



10 Interview Questions You Should Always Be Prepared For

There is no way you can accurately predict the questions that will be asked in an interview, but you can be ready and prepared by thinking about the factors that might concern an interviewer or employer before the interview.

Behind every interview question there is a concern or another question. Your job is to process the question thinking about what the interviewer's concern might be. In other words, why is the interviewer asking you this question?

Q#1 – How long have you been looking for a job? (Concern – is there something wrong with you that other employers have picked up?)

A#1 – “After I was laid off from my last job, I took the opportunity to take some time out to examine my career goals. I have just begun my search in the last few weeks. I have a definite goal in mind and have been selective about the positions I consider. Your company and this position are of great interest to me.”

Q#2 – How did you prepare for this interview? (Concern – are you interested enough to do some research, or are you going to “wing it”?)

A#2 – “When I found this position posted on the internet (web-site), I was immediately interested. I checked out the company website and mission statement, looked at the bios of the company founders and executives, and was impressed. Once I had the interview appointment, I talked with friends and acquaintances in the industry. And, I'm sure I'll find out a lot more in today's meetings.”

Q#3 – What is your salary expectation for this job? (Concern – can we afford you? Can they get you for less than budgeted?)

A#3 – I'll need more information about the job and the responsibilities involved before we can begin to discuss salary. Can you give me an idea of the range budgeted for this position?”

Q#4 – How do you keep current and informed about your job and the industries that you have worked in? (Concern – Once you get the job do you continue to learn and grow – stay challenged and motivated?)

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A#4 – “I pride myself on my ability to stay on top of what is happening in my industry. I do a lot of reading – the business section of the newspapers and magazines. I belong to a couple of professional organizations and network with colleagues at the meetings. I take classes and seminars whenever they are of interest, or offer new information or technology.”

Q#5 – Tell me about a time when you had to plan and coordinate a project from start to finish. (Concern – behavioral questions – seeking an example of specific past behavior)

A#5 – ” I headed up a project which involved customer service personnel and technicians. I organized a meeting to get everyone together to brainstorm and get his or her input. From this meeting I drew up a plan, taking the best of the ideas. I organized teams, balancing the mixture of technical and non-technical people. We had a deadline to meet, so I did periodic checks with the teams. After three weeks, we were exceeding expectations, and were able to begin implementation of the plan. It was a great team effort, and a big success. I was commended by management for my leadership, but I was most proud of the team spirit and cooperation which it took to pull it off.”

Q#6 – What kinds of people do you have difficulties working with? (Concern – ability to be flexible and work in a diverse environment?)

A#6 – “In my last three jobs I have worked with men and women from very diverse backgrounds and cultures. The only time I had difficulty was with people who were dishonest about work issues. I worked with one woman who was taking credit for work that her team accomplished. I had an opportunity to talk with her one day and explained how she was affecting the morale. She became very upset that others saw her that way, and said she was unaware of her behavior or the reactions of others. Her behavior changed after our talk. What I learned from that experience is that sometimes what we perceive about others is not always the case if we check it out.”

Q#7 – We expect managers to work more than 8 hours a day. Do you have a problem with that? (Concern – are you a work-aholic or a person who requires balance?)

A#7 – “I have no problem working long hours. I have worked 12 or 14 hour days. What I have found works for me is to work smarter, not necessarily longer. My goal is to get the job done, whatever that takes, in the most efficient manner.”

Q#8 – When have you been most satisfied in your career? (Concern – what motivates you? Or de-motivates you?)

A#8 – “The job before the one I am currently at, was my most rewarding experience for me. I worked in a wonderful team environment. There was a lot of camaraderie. I

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worked with a team of four people and we did some really original thinking. It is that kind of environment I want to be involved in again.”

Q#9 – Why do you want this job? (Concern – are you using the shot-gun approach to job search or do you really know what you want?)

A#9 – “I’ve been very careful about the companies where I have applied. When I saw the ad for this position, I knew I found what I was looking for. What I can bring to this job is my seven years of experience, and knowledge of the industry, plus my ability to communicate and build customer relationships. That, along with my flexibility and organizational skills, makes me a perfect match for this position. I see some challenges ahead of me here, and that’s what I thrive on. I have what you need, and you have what I want.”

Q#10 – We are ready to make an offer. Are you ready to accept today? (Concern – we don’t want you to go away and think about it and change your mind – we want you.)

A#10 – “Based on my research and the information I have gathered during the interview process; I feel I am in a position to consider an offer. I do, however, have a personal policy that I give myself at least 24 hours to make major life decisions. I could let you know by tomorrow.”

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