Congratulations! You’ve purchased 50 Interview Questions You Must Know to Get Hired!

Today there are more job seekers than ever. In a global economy Americans are finding more jobs being shifted overseas where labor costs are lower.

As a result, more people are competing for jobs in the United States.

Having purchased this e-Book, it is assumed that you have an interview on the horizon. You’ve done the right thing by doing some preparation for the interview process.

There’s no worse feeling than being caught not knowing what to say during an interview. Most people have had this happen to them and what usually follows is the thought- “I should have prepared better.”

The interview questions included here are a result of careful research. This e-Book will provide you with not only a better understanding of the top 50 interview questions. It will also give you confidence. Confidence that will come across in your voice as you look the interviewer in the eye and answer the question.

In many cases, one of the most important concerns you can have is what kind of questions will I be asked. Here you’ll learn the most common ones that can be asked by any employer in any industry. But you should also learn the types of questions you’ll be asked specific to your industry.

If you’re an accountant, they may ask about how many returns you can process in a day. If you’re in sales, they’ll definitely ask how many years in the last five did you exceed your sales quota?

So try to anticipate the industry specific questions as well as prepare for the questions that follow.

The best way to take advantage of these questions is to actually read them and then answer them in your own words out loud. While you might feel a little silly, you will be amazed at how you initially trip over your words. After practicing however your answers should flow as smooth as honey.
This is what manager’s like- a person that is composed under any circumstances. One that puts some thought into words before speaking them.

So read on, on best of luck to you!

1. “Tell me about yourself”

This is one of the first questions you may hear in your interview. What has happened is that the manager has taken just a few minutes to review your resume, and wants to hear it from you.

When the interviewer hears your story, then puts that information with what’s on your resume, he or she now has a good basic summary of what you want and why you applied to the job.

What you have to do is prepare yourself to give a brief yet complete answer to that question. You don’t want to ramble on and on, you don’t want to start from the day you were born.

The hiring manager wants to know what you’ve done since you graduated from high school.

So something like “I graduated from Maple High School in 2000 with a 3.5 GPA, and was admitted to Central Anywhere University where I majored in...”

Then give a little background on that experience, and anything in between then and the day of your interview. If describing past jobs, just give the name of the company, what your title was, and your basic job responsibilities.

You may say “I left that company because...” which will head off the inevitable question “Why did you leave?”

Being able to give a comprehensive answer to the above question will start off the interview on the right foot. The hiring manager will feel you are sharp- you know how to articulate your skills and experience.

Keep this answer to between three and five minutes. Rehearse it over and over until your delivery is smooth and fluent. Note the important issues you want to cover and cross them off as you make them. Do this while you practice but not in the interview.
2. “What Interests You Most About This Job”

With this question, you must be very careful to make sure you know exactly what a person in this position does.

If you try to sound like you’re knowledgeable but you’re really not, you’ll come off as someone who just wants a job, any job, and you really don’t know what this position entails. Worse, you’ll ruin your own credibility with the company.

It’s best if you know what the job is all about before the interview.

If you don’t just use Google to learn about. Research the company’s website, and Google the term “medical sales representative job description.” You’ll come up with lots of information on what a person in the job does on a day to day basis.

If possible, try to speak to someone already doing similar work.

However is you find yourself in this position, turn the tables by stating “I believe I have a good understanding of what this position entails but could you give me a brief summary before I answer the question?”

Now you sound like a smart person- one who gathers all the facts first. In most cases the interviewer will gladly comply and give you a five minutes summary of the position. If you’re taking notes, you can state the things you heard that interest you most.

If you already know what a person in this position does, then talk about how you will do it better than anyone else.

For example, a person applying for a receptionist position might emphasize your professional phone manners, ability to determine which calls are a priority, and which can go into voicemail and how your ability to screen calls and visitors will save interruptions for managers.

Regardless, it’s very important here to use inflection in your voice to demonstrate your high level of enthusiasm for the job. You want to make them understand you’d be very happy on a day-to-day basis, and will work hard to do your best.

Remember, companies want to hire people that are enthusiastic about their jobs, so be sure your excitement shines through.

Be very careful with this question. You want to come across as having made a very positive contribution to your previous employer, not the opposite.

Be sure to leave out all the subjective stuff. Only give positive comments about your previous boss. Speaking in a positive way will make you seem like a great employee to have.

Negative experiences are not something to mention here. Disagreements with your co-workers, complaints about your boss or working conditions will only make you seem like a complainer.

