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back" (after your first response) Share any research that you've done into your salary ranges for your type of job. But only provide a broad range (for example, range of \$50K - \$75K). Don't: Tell them a specific salary you're targeting. Tell them a narrow range you're targeting. Example answer: "Right now I'm focused on finding a job that's the right fit for my career. Once I've done that, I'm willing to consider an offer you feel is fair, but I do not have a specific number in mind yet. My priority in my job search is to find a position that's a great fit and will allow me to continue learning and becoming more skilled. That said, I did some baseline research into salaries for this type of role here in Seattle and found that the average seems to be in the \$50K to \$75K range, so if your job is within that range, I think it makes sense to keep talking." For more info, here's a full article on how to answer desired salary on applications and interviews. 8. Why should we hire you? Employers ask, "Why should we hire you?" to see how well you understand the role, and to hear your perspective on how your skills can help them. When you hear interview questions like this, you should be thinking about their role, their needs, and how you'll help them. How will they benefit if they hire you? What will you improve for them? What will become easier, more efficient, or more profitable? And show you've done your research. Make it clear that you know what this position involves and that you're ready to perform those exact tasks in your next job. Do: Be confident in your skills and abilities Talk about specific things you can help them do or achieve if they hire you Do your research before the interview and understand their needs, so you can "tailor" your answers and target the specific things they'll need if they hire you in this role Don't: Say "I don't know" Say "You should hire whoever you want" Give a generic answer that'd fit any company. You really need to "tailor" this to the specific duties you'll be performing in THIS specific job. Otherwise your answer will not impress them. Example interview answer: "I read on the job description that you're looking for someone with experience in... I've done that for 3 years and can immediately help you accomplish... 9. Why do you want to work here? If they ask "why do you want this job?" show you've done plenty of research to learn about them before coming in to interview. You want to make them feel like you chose them for a reason. This is very similar to the previous question. "Why did you apply for this position?" Show them that you know what their job involves (at least as much as you could learn from the job description and company website) and that you're excited to be interviewing for this position. The bottom line is: The typical employer looks to hire someone who will want to work for them in particular, not just someone who wants to work any job they can find. Here's how to demonstrate that you want to work for them and that you're a good fit when you answer: Do: Mention specific, work-related reasons why their job and company interest you Talk about your own career path and goals, and how this job and company fits your future aspirations Sound excited about the opportunity to work for them Show you've done your research Don't: Say, "I have bills to pay and need money" Say, "I just need a job". Share any personal details like, "I live 5 minutes away so it would be a very short commute" Sample interview answer: "I've been actively searching for jobs since graduating with my Nursing degree. I'm interested in intensive care and emergency medicine and I've seen your hospital mentioned as having one of the best emergency departments in the region. I thought the job description matched up well with my background, and saw some of my personal strengths mentioned, like multitasking and being able to thrive in a fast-paced environment, so I'd love to begin my career here." 10. Why did you leave your last job? There are a lot of good answers to this interview question. There isn't just one "right" answer. Here are some guidelines: If you chose to leave on your own terms, stay positive and focus on what you wanted to gain from the decision, rather than bad-mouthing or focusing on negatives you wanted to avoid. And if you were fired or laid off, be upfront and clear. You're not going to make employers want to hire you by being vague or trying to hide something. If you got fired, show what you've learned from the experience, and what you've done to make sure this doesn't happen again. That's how to spin it into a positive. Do: Be clear and direct and address the question head-on If you were fired, own up to it and share what you've done to make sure this never happens again If you chose to resign, focus on the positive things you hoped to gain by moving to the next opportunity, rather than badmouthing or talking about the negatives in your last role Don't: Don't badmouth or complain Never say you resigned because of a disagreement or argument with a coworker Don't make it sound like money is your main priority Don't try to hide facts or avoid the question; this will just lead to more questions and suspicion from the interviewer Example answer: "I was hired for a project management role, but over time that changed and