



Your Guide to Nailing an Interview

*Successfully Ever
After*

a 30 Day Personal Branding Transformation

*The interview
starts the
moment you
leave the house.*



*TREAT
EVERYONE
LIKE YOUR
INTERVIEWER*

be polite and friendly to everyone you encounter during the interview process. The receptionist just might be asked to share his/her impression of you after you leave. Make sure you are seen in a positive light.



*STRONG FIRST
IMPRESSION*

- Smiling
- Firm hand shake
- Eye contact
- Clothing neat and appropriate
- Project energy
- Turn your phone off
- If your watch alerts you to texts, etc.. don't check it during your interview.

*6 in 10 managers
say an
interviewee's attire
has an impact on
their employability.*

33% of bosses say they know within 90 seconds if they want to hire someone



WHAT SHOULD YOU WEAR?

A CareerBuilder survey of 2000 hiring professionals says conservative colors like blue and black are your safest bets in an interview.

What's the worst color to wear?
Orange.



RESEARCH THE COMPANY

Take time to research the company you are interviewing with. See if they've been in the news lately. Get a feel for the language they use to describe their company and culture. Incorporate those into your interview answers. It shows you did your homework and have a genuine interest in the company.

It takes someone less than 1 second to determine if they trust you - and that impression rarely changes.

What about the questions?

BE PREPARED FOR BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.

These questions are designed for an interviewer to learn how you behaved in the past. Hiring managers feel the answers give them a better idea of how someone will behave in the future. Simply put, they want to know if you will work well in their organization.

Generally, they fall in 5 categories: teamwork, problem solving, motivation or value, failure and achievement. The formats will vary, but listen for "tell me about a time" or "describe a time you...". That's a sure signal you're about to be asked these types of questions. Let's look at each category.

TEAMWORK

The interviewer wants to determine if you are a team player. The ability to work with others is critical to most organizations.

1

Examples are:

1. Tell me about a time you worked closely with someone who had a totally different personality than you.
2. Tell me about a time you faced conflict on a team. How did you handle it?

Answers:

Only provide 1 or 2 examples that demonstrate your ability to work well with others.

You want to show you are easy to work with and others like working with you.

Show how you helped a team succeed. Team over individual success is important.

Use words like listened, respected and reliability.

PROBLEM SOLVING

These questions are used to determine if you can manage problems successfully.

Examples are:

1. Describe a time in your previous employment you experienced change. How did you adapt?
2. Describe a challenging project you were given and tell how you handled it.
3. Talk about a time you dealt with a difficult colleague. How did you work with them.

Answers:

You are expected to give real examples of how you handled a problem and thought through it strategically.

Show how you remained professional during a tough encounter.

How did you approach the problem? This shows thoughtfulness.

Don't over emphasize your personal accomplishment. Remain humble, talk about how the experience helped you grow.

2

MOTIVATION & VALUE

The interviewer wants to determine what motivates you. These questions can appear random and unrelated to the job.

Examples are:

1. Tell me about a time you worked hard and achieved something.
2. Tell me about the last time you learned a new hobby.
3. Tell me about a time you tried to help someone.

Answers:

These are designed to see if you can handle unexpected questions. Stop and think before you answer. Smile. These should be positive stories. There is no right or wrong answer. It's designed to show you are self-motivated, have the ability to stick to something, are driven, are compassionate. You can use non-work related answers for these as well.

3

FAILURE

Interviewers want to see how you handle failure without it being detrimental to you or others. They want to see how you learned from mistakes and improved. They may be uncomfortable, but they aren't meant to embarrass you.

Examples:

1. Describe a time you failed.
2. Tell me about a time you were under a lot of pressure. How did you handle it?
3. Explain how you lead a difficult group.
4. How has a communication break-down effected you.

4

Answers:

Be honest and positive. Admit fault and show how you grew. Don't blame others. The whole goal of this question is for an interviewer to see what qualities or skills you gained from the experience. Do not use a detrimental failure (one that shows you can't do the job for which you are applying).

ACHIEVEMENT

5

This is where you get to highlight your skills and talents. It's also used to see how you view success and what your future goals look like.