Try to identify the most positive things. If you were in sales, but hated your boss and the products you had to sell were obsolete- don’t go there. Instead, focus on the things you learned and the relationships you built.

You could mention how you know the all the prospects in the area. Mention associations you belonged to, mention projects you completed, challenges you overcame, and people you admired.

Overall, you should begin by summarizing your duties in each position you held. Then talk about longer term achievements. Mention highlights- particularly hard, large, or tenuous assignments most people couldn’t handle.

The obvious follow-up to this question is “Why did you leave?” Again be careful here, just mention that you’re looking for advancement, or more products, or a better quality of life. Don’t say anything negative about your former employer.

If you were laid-off, that’s ok these days, just be sure to put it in a light that presents that is was not your fault, but part of overall market conditions.

In most cases, when speaking about a job you had formerly, be sure you can present a clear and understandable reason why you left.

In the event that you were fired, you can try to move on without directly addressing why you left. Something like “then in my next position...” sounds good. If you’re asked directly, then tell the truth.
4. “What Skills Do You Have For This Job?”

This is a wide open question that lets you launch into all the great things you can offer a company.

Look to demonstrate a clear understanding of what is required of a person doing this job, and then match up all of your great qualifications.

Someone applying to a nursing position might have a list of all the requirements one needs to perform well, and then go above and beyond by describing the additional skills you have- great bedside manner, attentive at all times, willing to complete tasks on time.

In sales, you may want to state all the skills you have learned while doing your job. How to identify prospects, how to qualify them, how to keep your contacts organized, how you track tasks, etc.

If you have specific certifications, make sure you list them all and give a brief description of what each one means. For example “I am a CCNA, or a Cisco Certified Network Administrator,” and can manage an enterprise level network.

An accountant might mention your degree if recently graduated, or the number and types of returns you do each year.

With all the competition for jobs, you want to identify as many skills as possible and use those to differentiate yourself from the competition.

If you are an attorney but have marketing skills, be sure to highlight them in a way that complements the objectives of the position you are applying for.

Be sure to talk to people in this type of position so that you know your skills are relevant and that you’re not missing any skills critical to the performance of the job.

If you don’t have the skills necessary, but will learn as part of the job, explain that you’ll work hard to learn as you go and take full advantage of the training this position offers.

Most importantly, be sure you have a list to recite that includes any thing that could be relevant.
5. “What Are Your Salary Expectations?”

This and another version “What is your current salary?” is one of the most common questions asked applicants.

I don’t feel that people are entitled to such personal information. Would the interviewer disclose his or her salary? In most cases, no.

Reality is different however. Recruiters will state that they’ll ask for proof. In most cases this is a bluff to keep you honest. Since this question comes in the beginning of the process, try to first ask what the salary “range” is for the position that is being applied for.

In many entry level jobs, you’ll actually get an answer to this question. They’ll give you a range. Jump on this opportunity to ask where they think you fit in.

In higher level positions, they’re really asking what kind of salary it is going to take to get you to accept an offer.

Regardless, what’s important is to know what the going rate is first. Again the key is to ask around as well as doing research. The U.S. Dept. of Labor publishes data on the web that you can research.

Salaries can vary greatly by region so be careful to know the circumstances of where you’re at.

Another key to answering this question is how well qualified are you for the job? If you can begin working and make an immediate contribution without any training then you are saving this employer a lot of time. Not just unproductive training time while you’re being paid, but the time someone else takes away from their job to train you. So if you’re very well qualified and can make an immediate contribution, you should earn more than someone who’s not.

Finally, I’ll say that having done your research just come right out and tell the interviewer what you want to make. Be reasonable, but don’t sell yourself short.

I’ve also come across many people that will flat out lie about what their current or past income was. There is some risk here, especially if they do ask you to present W-2’s to document your claim. But it’s not uncommon for someone to claim they make 30-100% more than their actual salary.
6. “Give Me an Example of How You Handled a Difficult Situation.”

This is a great opportunity to showcase your talents. As long as you have prepared and rehearsed your answer to this question you should be able to ace it.

Any job has difficult circumstances. Let’s consider the burger flipper at a fast food chain.

There are a number of circumstances that could have been disasters had it not been for your creativity and intelligence.

Perhaps it was an extremely busy time and you ran out of ground beef. Perhaps you ran to the grocery store and cleaned them out.

Perhaps it was how a co-worker failed to use sanitary food handling methods. You were able to convince him or her how important it was to provide safe food to customers, how sick they could get from tainted food.

In other cases it may have been a disgruntled customer that you turned around into a satisfied patron.