I was no longer being given the opportunity to do the work I was interested in. I left to pursue an opportunity that I felt was more aligned with what I've chosen to focus on in my career." You can also get more ideas for how to answer this on our list of 20 answers for "why did you leave your last job." 11. What is your greatest weakness? When they ask, "what's your greatest weakness?" you want to name a real weakness. I recommend picking something skill-based, not personality-based. You never want to say you struggle to work with others, or you're bad at resolving disagreements, or taking direction from a manager, etc. Those things will get you rejected in the interview. So pick a specific skill, but pick something that won't severely impact your ability to do this job. For example, if the job involves data entry with Excel spreadsheets all day, you do not want to say Excel is your weakness. Or that you struggle to pay attention to details. Finally, end your answer by explaining what you're doing to overcome or improve your weakness. Take a look at the do's and don'ts and the interview answer example below to get a sense of what the best answers will sound like. Do: Name a real weakness Pick something skill-based, not personality-based. For example, say, "I'm not particularly strong in Microsoft Excel..." rather than, "My weakness is working on a team and following directions." Mention what you've done to overcome this weakness and improve recently Don't: Don't give a fake weakness like, "I work too hard" Don't try to be funny with an answer like, "Kryptonite." Hiring managers have heard it over and over Don't tell them you have no weaknesses Don't name a personality-based weakness (like "I have trouble getting along with colleagues") Don't name a weakness that will severely impact your ability to succeed in their job Example interview answer: "I'm not particularly strong in social media marketing. For the first few years of my career, I focused entirely on email marketing. That's still what I specialize in, which is why I applied for your Email Marketing Manager job. But I've realized it's also helpful to understand the principles of social media marketing because some of the strategies that work there also work well in email. So I've started spending a couple of hours per week of my own time to study and learn this new area, which has helped me a lot." Note that you the interviewer might also ask, "what areas need improvement?" In that case, you can use the same approach, and I still recommend naming one single weakness, just to keep your answer simpler and more concise. 12. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? There are three big reasons interviewers ask "where do you see yourself in 5 years?": They want to see if you've thought about your professional future They want to make sure you're ambitious and hard-working They want to make sure the job they're offering fits your goals So, pick a work-related goal of where you'd like to be five years from now, and make sure it's slightly challenging or ambitious-sounding. Don't want to say, "I see myself in the same position five years from now." And make sure to share a goal that is related to the type of job you're interviewing for. You want to sound like the experience you'll gain in this job fits your long-term goals. Otherwise, they're going to be scared to hire you. Why would they offer you the job if it doesn't fit the goals you described to them? You'd be unsatisfied, bored, and would probably quit within the first year. No company wants this. Do: Show you've thought about this topic and question Sound ambitious and motivated Be realistic. Don't say you want to be CEO in five years if you're entry-level Make sure your answer is related to this job. They won't hire you for a job that has nothing to do with your 5-year goal Don't: Be sarcastic or give a joke answer like, "I plan on having your job" Say you're not sure, or say you'd be happy staying in the same role for five years (most companies do not want to hear this) Example interview answer: "I'm glad you asked. In five years I see myself taking on more responsibilities, either through management or higher-level individual contributions. I'm not sure which path will make sense to pursue, but I know my goal right now is to build a strong foundation and gain valuable experience so that I'll have a successful future in this industry." They may also ask, "What are your career goals?" so prepare to answer that, too. You can read career goal examples here. 13. Tell me about a time you failed? This is one of the most common interview questions in many fields, from retail to corporate positions, and is intended to find out if you're able to learn from mistakes and bounce back when things don't go your way. Employers want to see if you can own up to your mistakes, be accountable, and also learn and improve from the experience. That last piece is key if you want to give a good answer to this question. When you answer, "tell me a time when you failed...", here are the most important do's and don'ts to follow: Do: Admit to a real failure Describe the situation and what went wrong Show that you take responsibility (rather than blaming others), and show you learned from it Ideally, talk about how you used that lesson to get a different outcome next time you were presented with a similar