

Interview Question Guide

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.” - Colin Powell

The 5 KEY QUESTIONS behind every interview question

There are 5 core things every employer wants to know about you. No matter what question they ask you, I promise you: it points to one of these core questions. If you can wrap your head around that, and prepare accordingly, you’ll be able to deliver what they want ... even when their questions seem confusing. Stay focused on these 5 things, and you’ll be able to answer with confidence and clarity. Here are the 5 things they want to know:

1. Can you DO the JOB?
2. Do you UNDERSTAND the JOB?
3. Are you at the RIGHT PRICE?
4. Will you FIT IN with the team?
5. Do you WANT the job?

The trick to giving employers answers to these questions is to practice answering them before the interview! Good answers rarely come to mind in the heat of the moment. Below are some great ways to get ready for every single one of them. If you prep for these questions, you’ll be prepped for almost any interview question that comes your way. Below, you’ll find the 5 key questions and an exercise to do to prep for each one of them.



Answer the 5 key questions

1 - Can you DO the job? (Are you really qualified? If so, prove it!)

Name 5 key skills (experiences) you have that qualify you for this job:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

2- Can you UNDERSTAND the job? (Are you qualified? If so, prove it!)

- How is the job like past jobs of yours?

- How is it different?

3 - Are you at the RIGHT PRICE? Can they afford you? Will you accept their offer? Will you be HAPPY at their offer ... or will you quit for more \$ elsewhere?

- What is the MARKET rate for your skills & experience now? (Range)

- How much money do you NEED? _____

- How much money do you WANT? _____

- When will you walk away? (What is your bottom line?) _____

4 - Will you FIT IN WITH THE TEAM? Culture clash is one of the top reasons people fail, get fired or quit. Employers know this, so they are just as concerned as you are about finding a good “fit.” If you can’t answer the following questions right now (because you don’t know enough about the company), that’s just fine. Be open and enthusiastic about learning what their company culture is like. Ask the hiring managers some questions to help you understand their culture (see sample questions for you to ask below).

- Have you worked at a company with a similar structure and culture?

- In what kind of environment do you thrive (excel and succeed)?

- What attracts you to the company, work and/or team?

“People don’t buy what you do; they buy why you do it.” – Simon Sinek

5 – Do you WANT the job? Just because you applied for the job does not mean you really want it. Employers know this. A few interviewers will ask you directly about this with questions like “What attracts you to this company and job?” or “Why do you want the job?” All will spend the interview looking for clues that you’re excited about their company and job. It’s up to you to find some enthusiasm and bring that forward in your interview. Here are some questions to help you find your enthusiasm for this job:

- What attracts you to the industry?

- What attracts you to their company? _____

- What attracts you to the job (duties, role, etc.) _____

Psst! If you really DON'T want the job, but you need a paycheck:

The reality is this: sometimes in life you will be interviewing for a job that does not excite you ... because you need a paycheck. That’s reality, and that’s just fine. However, you need to find something you can get excited about before you go on that interview or your lack of enthusiasm will come through and they will hire someone else.

For example: Sue needed money, so she took a part-time job at Target as a cashier. In her heart, she did not want to work in retail again, but she couldn’t afford to wait for the perfect job. During the interview, they asked her “Why do you want to work at Target?” She said “I’ve been shopping at Target since the Dayton days. I love the shopping experience. I also love that Target donates 5 percent of its profits back to communities.” She did not say “I love working as a cashier,” because that was not the truth. Instead, she found something else to get excited about, and shared that. It worked; she got the job ... and it paid the bills while she looked for the job she really wanted.