The key while answering this kind of question is to take your time setting up the story. Make it sound like the odds of a positive outcome were a million to one. Then use shock and awe as you explain the incredible opportunity you turned it into.

These situations happen in every job. Take a few minutes to think about how and when it happened to you. If you haven’t had anything like that happen, turn instead to family life or school. Surely you had exposure to some situation that you were able to turn around.

In any event, the employer is trying to find evidence of your reliability. Can you be left on your own or do you need constant guidance? A self-reliant employee will seek to solve his or her own dilemmas.

Managers will then feel at ease knowing that you have the confidence and persistence necessary to handle adversity like a pro.

Don’t forget to write down your situation, and practice telling it out loud. Only then will your delivery sound smooth and confident.

7. “Why Do You Want to Leave Your Current Position?”
The interviewer wants to know what are the circumstances that made you want to seek new employment.

Don’t overwork your answer to this question. It’s a common mistake to come up with a long story with many items that caused you to leave.

In most cases it’s best to just state the truth in simple terms. “I’m looking to improve myself,” or “For career advancement.”

Most interviewers will accept this at face value. Just keep it general, and of course never say anything negative about your company, your performance or your co-workers.

Develop an answer that demonstrates all the careful thought and reasoning you put into your decision to seek employment elsewhere.

You should also focus on all the career benefits the new position will give you. “I want this position because it will give me exposure to new markets” or “I want this position because there are more opportunities for promotion” or “I want this position because it will allow me to use my skills better.”

In any event the key is to have three to five solid reasons to discuss in a constructive way why this new position will benefit you more than your current position.

8. “What is Your Biggest Weakness?”

This is a very common question. You should identify and write down two or three weaknesses that you can be candid about.

Make sure that you have a positive spin on each one. Admitting that you’re a perfectionist is a great example. The spin you put on it is that it causes you to be a very thorough and conscientious employee. You are the type to dot every “i” and cross every “t.”

Another example is sometimes you’re too competitive. State some very minor repercussions that came about from your wanting to be the best, and how you’ve learned to focus your energy in a more productive manor.

No matter what do not tell them you don’t have any weaknesses. Everyone has something. Turn it humorous- “I have a weakness for chocolate and I need room in my desk to store a candy bar.”
Trying to convince someone you don’t have any weaknesses is futile. The interviewer will question your credibility and dismiss you as a candidate.

9. “You have a vacation day scheduled and your boss announces a very important last minute meeting. How do you respond?”

Here you’re being asked what’s most important to you. First thing to do is think like a manager. What would you want your employee to do? Likely you’d like an explanation from the employee.

If your employee had a really important reason- say expensive airline tickets were purchased or you have a sick relative that needs urgent care- just state that you analyze the importance of the meeting against your plans for your day off.

Make it clear that if you’re just taking a day off to relax or catch up with friends, you’ll gladly re-schedule it for another day.

This type of question may initially throw you off course. To buy yourself some time, re-state the question to the interviewer after you ask him or her to repeat it. This will give you time to think how to respond.

The most important thing to say is that you’ll first investigate both the company meeting and your own plans to see which event has the highest priority and then act accordingly.

10. “Why Should We Invite You Back?”

This question may at first seem a little harsh, but they’re just asking to hear you tell them why they should hire you.

Preparation for this question is key as always.

Analyze your strengths prior to your interview and try to identify things that make you unique.

If you’re applying for a job in international business, and you’ve traveled to many countries abroad, be prepared to cite the places you’ve been and how that puts you ahead of anyone else.
If you’re in sales, it might be the experience you had launching a new product.

Maybe you’re a teacher, and you took specialized courses for a unique training assignment.

Whatever it is you have unique about yourself you need to identify your “killer” skill that the other applicants won’t have.

You might be saying that you just don’t have it. But again look to your family, social and academic background for experiences to recall during your interview.

Offer a great summary like this “so when you add these things up I clearly have the strong qualifications and unique abilities to be the best candidate for your company to hire.”

Rehearse this line over and over until you can say it without missing a beat and coming across completely confident but not arrogant.

11. “What extra-curricular activities did you participate in?”

If you don’t have organizations and associations that you belong to and volunteer for you should begin to work on that now.

If you have done that, be prepared to explain your contribution to each organization. Even if you never served on a committee or board, be sure to be able to cite ways that you provided added value to your group.

Charity organizations are particularly nice to have on your resume. Doing a simple charity walk to raise money for cancer, or selling cookies for the Girl Scouts are all examples of extra effort you put in to help others.