Examples are:

1. What's one accomplishment you are extremely proud of? Why?
2. Describe a time you successfully led a project.

Answers:

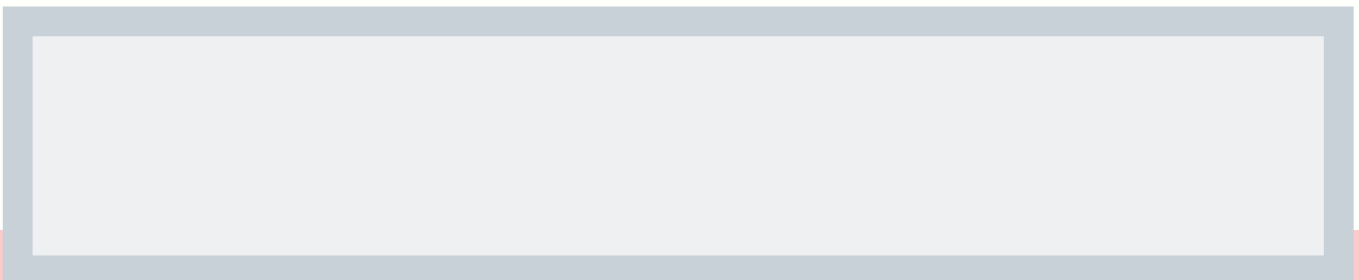
Be specific in your achievement. If you received recognition for it, say so. Be careful of sounding boastful. Talk about the strategy or philosophy you used to achieve. Show how the same strategy will help you in this position. Show how this achievement has created a desire for you to do more.



You'll find the Top 10 Interview Questions on the following pages. You'll find suggestions about what to talk about and space to write out your answers so that you can practice them ahead of your actual interviews.

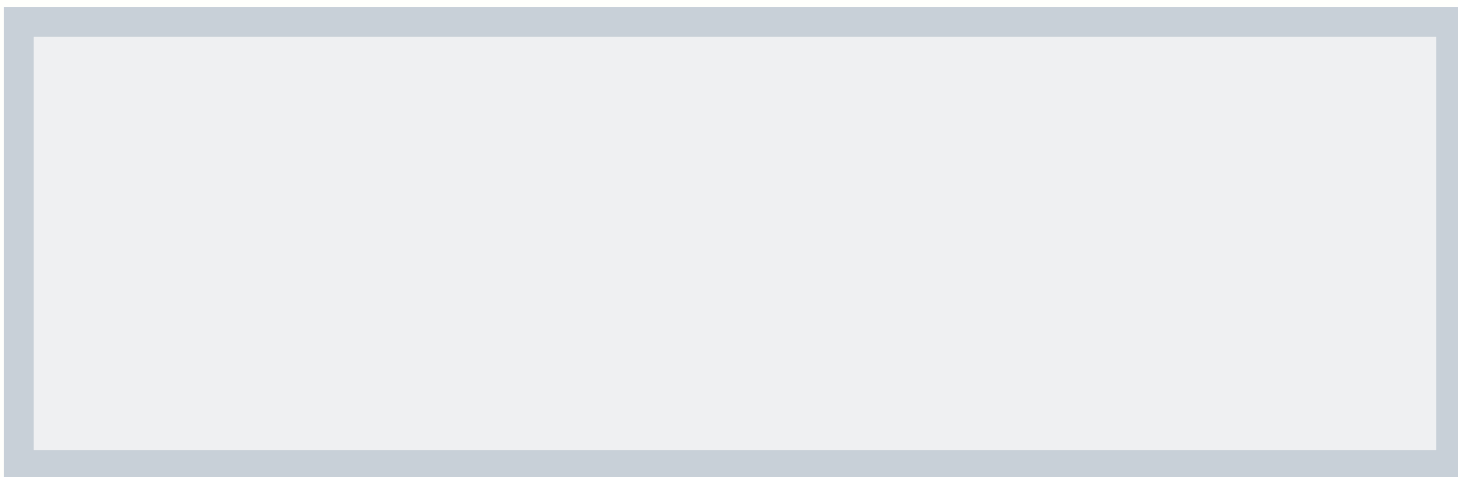
1 Tell me/us about yourself.

