



## THE “TOUGH” INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### **What are your short and long-term goals; how are you prepared to achieve them?**

*This question is aimed at finding out what kind of person you are. Keep in mind that your goals must be achievable and you should be prepared to explain how you plan to achieve those goals. Have several short-term (in the next 12 – 24 months) and several long-term goals (2 – 5 years) to present.*

### **What do you see yourself doing five years from now?**

*This question is to see if you can set achievable goals for yourself and whether the position and organization fit with your long-term plans. Even if you know there may be opportunities for advancement within the organization, be cautious about discussing your desire for promotion at this time.*

### **Why did you apply for this position?**

*The interviewer is trying to determine whether you will be satisfied in this position and likely to stay. Explain why you are interested in the position and working for the company.*

### **What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?**

*Highlight your most positive attributes (i.e. skill, reliability, enthusiasm, etc.) Use examples to illustrate your positive qualities and how they apply to your work. Do not describe any weaknesses that may be essential to performing effectively on the job and avoid making negative comments. Talk about the things you have improved and the steps you took to do so.*

### **How would you describe yourself?**

*The interviewer is asking you to profile yourself to see if you fit with the company and to get a sense of your self-image and how it compares to his/her perception of you. Be factual and use the opportunity to sell yourself without being arrogant.*

### **What qualifications do you have that make you think you will be successful in this position?**

*The interviewer is asking you to make their decision for them. If you have to hesitate or can think of only one or two reasons, then they will think that the qualifications are not obvious or succinct enough. Quickly list your skills and positive characteristics.*

### **What two or three professional accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction and why?**

*This question is to find out what kind of professional accomplishments give you a sense of pride. Pick several accomplishments; explain why they satisfied you and how they related to your job performance.*

### **How do you work under pressure? Give me an example.**

*This question indicates that your job will involve working under pressure and with deadlines; reassure the interviewer by giving examples of paid or unpaid activities that involved pressure/deadlines. Stress how capable you are in rising to the occasion.*



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### **What do you know about our company?**

*The interviewer wants to know if you have done any research about the company and know it well enough to really want to work there, rather than just wanting to work anywhere. To reassure the interviewer, mention as many positive features about the job, company or organization as you can. Here is where your research will come in handy!*

### **What have you learned from your mistakes?**

*This question is designed to see if you recognize that you have made mistakes and then how you resolved the problem. Be honest – this is a test of your credibility and integrity. Use examples of real mistakes that you have made – stress how what you learned led to better performance.*

### **What is the biggest mistake you have made?**

*Once again, be honest. You will show credibility and integrity. Be careful, however, to concentrate your answer on describing what you learned from your mistake.*

### **What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you work?**

*The interviewer wants to know that you are being targeted in your job search and that you do not want to work for just any company. Give several examples of things that you look for in companies you wish to work for (i.e. good reputation, room for advancement, excellent products, friendly work environment, etc.)*

### **Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision, but didn't have all the information you needed.**

*Use a real anecdote from your experience. The answer doesn't have to be grand – it could be a simple situation that was handled well.*

### **What is the most significant contribution you made at your most recent place of employment?**

*Tell a story about an accomplishment that added value to the company, demonstrating skills that showed initiative or resilience. Relate the outcome of your work.*

### **Was there anything today you were afraid I was going to ask you? Why did it make you uncomfortable?**

*Keep your cool. Many people blurt out the question they didn't want asked. Be prepared for this one.*

### **How do you feel about working overtime? Travel? Possibility of relocation?**

*If these questions are asked, chances are the position will involve overtime, travel and/or relocation. Ask the interviewer for more details and be honest in your response. If you cannot or will not relocate, say so!*



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**Do you have any hobbies? Tell me about them.**

*The interviewer is trying to determine what kind of person you are outside of work. This is the time to talk about any volunteer work you do, any teams you may participate on, etc.*

**What kind of person gets on your nerves?**

*Maybe there is a difficult person as supervisor or in the department and the interviewer is trying to determine if you could work with this person. Stress how you can get along with most people and use examples from your past experience of how you have interacted with “difficult” people.*

**Define success. Define failure.**

*This is a very personal question. The interviewer wants to know how you personally judge success and failure. You may want to address this as individual success and failure versus corporate success and failure.*