Most people at the entry level don’t have these yet, unless they were from their college life.

Building on these now will help you to stand out and show that you’re a go getter.

12. “Why Do You Want to Work Here?”
The interviewer wants to know what attracts you to them as a company. So while you might like the industry or live in the geographical area, be prepared to give specifics about that exact company and what you know about them.

If you are familiar with the company, great. Be sure to write down and rehearse saying 3-5 reasons why you want to work at that particular company.

If you’re not familiar with the company, start with research on their website. Become familiar with products and services that they sell, and look for awards and accomplishments.

Next, put the company name into a Google News search box and read the latest news about them, if any.

It will make the interviewer feel good that you know so much about the company. You can even demonstrate this by asking questions about many of the items you found in your research.

This demonstrates a strong interest and desire to work at the company you’re interviewing at. Most people tend to use the first interview to ask the interviewer these types of questions. It’s better if you already know them and can discuss products, services, divisions and geographic operating regions in an intelligent way.

13. “Describe an Idea or Project That Was Shot Down.”

This is a really tough question, one that could lead to you losing any points you’ve gained.

In this case you want to have a project or idea that never got off the ground simply because after it was thought through everyone decided not to pursue it.

It’s ok to have an idea that didn’t fly, entirely different thought if the idea didn’t fly because you weren’t able to work well on it.

So going back to learning how to generalize, this question is asking if you are creative with ideas for the company, it asks if you have confidence and courage to offer something up that might fail, and it demonstrates how you take criticism if the idea is taken up by management.
Think it through, there may be even some very simple ideas that you through out- like simply recycling paper, or buying re-filled ink cartridges.

14. “Where Do You See Yourself in Five Years?”

Demonstrate some planning here by starting off with the thing you’re doing to plan for the next five years.

Then the second half of your answer can explain the position and responsibilities you’d like to have by that time.

Show your passion for the job by reciting all the great skills you will develop in the position.

Most importantly, don’t come across as arrogant or as a genuine threat to replace your boss.

“I would like to develop the knowledge necessary to become known as an expert in my field so that I can begin to recruit and manage clients on my own. This will hopefully lead me on a path to a partnership provided I meet and exceed client revenue quotas.”

15. “Sell Me This Pencil.”

It’s true, this could happen in an interview. While most people might laugh it is a serious challenge, one that you can easily meet and here’s how.

First, you want to show that you just don’t jump into your sales routine. You first ask some questions to develop your approach.

The questions might be how many boxes will they buy and who will be using them for what purposes? General office use or drafting? By clerical workers or construction workers?

Then you take the pencil in your hand and you begin to discuss the yellow paint on the outside, and then discuss the wood surrounding the lead, then the eraser and how it’s mounted. Then close the deal by explaining that your pencil lead is far superior to anyone else’s. Because of your superior manufacturing technologies, your pencil will last twice as long as anyone’s and will reduce their pencil expenditures by 50%.
16. “We Just Produced a New Commercial- Have You Seen It?”

Be very familiar with the advertising efforts of your potential employers. They’ve put a lot of money and effort into them. If you haven’t seen them and understand the focus of the ad you’ll come across as being out of the loop and uninterested.

Many companies today are posting their ads on YouTube or some other video sharing service.

In your standard background check of companies be sure to include a Google search, a YouTube search, industry association websites, and be familiar with how many ads for positions they have posted.

Every advertisement has a goal or an approach. Something to grab your attention or an unusual approach to the market. It will usually end with a close, a call to action to get the viewer to take action.

Just try to identify these in the company’s ads and you’ll be able to speak intelligently about their marketing efforts.

17. “Who Else Are You Interviewing With?”

Be careful with this question. You may be tempted to demonstrate how much you are in demand by replying that many large companies are interviewing you.

It’s best to show that you are a discreet person who is specifically focused on one industry and on a particular position.

“I’m interviewing with Tier 1 automotive suppliers only for openings in project management that require a certified project manager.”

Chances are they know the other companies and even know the hiring managers. But you’ll look smart for not revealing them and later if they ask if these companies hire you it will save you the embarrassment of saying they were not interested.

As always it is best to be prepared on what to say, but also be prepared on what not to say.

Your ideal job would be the one where you get to utilize all of your skills while enjoying tremendous success and career growth.

Before your interview, envision what your ideal job would be like. Where would you work, who would you work with, what would you do on a daily basis, what would the employer be like, what would the product or service be like.

Just spend some time brainstorming and using your imagination to visualize the exact details about your ideal position and your response to this question will just flow off your tongue.

19. “What Skills Do You Possess?”