challenge (e.g. how you turned a past failure into a future success) Don't: Say you never fail Talk about a failure but then blame others and talk about how it wasn't really your fault Give a long-winded answer that goes off-track. You really need to be concise and show you can tell a clear story. That's one more thing employers look for when they ask this interview question. Sample interview answer: "In my most recent position, I had recently been promoted to Supervisor and was managing the department by myself right before the close of business. An employee was acting out and I confronted him in front of everybody. It made the situation worse and caused a lot of distraction for everyone on the floor. I failed to lead properly in this situation, and spoke to my manager the next day to discuss what I could have done better. We both agreed that I should have handled this privately with the employee by asking them to step inside my office. If I had done this instead of reacting the way I did, the situation would have turned out much better. From that point onward, I am always conscious of whether a discussion with a team member should occur in public or behind closed doors, and it made me a better leader." 14. How do you make decisions? This is another one of the most common interview questions you'll hear. You may also hear this phrased as a behavioral interview question, like, "Tell me about a time you had to make a difficult decision. How did you handle it and what did you decide?" With any of these decision-making job interview questions, hiring managers want to know that you've made good decisions in the past and are comfortable making a tough decision under pressure. Demonstrate this, and they'll feel more confident that you'll be able to make good decisions in your next job, too... while working for them. So to show the hiring manager that you're the right fit, I prepared to explain how you organize and structure your decisions. The best answers will show that you're calm and follow a logical system when you make important decisions. Answer sample 1: "Just last week I had a situation that describes my process pretty well. One of our largest clients was having an issue with our latest software update and I had to decide between doing a fresh install on their system or trying to troubleshoot. The fresh install would come with downtime, but it was a known variable. Whereas, if we took troubleshooting steps, it could resolve the problem eventually, but the company would be working with multiple software bugs and issues for an unknown period. I spoke to our representative from their company, and also spoke to the Account Manager within our firm who had originally brought this client on, since he had the closest relationship with the firm. The company didn't express a preference and told us that we should decide what's best. However, the Account Manager I spoke with said that this company is typically risk-averse and doesn't like uncertainty. They want to know how bad the "damage" will be whenever a problem arises. Based on this information, I felt the best way to resolve the situation was to do a complete reinstall of the software, causing 30 minutes of downtime, but solving the problem that day. I also spoke to our billing team to provide a special discount to help offset the lost revenue our software caused, which the company appreciated and thanked me for." Answer sample 2: "I typically list out all available options and then weigh the pros and cons and expected outcomes of each. If other teams or people are impacted by the decision, I'll ask for their thoughts, too. Sometimes a peer will point out a pro or con that I hadn't seen, so I find it helpful to talk to others when appropriate. After this, I'll choose the answer that I feel is most likely to bring about the best outcome. I also weigh the risks of each possible decision. If one decision has a good potential outcome but comes with too much risk for the company, then it may not be the right choice. Would you like me to give an example? Or did that answer your question..." 15. What is your greatest achievement? You shouldn't brag about yourself in every interview question and answer, but sometimes it's called for. And this is one of those cases. Don't be timid and don't hold back. This is your chance to share one accomplishment that you're most proud of and why. I recommend choosing a professional achievement, but if the biggest win that comes to mind is personal, that's fine too. Ideally, share a story that illustrates how you overcome a challenge, went through a transformation, or overcame doubt or fear to accomplish something that you're proud of. If you can show determination and resiliency, that's going to impress most employers. However, there are plenty of scenarios where your biggest achievement might show other traits instead. That's fine, too. 16. What are your leadership experiences? Even if you're not directly interviewing for a management role, you may face some leadership interview questions. Employers like a candidate who can take initiative and lead projects and tasks even if it's not their main role to lead. Plus, that shows you've got room to grow and can be promoted in the future. So before any interview, think about one or two recent leadership experiences, ideally from work situations. Did you lead any meetings or projects? Did