You want to plan this answer ahead of time so you don't come across like you're rambling. Don't give them your work history. They read that on your resume. Instead, think of what you want to highlight. Add some personality and talk about your ambitions. You can even add in community service and other activities that help show how well you'll fit with the company.



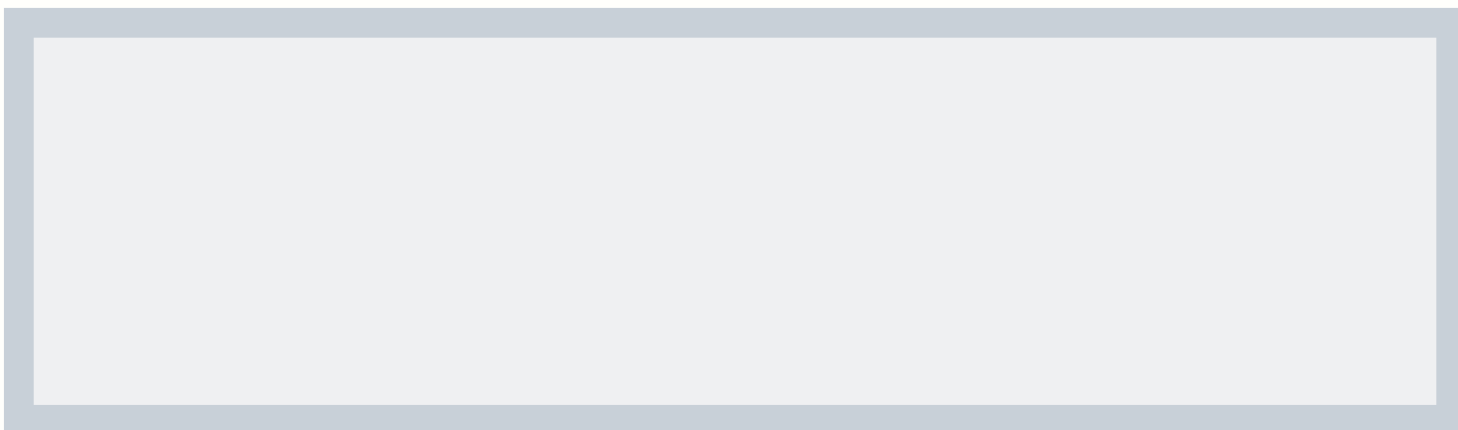
2 Describe your strengths.

Don't get fooled into listing out a never ending list of traits here. I recommend you pick your top 3 strengths and give examples of why you feel they are assets and how you have used them positively in previous work. Anyone can say they are anything - you need to validate your choices. For example, if organization is your thing, then talk about how you managed a project.



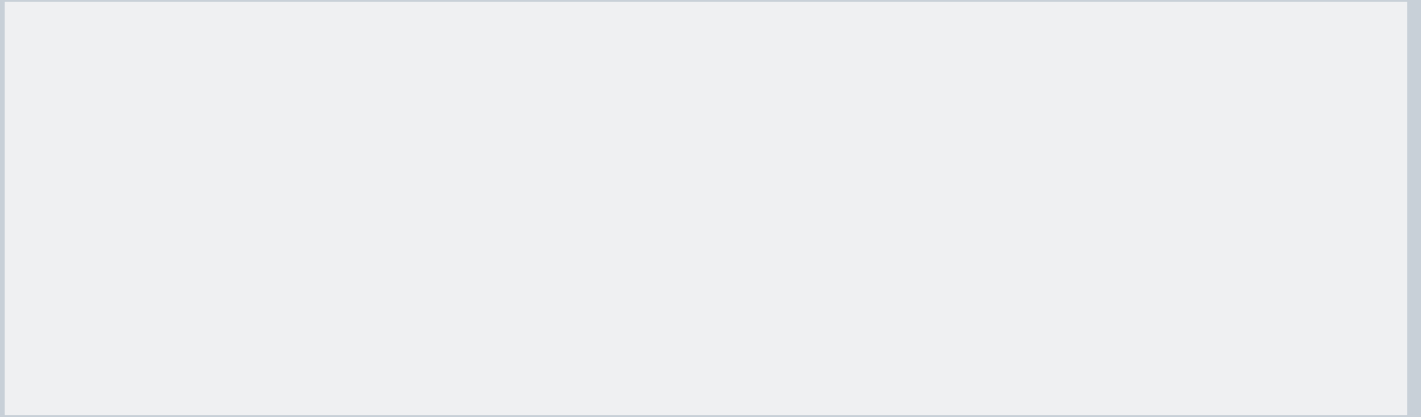
3 Why do you want to work with XYZ Company?