Have prepared a short list of your most useful skills. Make sure they are very specific and took time to develop.

Good communication skills in general would not work. However, if you were a communication major in college, participated in a debate group, and give speeches on a regular basis, that would qualify you as someone that has developed great communication skills.

“I am a union certified carpenter and am certified with the Kitchen & Bath Industry Association as a Master Kitchen Carpenter.” See how this answer is relevant, very specific, and it’s a skill that took some time and dedication to achieve.

The list you recite should be easy to remember and relevant to the company.

Hiring managers usually report to someone else and they want to be able to cite the reasons they want to hire you. Giving them a short but very important set of defined skills will help your interviewer sell you to his or her manager.

20. “Your Boss Is Wrong.”

You might be asked how you would handle a situation when your boss is flat out wrong. How would you respond?

First, in a private meeting with your boss, you should explain that you feel organizations benefit when everyone can express their point of view and explore different scenarios to determine the best approach.
Then explain with total objectivity your “observations.” Presenting just the facts you have observed, you’re avoiding presenting your idea as a subjective opinion.

“John, I’ve seen several cases where you approach worked well. However there have been instances where the result was …… Do you think we need to be concerned with these other situations?”

Now you just presented your concerns in a non-threatening way that allows your boss to examine and reflect on other situations. Chances are he or she will stick with their approach but at least you brought other possible outcomes to their attention. Be prepared to support your examples with specific details from your research and analysis.

21. “Does Your Boss Know You’re at This Interview?”

This question can startle people because most people they’re not prepared for it. Even the slightest hesitation will send a message that you feel guilty.

So you need to have a short but straightforward answer. It can be as simple as “I took a vacation day, as I had several accrued.”

Sometimes a simple shift change can explain it away. “I work the late shift and I’m normally off at this time of day.”

In other cases, just simply state that you made arrangements in your schedule to accommodate this interview because it’s very important to your career.

Rehearse saying this and you’ll be ready to fire back the moment the question is asked and completely eliminate any question about your integrity and trustworthiness.

22. “How Do You Ensure Nothing Falls Through The Cracks?”

This question is asking how thorough are you in your work habits, and what tools do you use to ensure all your tasks get done on time.

Most people use either their calendar or a task list, like the one in Outlook, to ensure they don’t miss deadlines and get their work done.
The key, you should explain, is that you take the time to enter a new task as it comes up in your daily routine. Many people forget to enter them, then the task can indeed fall through the cracks.

So you state “I enter all my daily tasks into my task list, and include the names and phone numbers of who I’m reminding myself to call. Each morning I run through my task list until it’s complete before I move into the rest of my day.”

This way you’ll come across as a detail oriented person who knows how to fully utilize technology to help ensure the best possible job performance.

23. “Do You Set Goals for Yourself?”

This is a great opportunity to demonstrate that you’re someone interested in learning and improvement.

Explain how you analyze, identify and record your goals and periodically evaluate your progress.

Even the most common jobs have goals that can help motivate you to achieve. Simple new goals for employees are just learning the business processes used to facilitate the work flow. Learning computer applications, learning company procedures, learning about customers and clients.

Other goals are performance related. “I work with my manager to set goals for myself that help the company achieve it’s objectives.”

Then be sure to include the manner in which you make sure you reach your goals. “I compare my monthly results to my goals. If I’m behind I develop a strategy that will help ensure I’m back on track by the end of the quarter.”

24. “Are You Computer Literate?”

The interviewer is asking do you possess basic, intermediate or advanced computer skills. The types of skills included here are a necessary part of any job to one degree or another.

On a basic level you should be able to handle basic email functions including sending, receiving, attachments, broadcast, etc. You should
also be proficient in Microsoft Office products- Excel, Word, Outlook and Powerpoint.

You should know how to multi-task- cutting and pasting words and images from one document to another.

In Excel, understand basic spreadsheet functions like sum, total, average, etc. and know how to work with tabs.

In Powerpoint be able to create simple text and image slideshows.

25. “Can You Work From a Home Office?”

Working from a home office has its advantages and disadvantages. You can run your own schedule, set up your own office and work interruption free.

You also need to have a lot of ambition. It’s easy to get distracted and you need to be focused on what you have to accomplish that day.

Your response to this question is that you’re hired to produce results and you understand that only hard work and persistence will allow you to achieve the goals you set for yourself and your company.

You also want to address concerns that you have a good working environment- telephone, fax, computer, file cabinets, etc. and that you’re not trying to raise a pet or child while you’re working.

