

# tip sheet



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## COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The most commonly asked interview questions touch on the essentials a prospective employer wants to know about every candidate they consider, who they are and why they are a good fit for the position/organization. You may not be asked the following questions in exactly the same words, but if you're prepared, you'll feel a lot more confident walking into the interview!

### Tell me about yourself

*This is often one of the first questions an interviewer may ask because they want to know about you as a person in relation to the position. Make sure that you include only relevant personal and work related information. Outline your experience (work, volunteer), knowledge (and education) and skills that qualify you for the position. Give specific examples but do not include any personal details such as your age, marital status, etc. Express your strong interest in the organization, and position you are being interviewed for.*

### Do you have previous work experience in this type of position?

*The interviewer wants to know how familiar you are with the work associated with the position. If you have related experience, provide specific examples of the duties and responsibilities from your current/previously-held position(s). Highlight your accomplishments! If you do not have any related experience, emphasize how your skills and experience are transferrable to the position. Use language that is specific to the position that you are being interviewed for.*

### Why did you apply for this position?

*This question is usually asked near the beginning of the interview. Be sure to mention your interest in organization, their mission and values, and how the position complements your past work experience, education, interests or skills. Keep your answer brief and express your enthusiasm and commitment.*

### Why did you leave your last position?

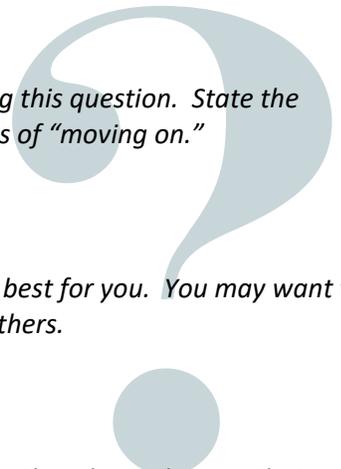
*People leave jobs for many reasons but there is no need to go into great detail when answering this question. State the reason clearly and concisely. Don't dwell on the negative, instead focus on the positive aspects of "moving on."*

### How do you like to be managed?

*To answer this question, you need to think about past work experiences and what has worked best for you. You may want to mention both your ability to take initiative and direction, as well as your ability to work with others.*

### What software (equipment) can you use?

*It is important to speak to your ability to work with the software and/or equipment required on the job. Make sure that you are familiar with the technical vocabulary associated with software/equipment and be prepared to provide examples. If you*



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*are not familiar with the software/equipment required for the job, you can mention that you would be willing to take a course or training on your own time.*

### How would your last supervisor describe you?

*Don't bring out your letters of recommendation, the interviewer wants your opinion. Provide examples of personal strengths, knowledge, attitude and job performance (three is usually enough) that may be needed in the position you are applying for. Be sure to give specific examples of how you displayed the traits described.*

### What are your strengths?

*With this question the interviewer may be testing your self-confidence, try to think of the strengths (you have) that may be needed in the position you are being interviewed for. Your strengths can relate to personal or transferable skills, education or training, or experience. Make sure that you provide examples of how you demonstrated these strengths.*

### What are your weaknesses?

*With this question the interviewer wants to know if you can be open and honest about your shortcomings. The key to preparing for this question is to identify weaknesses that are also opportunities for development. Use this question to demonstrate how a weakness can be used as motivation to learn a new skill. Make sure that the example you provide is not something that is critical to the position you are applying for.*

### What are your long-term plans?

*Whatever you are planning to do in the future, make sure that you include the job you are applying for into your answer. It is good to have vision and direction in your life but your plans do not have to be set in stone. You may want to start with what you want to do now and how it relates to your future plans.*

### What are your salary expectations?

*It is best not to mention a particular salary at this time. A safe response can be "What is the normal range for this position?" Do your research and answer with a salary range rather than one amount. Once a job offer has been made, you can then sometimes negotiate salary, benefits, etc.*

### Do you have any questions?

*This question is usually asked to bring the interview to a close. Your questions should be brief, to the point and focused on the company's needs (not on yours), the position and the hiring process. After you have a job offer, you can ask questions about salary, medical benefits, etc.*

