

Questions to Expect

1. Tell me a little about yourself.
Talk about your professional experience, qualifications, and accomplishments – do not bring up personal information.

2. Why do you want to work as a ...?
Talk about the details of the job and why they interest you.

3. What are your qualifications?
Tailor this to the job.

4. What do you know about my company?
Visit the company's website or call the Chamber of Commerce. Get information on the company size, its key products or services, the markets where it competes, and the company's overall reputation.

5. Why do you want to work for us?
Focus on matching the company and job requirements to your skills and education.

6. How did you learn about us?
Friend, relative, newspaper story, advertisements – anything to show that they are not a random choice.

7. You seem to switch jobs a lot. Why?
Job stagnation, demotions due to down-sizing, career exploration, a short-lived personal problem, or having made a bad choice are all good reasons.

8. How long do you plan to work here?
"I anticipate working for your company a long time, since I see so much potential for growth here."

9. Tell me about your current (or last) job.
List your duties and responsibilities.
Explain your accomplishments.

10. Why do you want to leave your current job?
Make your answer a positive one: career exploration, the challenge that this new job will bring, or having advanced as far as possible.

11. What did you like most about that job?
Talk about your responsibilities, challenges, accomplishments, and the people you worked with.

12. Did you ever have a problem with a co-worker or your boss? If so, how did you handle it?
The interviewer wants to know how you handle stress and/or disagreements. Steer to the positive by saying, "Yes, there were disagreements, however, we worked well together when it counted. For example,"

13. Tell me about your education or training.
Explain your education or training and tell how it helped prepare you for this job.

14. Give an example of any major problem you faced and how you solved it.

Think of something related to work, school, civic, or leisure activities. Tell it as a story. Give details. The manager wants to see how you define problems, identify options, decide on a solution, handle obstacles, and solve the problem.

15. What was your greatest accomplishment? What did you learn from it?

A personal touch works well here, such as your marriage, birth of a child, or helping someone in need.

16. What was your greatest failure? What did you learn from it?

Everyone has experienced failure, so talk about one example. Avoid choosing one that might reflect on your ability to do the job you are interviewing for.

17. What is your greatest weakness?

Focus on work, not character weaknesses. Turn it into a positive, "I'm accused of being a workaholic. I like to stay and get caught up on the odds and ends before I go home."

18. Last year, how many days of work, or school, did you miss? How many days were you late?

This will tell the manager whether you are going to show up for work on time every day. If you've missed more than a couple days, have some good explanations ready.

19. Are you at your best when working alone or in a group?
"Both. I enjoy working as part of a team, and I can work independently to get my share of the work done."

20. Would you rather be in charge of a project or work as part of the team? Why?
"Either. I'm not afraid to take responsibility and I'm not afraid to roll up my sleeves and pitch in."

21. What kind of salary are you looking for today?
"I have no set salary. What salary is usually offered to someone with my qualifications?" If the manager persists, find a general answer like, "somewhere in the teens," or "somewhere in the thirties."

22. Have you ever been fired from a job? Why?
This is a legitimate question, so be prepared to answer with a brief and to the point explanation.

23. Do you have any questions for me?
"Yes, thank you, I do have a few questions..."
See additional handouts.