you train or mentor anyone? Did you spearhead a new initiative at work? If you have no examples from work, then look to university experience, sports, or other clubs/activities where you led a project, task, meeting, or event. Note that you may also be asked, "what is your leadership style?" but this is typically reserved for positions where you'll be leading as a core part of your role. 17. How would you describe yourself? While this question is similar to, "Tell me about yourself," it's best answered with a shorter response. To prepare, pick two or three key positive adjectives that you'd use to describe yourself and your work, and be ready to explain why. Example answer: "I would describe myself as careful and hard-working. I'm persistent, and my work ethic is something I take pride in. But I also like to work carefully and ensure that I'm not committing mistakes or having to redo my work. I've found that by slowing down and working carefully and methodically, you can often save yourself a lot of time and hassles in the long run. 18. What are you passionate about? Employers like to hire a candidate who has interests, passions, etc. This is also why companies often ask, "what motivates you?" or, "what gets you out of bed in the morning?" When answering, "what are you passionate about?" you have a lot of freedom. The question is very open-ended. I recommend naming one single area. This keeps everything simple and makes it easier to prepare. That's why I recommend it for multiple interview questions and answers above, too. So pick one topic that gets you really excited. It can be mission-oriented, like solving a crisis or helping the world. Or it can simply be that you enjoy challenges at work, learning, improving, problem-solving, reaching new levels of skill, etc. You can also share a personal story explaining how you got into your field of work or why it matters to you. No matter what you choose, pick one thing, and tell the truth. There isn't one "right" answer here but employers can tell if you're being genuine/honest, and that's what they want to see. 19. Do you want to tell us anything else about yourself? As you reach the end of the job interview, the employer may ask, "do you want to tell us anything else?" When you hear this, you have two choices. First, if you feel the interview went well and you don't have anything else to add, it's completely fine to say, "No, I think we covered the important topics here. I'm satisfied if you are. I'm looking forward to hearing your feedback, though, and the role sounds exciting to me." This is normal/acceptable and you shouldn't feel pressure to say more if you're satisfied that the interview went well. This is not a trick interview question. However, if there is a topic you wish they had asked about but didn't, or something unique that sets you apart from other candidates that you didn't explain yet, then feel free to share it. They're giving you the opportunity because they genuinely want to know. You can also give yourself the opportunity to share a final point even if they don't ask. Just say, "Is it alright if I share one more detail? Something came to mind and I think it's relevant." 99% of interviewers will say, "Yes, sure!" 20. Why was there a gap in your employment? When an interviewer asks "Why was there a gap in your employment?" there's no hidden motive, they're simply looking for your best (and most honest) explanation of the truth. Do: Most employment gaps (including self-inflicted ones) can be overlooked, but be prepared to show you've learned from the issue and can address the future with positivity, motivation, and confidence. You may have been sick, caring for a loved one, traveling, or engaged in personal development but, whatever your truth, try to be candid. Don't: Don't lie to smooth over a difficult patch in your lifestyle, career, or family life, instead, show how you have progressed as a result. Sample Answer: "I was in a position that was going nowhere and weighing heavily on my mental health. I decided to take six months off to travel, regain my confidence and find a sense of direction. It was worth it. I came out of it with a better sense of who I was and what I hoped to achieve." 21. What did you like least about your last job? When an interviewer asks "What did you like least about your last job?" they're hoping to gather positive information about your personality, drives, and skills by understanding what you saw as negative about your last role. Be careful how you answer, because an answer like "I didn't like deadlines or teamwork" has the potential to reveal plenty of negatives about you too. Do: Be positive, light-hearted, and non-critical. Answer in a way that highlights your work ethic or ability to overcome challenges. Don't: Don't launch into a tirade of insults and complaints about the former employer, coworkers, and role. Don't paint yourself as a disgruntled worker who'll crumble at the first sign of difficulty. Sample Answer: "I worked in an open plan office with 25 other people, however, the work didn't call for interaction, collaboration, or teamwork of any kind. Interaction was mostly trivial. I'd prefer to work in a collaborative environment where I can form meaningful, constructive relationships with my peers." 