Show off the fact you researched the company here. Do not make negative comments about your former employer. For starters, you can mention how you've enjoyed working in the "x" industry for several years and want to work with a company that is consistently researching new methods. Or you might say, you've researched the organization and would love to work for a company who invests in their employees and believes in the value of building strong teams.



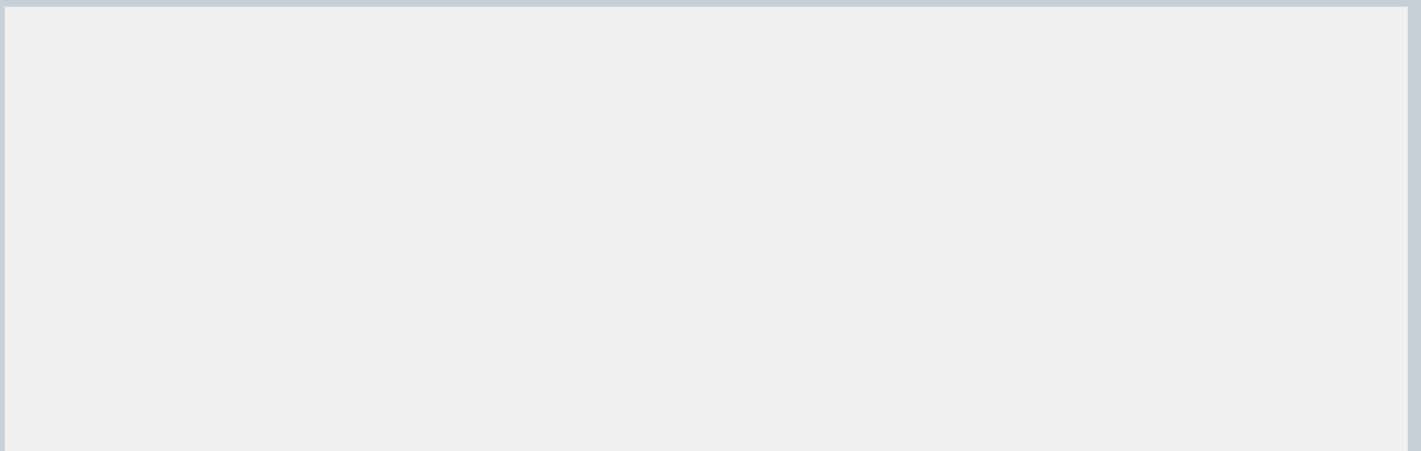
4 What are you passionate about?

Interviewers are looking to see what drives you and what you care about. Give examples of something you pursued and enjoyed. Make sure you can relate it back to the job.



5 What motivates you?

This shows the interviewer you are self aware and have an understanding of what it takes to get things done. This is a great time to use real life examples and tie them back to experiences in the workplace.



6 Describe a difficult work experience and how you worked through it.

You'll need to refer back to the PAR method we used when building out your resume for this one. You need to tell what the problem was, describe the actions you took and talk about the results. Don't trash a former employer or co-worker. Keep a positive outlook. Show how what you learned has helped you going forward with your career.

7 Why are you leaving your current job (or why were you let go)?

This isn't a trick question. It's always best to be truthful and direct. If you can put a positive spin on it, then do. For example, you could say you're motivated by the chance to explore new opportunities, not your old workplace had issues. If you were laid off, be straightforward. You can say the company experienced loss of sales or an economic downturn and I was let go based on job tenure.

