Before you walk into any interview, you should know as much about the company and position as you possibly can. Gather your ideas for your interview by referring to the Sample Job Description and input your responses below.

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| --- |
| **Type of Company** |
|  |
| **Mission Statement/Core Values** |
|  |
| **Company News** |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Questions for the *interviewer* about the company/environment, based on your research.** |
| 1.  2. |
| **Two positive personal experiences relating to the company’s core values.** |
| 1.  2. |
| **Two experience where you overcame a challenge or weakness.** |
| 1.  2. |
| **Two examples of personal qualities, job skills, or value experience you can bring to the position.** |
| 1.  2. |

# Interview Questions

## You can’t predict the exact questions that an interviewer will ask, but you can be well-prepared by thinking about how you would answer the following questions:

1. **Tell me about yourself. What are your long-term and short-term goals?** *Keep your answer in the professional realm only. Review your past positions, education and other strengths.*
2. **What do you know about our organization/company?** *Your research is designed to help you prepare for this question. Show genuine interest in the organization/company and show that you’ve done your research.*
3. **Why are you interested in this position?** *Relate how you feel your qualifications really match the requirements of the job. Additionally, be sure to express your desire to work for the organization/company.*
4. **What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?** *Remember that every weakness is an opportunity to build a strength. For example, you could talk about how your past weakness when it came to deadlines helped you to improve your time management skills and get things done on time.*
5. **Interacting with others can be challenging at times. Tell me about the greatest difficulty you faced when trying to get along with peers, team members, or others at school or work. How did you handle the situation?** *The interviewer wants to know about your conflict resolution skills. Demonstrate your ability to find common ground with other people but avoid speaking of them in a negative manner.*
6. **What was the most difficult course you took in school?** What steps did you take to get all your work done? *This question is about time/work management. Show how you adapted to complete tasks in a timely manner.*
7. **Tell me about a time when you were able to help team members solve a problem. What was your role? What did you do?** *Tell the interviewer about how you applied your strengths to a team project—and remember, not every role needs to be a leadership role.*
8. **Tell me about the most difficult or demanding customer (or teacher) you have faced. Describe a specific interaction you had with this individual.** *This is another question about your conflict resolution skills. As before, tell the interviewer how you helped resolve the issue without speaking negatively about others.*
9. **Give me an example of a good decision you made recently. What alternatives did you consider? Why was it a good decision?** *The interviewer wants to know what your decision-making process looks like. Demonstrate that you put thought into your decision as opposed to making a snap judgment, then evaluate the results of that choice.*
10. **Have you ever worked on a group project for a class or work? How did you make sure that the other group members were doing their share of the project?** *This question asks about your ability to ensure success within a group. Tell the interviewer about what steps you took to keep the project moving without putting yourself in a position that comes across as overly bossy.*
11. **Deadlines can’t always be met. Tell me about a time when you missed a deadline on a project. What were the causes? What could have been done differently?** *The interviewer wants you to own up to your mistakes. Instead of blaming others or external factors, acknowledge what went wrong and tell about the steps you have taken to make sure you are on time for future deadlines.*
12. **Tell me about a detailed class or work project that you worked on. How did you keep track of the details? How did the project turn out?** *The interviewer wants to know how you stay organized. This could be a notebook, an online document, sticky notes, or whatever works best for you.*
13. **Tell me how you balance your schoolwork with extracurricular activities.** *This is a question about time management. Tell the interviewer about the tools you use to balance your activities—this could be a calendar, reminders on your phone, or whatever works best for you.*
14. **Can you describe a situation in which you had difficulty getting along with someone at school? How did you handle it?** *Like the other questions about conflict resolution, tell the interviewer how you cleared the air but avoid speaking with a negative attitude towards others.*

# Interview tips

**Come into the interview with some questions to ask your interviewer. Here are some examples:**

1. What type of training programs will be offered to the person hired for this position?
2. What are your goals for this position?
3. What obstacles must be overcome in order for the person in this position to succeed?
4. How will my performance be evaluated?
5. What growth opportunities exist for employees in your company/organization, and for this position in particular?

**Do:**

* Dress appropriately. Make your first impression a professional one.
* Consider your appearance and personal hygiene. Make sure to:
  + Wear neat, clean, and conservative clothes and shoes.
  + Clean and brush your hair.
  + Wear only minimal makeup and jewelry.
  + Use deodorant but don’t wear heavy perfume or cologne.
  + Clean your fingernails.
  + Either wear no nail polish or be sure the polish is conservative in color and not chipped.
* Be organized; bring a pen, notebook, questions for the interviewer, and at least 2 copies of your résumé, cover letter and application.
* Arrive 15 minutes early. Use this first impression as an opportunity to demonstrate your punctuality!
* Turn off your cell phone when you enter the building.
* Introduce yourself, shake hands and look the person in the eye. Then, address the interviewer by his/her name during the interview.
* Clarify questions. Be sure you answered the questions the employer really asked.
* Get the interviewer to describe the position and responsibilities early in the conversation so you can relate your skills and background to the position throughout the interview.
* Conduct yourself professionally. Be aware of what your body language is saying. Smile, make eye contact, maintain composure and don’t slouch.
* Anticipate tough questions. Prepare in advance so you can turn apparent weaknesses into strengths by showing what you’ve learned.
* Listen closely so you can respond to the interviewer’s actual questions, not just the questions you prepared for.

**Don’t:**

* Don’t answer vague questions. Rather than answering questions you think you hear, get the employer to be more specific and then respond.
* Never interrupt the employer. If you don’t have time to listen, neither does the employer.
* Don’t chew gum or place anything on the employer’s desk.
* Don’t be overly familiar or casual, but also avoid being too formal. Maintain pleasant professionalism.
* Don’t ramble – get to the point. Long answers often make the speaker sound apologetic or indecisive.
* Don’t answer questions with a simple "yes" or "no." Explain whenever possible.
* Don’t lie. Answer questions as truthfully as possible. If you don’t know the answer to a question, say so.
* Don’t make derogatory remarks about your present or former employers or companies.
* Don’t be discouraged if no definite offer is made or specific salary discussed. The interviewer will probably want to communicate with the office first or interview other applicants before making a decision.

**Closing the interview:**

* Express thanks for the interviewer’s time and consideration.
* Ask for the interview’s business card so you can write a thank you letter as soon as possible.
* When you leave the interview and have a moment, write down what was discussed in the interview. You can use this information when writing your thank you letter.
* Write, proofread and send a thank you note no later than 24 hours after the interview.