22. What type of work environment do you prefer? The "What type of work environment do you prefer?" interview question is a quick way for employers to gauge what comes naturally to you, your inherent work style, and how likely you are to adjust favorably to this role. Do: Remember that what you prefer describes who you are, so frame your answer to highlight your good work ethic and versatility. Research the company and try to describe a work environment that's close to the one you're applying for. Include authentic past experiences for credibility. Don't: Don't give a "too good to be true" answer that's based entirely on your preparatory research. Don't be too specific either, as this can make you seem fussy or inflexible, instead, show that you're content under a range of conditions. Sample Answer: "I like to work in a fast-paced, collaborative setting where I can brainstorm and bounce ideas off a diverse group of individuals. I like to balance collaboration with periods of solitary work, particularly work that's detail-oriented and creative." 23. How would your coworkers describe you? Interviewers ask "How would your coworkers describe you?" as a more revealing alternative to "How would you describe yourself?". It's a great way to determine how introspective and self-analytical you are. It's also a great way to get an honest answer out of you and, should you be inclined to lie instead, the chances are high they will see straight through your falsehood. Do: Be honest, but don't get too carried away. Think of one or two personality or work-style traits that people have commented on in the past, then offer real examples of times when you put those traits to good use. Don't: Don't fabricate an answer to make yourself seem more popular or exceptional than you are. Savvy employers have a sixth sense for insincerity and the last thing you want is to be flagged as untrustworthy. Sample Answer: "I think the team saw me as the counselor or moral support person. I get to know people so I can figure out how to make them laugh. I help wherever I can, so my colleagues know that they can count on me for support both as a friend and in work matters." 24. What do you like doing outside of work? The "What do you like to do outside of work?" interview question is one of many methods potential employers use to set you apart from the crowd. They are looking for a glimpse of the real you, not just the scripted version everybody shows in job interviews. Do: Talk about your pastimes, passions, and secret talents. Be yourself! Be brave enough to open up about interesting pastimes like UFO hunting, character sculpting, or fiddling in the veggie patch. Include hobbies that highlight special skills and interests that paint you apart from the crowd, but only if they're true. Don't: Don't overdo it or make it seem like you have far too much time on your hands. Don't fabricate pastimes just to impress as you may get caught out on a lie. Sample Answer: "I have a 12" telescope and am an amateur astrophotographer. I've spent hundreds of hours wrapped in a blanket on my back lawn with a red light strapped to my forehead. I've got plenty to show for it though, some great planetary nebula shots and a couple of UFO stories too." 25. What makes you unique? Like the "What do you like doing outside of work?" question, interviewers ask "What makes you unique?" to try to set you apart from the crowd. Only, this is less about your secret personality and pastimes and more about what you can bring to the team that no one else can. Do: Study all aspects of the job description to identify qualities that employers would see as a "cherry on top". Use your understanding of the role requirements to highlight a hard or soft skill that sets you apart from others. Keep your answer clear and concise. Offer up real examples of traits that make you an exceptional candidate, not just a suitable candidate. Don't: Don't be dishonest, as your lack of confidence will give you away. Don't act coy and over-umble. Don't be afraid to gloat a little. Don't try to mention every skill and personality trait listed in the role requirements. Remember, the more traits you list, the less of an impact you'll make. Sample Answer: "Because I've worked with so many diverse clients as a freelance copywriter, I've developed a very positive form of 'instant expert syndrome.' I can take an unfamiliar topic, cram in deep research for two hours, and then speak about it (or even write a report) with the utmost confidence." 26. What are your career goals? Interviewers ask "What are your career goals?" to determine whether you are ambitious, goal-oriented, driven, and focused. Without SMART career goals, it is unlikely that you'll be motivated to consistently give your best to the role. Likewise, unless the job you're applying for is in perfect alignment with your long-term goals, it's unlikely that you'll be ready to offer your best effort. Do: Outline a clear career roadmap that alludes to your goal-oriented nature. Include long-term and short-term goals. Highlight how the role you're applying for serves as either a primary or stepping-stone goal in your career. Don't: If the job you're interviewing for serves as a stepping-stone to greater career goals, don't draw attention to it unless your intentions for future career growth align perfectly with the role's expectations and requirements. Sample Answer: "I'd like to work for a few years with a full-stack development team, getting used to the Agile process and mastering every aspect of the collaborative development process. When I'm ready, I'll apply for a lead developer role where I can innovate more and contribute creatively to apps and services." 