So plan it out a little, then just explain how you’ll set up your activities in advance and stick to your schedule.

26. “How Do You Handle Failure?”

Admitting failure can be a humbling experience but the truth is we have all experienced failure in one aspect or another.

First thing not to do when answering this question is to admit and dwell upon the details of a failure.

Stick to describing the things you do after you realize you’ve failed. “I try to look back and examine everything I did objectively. I analyze the events that caused the failure, decide if I could have done better, then I move on and focus on my next assignment.”
Having a very positive spin is important when answering this question. You can cite that even the best baseball players have a .650 failure rate at the plate.

27. “How Would You Handle a Customer Complaint?”

Most people tend to want an irate customer to just go away. Actually an irate customer can be turned into one of your most loyal customers depending on how you handle the situation.

The first thing to do is to stay calm, speak in a quiet voice and tell the customer you want to hear the entire story. They’ll feel you care because you want to listen.

Let them speak and repeat their points back to them for confirmation that you understand exactly what happened.

In many cases by having them start at the beginning and telling exactly what happened you can pinpoint the source of their frustration.

In most cases you don’t necessarily want to solve the problem right then and there if you don’t have to. Ask if you can investigate their incident completely and get back to them.

This will allow you to think through how to address this problem. Contact everyone involved from your company and get the facts.

Now that you understand both sides you’ll be able to put together a solution that benefits everyone. Just remember “The Customer is Always Right.”

28. “I’m Not Convinced You’re Right For This Job.”

You’d think this question was very negative. Actually there are a lot of good reasons why you want to have this question thrown at you.

Chances are the interviewer really like you, he or she just wants you to convince them once and for all.

The first thing to do is to discover more details on why they feel that way. So go ahead and ask “Could you be more specific?”

As the interviewer responds, write down the responses then address them one at a time.
Be prepared to have responses for each concern and an example to back it up.

29. “How Do You Deal With a Bad Manager?”

Don’t fall for this trap. You’re being asked to criticize a former supervisor.

Many people will just move into the answer by explaining that they just follow directions or ignore criticism.

Instead explain that every manager you’ve worked for had particularly strong skills in certain areas that allowed them to advance.

While you can admit hearing complaints from co-workers explain that you never participate in gossip and focused on following directions and doing your job.

30. “How Do You Address Someone Not Doing Their Job?”

Are you a snitch? You might want to gain favor from your interviewer by stating that you’d report them right away, but there’s actually a better way to handle that situation.

First address it with the employee if it’s a co-worker or subordinate. Begin by just stating “I wanted to fill you in on....” Avoid any tone of criticism. This gives the employee a chance to address the oversight without anyone else being involved.

If that doesn’t work, then bring it to their immediate supervisor, again without any criticism. From there, it’s in their hands to address and you’ve done your job.

Sometimes people tend to go right to the boss when someone is not doing their job. This can generate all kinds of resentment from others who might be involved. That’s why it’s best to handle the issue discreetly.

Giving this response will show your interviewer you have tact and experience in handling issues in the workplace.

31. “Someone Else Got Your Promotion.”
Explain how you responded when another employee was given a promotion you thought you deserved.

First explain how you felt disappointed but when you objectively analyzed all of your qualifications you realized you still had a few areas where you needed a little more experience.

Then explain how promotions don’t necessarily always go to the best qualified person. Sometimes there are other relevant issues such as geography, tenure, etc.

This is another question that demonstrates you’ll be a stable employee, one who is able to roll with the punches of corporate life.

32. “How Have You Developed Your Teamwork Skills?”

You might have to recall something from your personal or academic life on this question.

Prepare ahead of time and you’ll be able to cite an example for childhood sports, and church group or any part of your academic background.

Teamwork involved supporting and looking out for each other. Teams can be extremely powerful when compared to individuals. Explain that working together gives each other ideas and solutions and helps everyone reach a common goal at the same time.

33. “Can You Travel?”

Research the position well enough to know the travel requirements. If you can’t commit to what is required, then you should say so up front.

In some cases your attributes and qualifications could still land you the job albeit with agreed to limitations on your schedule.

Don’t be tempted to agree to the travel requirement then later not meet it. You and your boss will be disappointed and you will have wasted a lot of time in a position you no longer want.

Often there can be confusion as to travel requirements. If this is the case then you should work to get specific details. 50% could mean on average across the span of a year, or it could mean that each and every week you will spend at least 20 hours a week on the road.
34. “When Did You Decide On This Career?”

