theme, including:

- Do you like to work? Why?
- Why didn't you do better in school?
- What makes you angry?
- What was the last book you read? What did you think of it and why?
- What was the last movie you saw? What did you think of it and why?
- How would you describe your personality?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- How is your family life?
- Why haven't you obtained a job so far?

## Questions about how you work

Interviewers ask these questions to understand how well you will fit with their team. They do not want to hire someone who will conflict with the current team. Answer these questions honestly but with the best possible version of yourself.

8. **What were your five biggest accomplishments in your career? Or in your last job?**
9. How do you work under pressure, deadlines, etc.?
10. **What kinds of people do you like to work with? OR What kinds of people do you dislike working with?**
11. Are you willing to travel? OR Are you willing to relocate?
12. **Describe your personal work style.**
13. **Where will you be in five years? OR What position do you expect to have in five years?**
14. **What do you think of your previous boss?**
15. **What features of your previous jobs have you liked? OR What features of your previous jobs have you disliked?**
16. What do your subordinates/peers/boss think of you? OR How would your subordinates/peers/last boss describe you? OR What would your subordinates/peers/boss say about you if I called them right now?
17. Have you hired people before? What do you look for?

## Behavioral Events Questions

These open ended questions require that you tell a story that has a beginning (describe the problem), a middle (what you did about it, how you were involved), and an end (how did you contribute to resolving the problem). The situation the interviewer describes gives you a clue about what it is like to work on that team or in that company.

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For example, there would be no need to ask you to describe a situation in which your work was criticized or your boss was unreasonable if the boss was not prone to unreasonable criticism of his employees. Be prepared with about 5 or 6 stories in the correct format that can cover a number of these situations. Then make a mental note of which questions are asked. Use this insight to help you formulate follow-up questions when it is your turn.

Behavioral events questions can sound like this:

18. Describe a situation in which your work was criticized?
19. Give me an example of a time of great conflict and what you did about it.
20. Give me an example of how you grew your team.
21. Give me an example of how you contributed to a big project that worked well.
22. Give an example of a good hire/bad hire you made.
23. Tell me about a time you fired someone on your team. What reasons caused you to take that action? How was the actual termination handled? Give an example.
24. Give an example of how you are creative OR analytical OR how you delegate OR how you work under pressure

## Why do you want to work here and what will you do for us

Interviewers want to understand your motivation and the contribution you can make if you are hired. Do not get caught up in a trap of answering how long you plan to stay or what are your salary demands. Be vague when it suits your purpose on questions that involve guessing how long you will stay or how long it will take to make a contribution. Refer to the job description to prepare for questions about what interests you about the position.

25. Why should we hire you?
26. What interests you most about this position?
27. How long would it take to make a contribution to our company? OR What can you do for us?
28. How long would you stay with our company?
29. What kind of salary are you worth?
30. What other companies are you speaking with about jobs?

Each interview might not be a unique experience. You could be asked the same questions repeatedly. Prepare your responses in advance. Be prepared to answer most any question that comes your way!

The Interview Doctor can help make your next job interview a success! Make an investment in finding your next job quickly.

Please share this information with your friends and family searching for a new position.