8 Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Your interviewer is trying to see if you plan on staying around or if you are someone who job hops always looking for the next opportunity. Focus on the job. Talk about how you'd like to grow and advance in the position. Talk about your desire to contribute to the best of your ability. You can mention that you'd like to lead a team. Stay focused on what you can do for the company you are applying with.

9 What are your salary expectations?

Do your research. Check out [Salary.com](https://www.salary.com), [Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com) or [Payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com) if you need help. You should know what the fair market value is for the position you are applying. You don't want to be unreasonable with your answer, but you do want to be fair. Setting the bar to high, could price you out of the competition. Setting it to low could make them think you are desperate.

10 What is your greatest weakness?

This is often the question that stresses people out the most. You might wonder why they ask at all. It's because they are looking for any issues or concerns to show up that could prevent you from working in their environment. They are checking to see how you communicate an uncomfortable topic. Here are some things to consider as you plan your answer.

What Not To Say:

1. I don't have any weaknesses.
2. I'm a perfectionist.

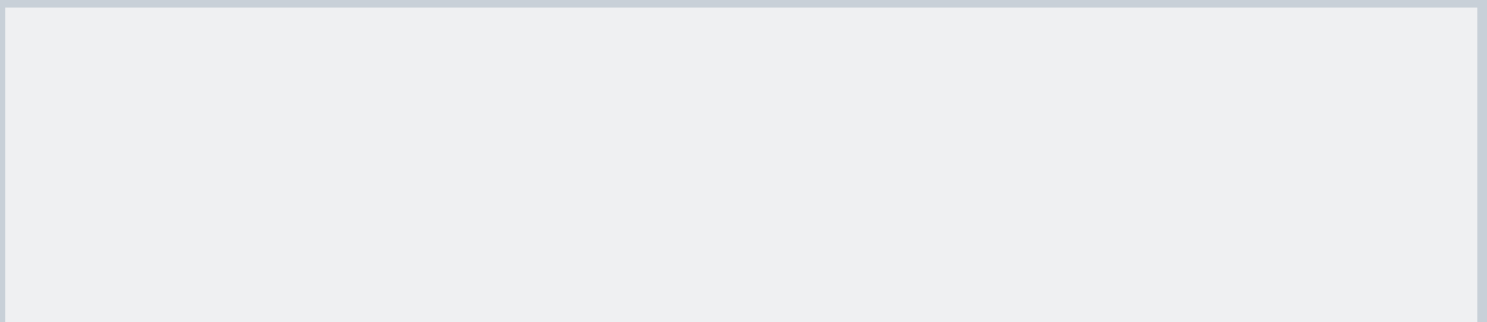
The first is just a lie. Everyone has a weakness. It makes you sound arrogant and you come across as a jerk. The second is overused. So many people are coached to say this that employers don't believe it anymore. Make sure you don't choose a weakness that is a necessary skill for the job you are applying.

What You Should Say:

Do not provide a long list of weaknesses. Just pick one and have a plan for how you answer. Once you pick your weakness, you want to phrase your answer as "this was a weakness, but I've improved it by..." This type of response shows the employer you are self aware and willing to learn. That you have focused on self development.

Here's an example:

I got nervous when I made presentations to our team. So I took a public speaking course and it helped me improve and gain more confidence. I still get a little nervous, but at my last job, my supervisor realized how I had improved and asked me to make a joint presentation with them about a special project.



Following your Interview, you need to send a thank you to the interviewer within 24 hours if possible. An email is perfectly acceptable today. Here's a quick template you can use.

Hi (Name of Interviewer),

Thank you for talking with me on (Date of Interview). After our discussion and learning more about the (Position You Are Applying For), I am even more enthusiastic about the possibility of working with (XYZ Company). I particularly enjoyed learning (Include something that stood out about the job to you from the interview).

If I can provide you with any additional information, please let me know.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Thanks,

NAME/EMAIL/PHONE

Use this if you haven't heard from the company within 2 weeks of your interview.



Hi (Name of Interviewer),

Thanks again for the opportunity to interview for the (Job Position) at (Company Name). I was great to learn more about the role and I remain interested in the position.

I wanted to check back and see if you had a timeline you could share with me on the hiring timeline. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,

NAME/EMAIL/PHONE