27. What are you looking for next? Interviews ask the "What are you looking for next?" question to determine whether you have specific goals and aspirations, or whether you are just another hopeful job-seeker looking for any old firm to hire you. It's also their way of determining whether your key aspirations align with key characteristics of the role. Do: Mention roles and responsibilities that might become a reality if you're hired. If you're hoping to do well and become a team leader, mention it. If you're hoping to incorporate new software and organizational skills in your next role, say so. Mention specifics only, to show that you aren't just desperate. Don't: Don't mention hopes and wishes that are unrealistic or irrelevant to the role. Don't mention goals that conflict with the role, such as hoping to work alone when the role calls for constant collaboration. Don't imply that "any job will do." Sample Answer: "This is exactly the type of role I'm looking for next, one where I'll have the opportunity to interact as much with my team as with our clients. I'm looking for a leadership role where I can manage creative, client-facing marketing projects." 28. Can you tell us about a time you found it difficult to work with someone? Interviewers may ask "Can you tell us about a time you found it difficult to work with someone?" to get some insight into your personality type, how you handle conflict, and whether you're suited to the kind of teamwork that's required for this role. Do: Highlight your ability to turn a challenge into a positive learning experience. Reveal your capacity to learn from misunderstandings, resolve conflicts, and get along with others - no matter how diverse. Stay positive! Don't: Don't use this opportunity to expound on petty dramas and personal grievances that will make you seem emotionally immature. Don't say things that paint you as antisocial or unable to get along with others. Sample Answer: "I was partnered with a very shy, introverted developer on my last project. We needed to collaborate and brainstorm but he lacked the confidence to contribute on his own. It was a challenge, but with humor, validation, and investment I managed to draw him out of his shell." 29. Can you tell us a time you went above and beyond? Interviewers ask "Can you tell us a time you went above and beyond?" to understand your attitude to tasks that fall outside your job description. This is how employers gauge your work ethic and ability to think and act outside the box. Do: Highlight your willingness to solve problems that you may not have been trained or prepared for. Use a real example from the past, explaining how you overcame the challenge or went 'beyond'. Paint yourself as a positive individual with a constructive approach to situations that require extra effort. Don't: Don't answer in a way that makes you seem lazy, ungrateful, and only willing to do the minimum. Sample Answer: "Our junior manager was diagnosed with an aggressive tumor that needed surgery. The manager missed his promotion as he was forced to take extended time off - and his medical bills were mounting up. I got help from my colleagues to create and spread a GoFundMe for his family. We raised almost \$150,000." 30. What is your greatest strength? The "What's your greatest strength?" interview question calls for a bit of a gloat and it's likely to make most people more than a little uneasy. Employers want to see how closely your strengths align with the requirements of the role. They also want to see how you engage in self-reflection. Do: Prepare by researching the job requirements in depth and choosing a single strength that's especially relevant to the role. Then, back your claim up with a solid example of a time when you accomplished something on the back of this strength. Keep it brief and stick to one strength. Don't: You can gloat a little but don't brag. Don't arrive unprepared or you'll seem like you're fishing for positives in an empty pond. The last thing you want is to seem like you're not confident in your own strengths. Don't harp on about a strength that has no bearing on the role - be relevant! Sample Answer: "My greatest strength is my versatility. I get extremely nervous initially, but I apply myself wholeheartedly to learning the ropes and I won't rest until I've mastered all aspects of the process, tool, or skill. The result is that I adjust really quickly to new situations, new tasks, and new technology." 