Some people have the fortune to know exactly what they want to do very early on. Sometimes in high school, sometimes earlier. These people will go right into their chosen field in college and then in graduate school.

If this is you, then be prepared to give examples and circumstances that lead to such a strong interest and how you were so decisive at an early age.

If you discovered it later in life, then explain the career path that exposed you to the field that you became interested in.

In many cases there is an event or person that caught your interest.

Most important is to be prepared and have your story ready. You will sound confident and decisive, just want the interviewer likes to hear.


This is a great question that allows you to explain your strengths with specific details.

“My customers would say I always get back to them, I’m very knowledgeable about my products, I’m professional and that I’m a nice person on a personal level.”

Never say you don’t know because you didn’t ask. Just anticipate what they might say and explain it.

There are other ways customers show they believe in you. They may share important leads with you, they may invite you to be on their boards, they may even try to hire you.

In any event think this question through and know exactly what you’re going to say.

36. “May We Contact Your References?”

The answer is yes, but only after you have a firm employment offer in writing, and you’ve accepted the position.
The interviewer is testing you to see if your references are valid. Don’t hesitate to confirm you’ve made arrangements with them to expect calls.

But you have a right to expect your application to be kept in strict confidence.

You also have a right to tell your boss you’re leaving before anyone else does.

So insist that yes, they can contact your references, but after you’re pretty much completed your employment agreement.

37. “Are You a Job Hopper?”

If you have a background of no longer than one or two years at any company, think long and hard about why you haven’t demonstrated more permanency in your career.

Just starting out in a career is a reasonable example for moving around from company to company, especially if each move produced a promotion.

If you’re mid-career or later, think about reasonable reasons that caused you to leave.

It could have been a long commute. Especially today with high gas prices, it is very reasonable to take a job that cuts your commute time in half.

No matter what don’t speak poorly of your former employers or co-workers. Just explain the reasonable circumstances that have caused you to move on from one job to the next.

You’ll find employers to be reasonable- just be honest and straightforward.

38. “How Have You Improved Processes?”

All businesses have processes. A process for mailing letters, a process for ordering supplies, a process for fulfilling orders.

Be prepared to describe any process- even one from your personal life, that you improved and made more efficient.
At home, if you have a large family, you may have set up ways to assign roles for chores & maintenance.

In summer jobs, you may have invented a new way to train new hires, or distribute newspapers.

Most companies embrace people that can improve processes. The key is to document the existing process, then identify areas for improvement. Most people will just offer a new way. Take it a step further and analyze and document a process including measurements of time, quantity and or space.

In any event, this is a great way to demonstrate you can make a very positive contribution to a firm.

39. “How Long Will It Take You To Contribute?”

Tough question if you don’t know the job and industry well.

In most cases, a new person can be completely versed about a job and still take 6 months to hit full stride. In others, particularly sales, it can take over 2 years to become highly productive.

In any event, its best to analyze the assets and liabilities you have that will effect this time period.

List all the items that will help you right away – “I know your top ten customers on a personal basis, they respect my professionalism and prefer to deal with me.”

You may already be an expert on the product and virtually no training whatsoever would be required.

In any event a list of contributing factors that will get you up to speed will help you convince the interviewer that you’d be the least expensive hire in terms of training costs.

40. “What Kind of Hours Do You Like to Work?”

Don’t fall into the trap by saying you’d like to work 9-4pm every day. Start out by asking “What kind of hours are required?” Then be prepared to ask “What are the typical hours worked by most employees?”
Once you have the answers to these questions state that you are prepared to work the hours required to do the best job that you can. Indicate that you'll always be doing casual research by reading industry periodicals, but also that you’re interested in doing any additional training required.

41. “Describe a Situation Where You Used Persuasion.”

Managers have all encountered situations where a new idea is met with resistance. It could be annual sales goals, a new ad campaign, or a challenging customer.

Even employees will often face times when the art of persuasion is required.

In your interview preparation, recall a circumstance where you had to convince someone of an idea, product or event that you believed in.

This is a tremendous skill to have and if you can develop and articulate how you have used it the interviewer will see you as someone with considerable assets and as someone with management potential.

For example “Our company introduced a new line of equipment for us to sell. None of the other salespeople felt the product could be sold. While the price was high, the equipment was unique. I spoke to my co-workers about how to focus on the benefits and how it would help their customers distinguish themselves from their competitors.”

42. “Can You Describe a Company Policy You Didn’t Like?”

How well do you follow the rules? The interviewer is asking you to talk about a rule or procedure or policy you disagreed with at your previous or current employer.