31. Are you considering other positions? Interviewers ask "Are you considering other positions?" as an early interview question to gauge your confidence, the extent and success of your job search, the likelihood of impending job offers, and the general profile of the jobs you're applying for. Do: Use this opportunity to show them that this role is exactly what you've been looking for. Be honest about other, high potential opportunities with similar themes and role requirements. Don't: Don't give specific names of companies you've applied to. Don't play hard to get by boasting about all the exceptional job offers you're considering. Don't give the impression that the search is a train wreck, interviewers keep turning you down, or that you're utterly desperate to land this role. Sample Answer: "There are two other roles that offer similar opportunities to what I'm looking for. I've interviewed with one so far and they've shown a lot of interest. I've got an interview scheduled with the other. All in all, I'm considering this and two other options, though I have my heart set mostly on this one." 32. Why were you fired? The "Why were you fired?" interview question is a direct question that deserves a candid answer. Potential employers appreciate honesty and the ability to recognize and learn from one's own faults. There are ways to turn this negative into a positive - and it's all about the art of learning from your mistakes. Do: Be candid and honest about past mistakes. If you were in the wrong, own up to it as much, describing the lesson you've learned and your intention to not make the same mistakes in the future. Don't: Never lie! If you lie just to cover up your own wrongdoing, there is a good chance you'll be caught out through background research. Sample Answer: "I was fired because, at the time, I didn't have a sense of direction in my career. I had no goals, I lacked motivation, and I made mistakes at work. I later realized what an opportunity I'd lost. I regretted my behavior and started to set clear goals that I've since been working towards." 33. Can you describe your ideal boss? The "Can you describe your ideal boss?" interview question is designed to draw out possible red flags, toxic attitudes, and potential personality clashes that could make the company regret hiring you. Employers are looking for answers that indicate versatility, positivity, and a willingness to adapt to diverse management styles. Do: Research the company managers, management culture, and work style via their social media, LinkedIn, YouTube, and website. This will help you avoid a faux pas and, instead, describe an ideal boss that's aligned with the company's reality. If your research is inconclusive, your safest bet is to show that you are versatile and able to adapt to a range of management styles. Don't: Don't answer in a way that makes you seem discriminatory, anti-social, or judgemental. Don't reveal that you have an intractable personality or inflexible work style. Sample Answer: "I'm very flexible when it comes to being managed, though I have to say I prefer a boss who doesn't micromanage too much. The reason being that I like to act on my own initiative and hold myself accountable on projects, and I like the freedom to be creative." 34. When can you start? The "When can you start?" interview question is easier to flunk than you'd imagine. Employers want to see that you'll honor any existing contracts by providing sufficient notice, but they likely already know when they'd prefer you to start. Savvy interviewers may be on the lookout for how desperate you really are, so be prepared and try to maintain your composure. Do: If you're employed, express your imperative to honor your existing contracts, providing notice where notice is due. If you must consider options, say so. If you're unemployed, it's best to allow some time and say you'll start in a week or a few days, otherwise, you'll seem too desperate, and tricky employers might take advantage. Don't: Don't say you'll start immediately if you need to provide notice at your current job, as potential employers will frown on how easily you dishonor your contracts. Don't provide a start date if you're still considering options. Don't show your desperation by offering to start the next day, as this may lose you the power to negotiate higher rates, benefits, and more, down the line. Sample Answer: "I'll only give notice at my current work when I know for sure that I've found a more suitable alternative. Since my notice period is two weeks, I'd only be able to start at the beginning of the third week after the new role is confirmed." 35. What will you do if you don't get this position? Interviewers ask "What will you do if you don't get this position?" to gauge both your eagerness and your attitude to professional disappointment. It's a rare question, but it does come up. This is an opportunity to show your maturity and professionalism, but it's also a chance to express your earnest desire to be hired for the role. Do: Explain that you'll request feedback and review the experience to determine why you weren't selected for the role and, if there's for improvement, you'll make the necessary changes. Explain that you'll continue to apply to similar roles, as this is exactly the type of job you see yourself thriving in. Don't: Don't say that you'll be devastated and inconsolable - show maturity. Don't say that you'll just brush it off and carry on, as this will give the impression that you're not invested in this role or the role type. Sample Answer: "There's no doubt I'll be disappointed. However, I'll be constructive about it and ask whether there is any feedback you can offer to help me understand where I need to improve. I'll work on those skills and ensure I don't make the same mistakes when I interview for similar jobs in the future." 36. Can you describe your work style? An interviewer will ask "Can you describe your work style?" for various reasons. They want to know how self-aware you are and whether you even have a style at all, but they also want to know whether your work style aligns with their needs and existing team dynamics. Your work style will offer insight into your overall work ethic, telling employers whether you're a hard worker, whether you're organized, and whether you're proactive. Do: Indicate that you like to keep things organized and goal-driven and that you're versatile enough to take instruction, collaborate, or work on your initiative. Research the role in depth to ensure that your work style you describe aligns fully with the role requirements. Don't: Don't try to be too unique, as employers will be on the lookout for tried and tested work styles that reveal your proactive, goal-driven nature, or indicate that you'd fit well with their existing team. Don't describe a style that's ill-suited to the role. Sample Answer: "I'm very goal and detail-oriented, so I'm determined to meet deadlines and briefs but not at the expense of the details. As a result, I have to work systematically, incrementally, and with a recurring cycle of hard focus and review - so I don't miss anything." 37. Do you work well with other people? Interviewers ask the "Do you work well with other people?" question to determine whether or not you'll be able to collaborate, communicate and overcome potential challenges in a team setting. Most roles involve a certain level of human interaction, while some are dependent on advanced collaborative skills such as leadership, incorporating feedback, and accepting compromise. Do: Try to answer in the positive, but if you prefer working alone you should say so and explain why. Even if you're not used to working in a team, you should show that you're excited about the opportunity to collaborate and engage with a team. Don't: Don't say things that will make you seem difficult, inflexible, socially inept, or antisocial. Don't be vague, instead, try to show your aptitude for specific interactive skills even if you're not great at all of them. Sample Answer: "Absolutely, I've thrived in collaborative open offices as well as Agile workspaces. I'm very focused and professional but I find that my creative and innovative drives do best when I'm bouncing ideas off others and discussing diverse perspectives." 38. What should I know that's not on your resume? Interviewers ask questions like "What should I know that's not on your resume?" to break through the mask of professionalism that we all wear in an interview. In some cases, this it's designed to catch you off your guard, as it shows the hiring manager how you overcome challenges and awkwardness, giving them a glimpse of who you are. Do: Be honest about positive personal qualities, achievements, or habits that show who you really are. Be prepared for a few personal questions like this so that you can answer confidently and appropriately. Focus on relevant strengths. Don't: Don't share the most sordid or regrettable tale you can muster from the past, this isn't about reliving your darkest hours. Don't overdo it, instead, be concise and strategic in your answer. Sample Answer: "I'm fiercely competitive, but not so much with others as with myself. It's vital to me that I improve my skill and expand my knowledge daily, and I become quite unhappy if I feel I've not progressed. If there are ever training, development, and promotional opportunities, you can count me in." 39. Do you consider yourself successful? Interviewers ask the "Do you consider yourself successful?" question because they're curious about your self-reflection, sense of ambition, and whether you're tough on yourself or just consoled. Yet, they're also genuinely curious about your past achievements and what your old habits say about your motivation to succeed. Do: Success should be always on your mind if you're hard-working, ambitious, and driven, so prove it. Show that you think about it and that, even if you've achieved a measure of success, you consistently set goals towards which to strive. Don't: Don't say you haven't thought about it. It's okay to show confidence and pride in past successes, but you should balance it by admitting your room for improvement and greater success in the future. Sample Answer: "I don't yet consider myself as successful but I see my habits as successful. After the gap in my employment, I changed my mental, lifestyle, and work habits. My track record of wins since then tells me that the changes I made are positive. I'm confident that if I keep using and adding positive habits, I'll be on the path to success." 40. Do you have any questions for us? If you don't ask good questions in each interview, you might be costing yourself job offers. Asking questions shows interest in the position and shows employers that you're looking for the right fit, not just any job. This will make them trust you more and want you more. You can ask about the work, the training, the challenges you'd face, the overall direction of the company. Don't ask about salary, benefits, time off, or anything that isn't related to the work. Wait for them to bring it up, or until you know they want to offer you the position. Here are 27 unique interview questions to ask employers. Example answer: "Yes, I have a couple of questions actually. The first thing I wanted to ask: Is this a newly-created position, or did somebody hold this role in the past? And if so, what did that person go on to do after this position?"