We all have rules to follow that make the organization work. Usually there are some that are tedious and seem like a total waste of time.

Think through policy issues you haven’t liked but found them to benefit the organization. “I don’t like filling out sales call reports but I found that by reading them my manager could identify the areas I needed help in most.”

Never outright disagree with a policy. Find one that has hidden benefits. The interviewer will see you as someone willing to follow the
company rules and finds the positive aspects that can benefit everyone.

43. “Give an Example of a Time You Anticipated a Problem.”

Be prepared to show that you think ahead. In this question the interviewer is not only asking you to tell a story about how you were forward thinking but also how you handled the problem and prevented it from happening.

A simple example would be a factory line worker who spots a defective weld in the assembly line robot. It could be a tough job to convince management to shut down the production line. Alerting managers will give them a chance to decide on how best to analyze the problem and determine if action should be taken.

This example would also show that the employee cared about the factory schedule and the profitability of the company. It shows the employee to be a “team player” that wants to ensure the team reaches its goals.

44. “Have You Ever Fired a Friend?”

Most supervisors tend to remain professional when dealing with subordinates. They tend to avoid building personal relationships that can interfere with work relationships.

It’s more than plausible that an employee may get promoted then be asked to terminate someone they used to work with.

That person could be a former co-worker that became a social acquaintance. It would be difficult to fire this person.

In most cases there would be a circumstance that required the company to ask you to fire your friend. First explain that you would investigate the circumstances and do what’s required of your position. In some cases it could be an industry slow down, in other cases there could be instances of insubordination you were not aware of.

45. “Did You Have Any Trouble Finding Us?”

Take the opportunity to show how well you prepare, taking no chances on mistakes.
Tell the interviewer you were in the area recently and took the time to check out the address so you knew exactly where to go and how much time it would take.

This is an important exercise regardless. People often find addresses hard to locate and end up late to the interview. A very embarrassing situation that sends a bad signal to your interviewer.

Go to the interview location on another day if possible. If it’s a large company, go inside and look around. You never know what you may learn that can help you out in the interview.

46. “What Kind of Company Would You Start With $1 Million?”

Planning this question out will demonstrate that you know what to do with the knowledge you have obtained from your career.

If you’re new to the working world, it will show that you’ve already thought about what you want to do.

But the question is designed to determine where your career interest really lies. Since you won’t have time to think about it, you’ll just have to throw something out there. Be careful, if you’re just looking for a job for income, your dream company may be totally unrelated, and you’ll come across as disinterested.

47. “How Do You Qualify Your Prospects?”

To prevent wasting a lot of time, every person in marketing or sales should be sure to qualify prospects.

Problem is most salespeople love to talk about their products, and they’ll talk to anyone about them.

When someone is interested, it’s hard to turn them down.

The hardest decision is to walk away. But if you don’t do it, you’ll waste hours of time for nothing. Some “buyers” will talk your ear off, but never buy. They’ll go right to the point where they issue a purchase order or payment, then announce a delay.

Two of the most important questions you should ask yourself is one, does this person have the authority to buy, and two, does this person really need the product now.
Tell your interviewer that you qualify all your prospects in your first conversation to determine if they’re the one to talk to, and if they really need the product now.


This can be a very tricky question. If you state that you spend all your time looking for work, and you’ve been off for six months, it might appear that you’re not a desirable hire.

But on the other hand if you state that a job wasn’t your priority, you’ll come across as being less ambitious.

The correct answer depends on your circumstances- if you’ve been off work for a short period of time, let them know you spend all day looking and that you’ve gotten a very good reception from a slow job market.

If you’ve been off for a long time, state that you focused on some long term issues that needed your attention- a sick relative, moving your parents into a care facility, worked on your house so you could sell it, or that you spent time volunteering for a charity.

49. “How Well Do You Communicate?”

Either as a manager or as an employee, everyone has different communication styles.

In this electronic age, email has become a crutch. Since it’s a one-way medium, it’s easy to shoot off a bunch of emails every day and feel like you’re communicating.

The best managers and employees will have one on one and one on many discussions. The dynamic element of a live conversation has no replacement.

Indicate that you prefer to speak to your boss or employees on important issues and policies of the company. Emphasize you feel your listening skills are just as important as your speaking skills.

50. “We’re Ready to Make an Offer. Are You Ready to Accept Today?”

Thank you for your confidence in my abilities to do this job. I’m flattered and very appreciative of your offer. However I do have a personal policy of
waiting at least 24 hours before making a very important decision like this one. If you can wait, I can confirm my acceptance within 24 hours.