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INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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FOREWARD

Interviews are not about delivering perfectly memorised lines. They are about revealing who you are, how you think, and why you are the right fit when the easy questions run out.

That is why I created this book.

Over the years, I have worked with countless job seekers, hiring managers, and career coaches who all agree on one thing: the hardest questions are the unexpected ones. The curveballs.

Questions like:

“How would your harshest critic describe you?”

“Tell me about a time you challenged authority.”

These questions are designed to make you think. Too often, people freeze not because they do not know the answer, but because they have not practised telling their story in a clear, authentic, and professional way.

Inside this book, you will find over 50 real-life interview questions, from the most common competency questions to surprising curveballs. For each one, you will see not just a sample answer but a framework, an example, and a story to help you shape your own responses.

But here is something critical I want you to remember: Do not rehearse or memorise these answers word for word. Your goal is not to become a script reader. It is to become a better storyteller. These examples are starting points, designed to give you reference and inspiration so you can craft your own, genuine answers tailored to your experience and the role you want.

Great interviews are not about reciting lines. They are about real conversations. They are about customising your responses for the company, the job, and who you are.

And one more thing: this is just the first iteration of this book. We know there are many more questions out there, and we are committed to expanding this guide over time. Future editions will continue to add even more questions. Use this book to spark ideas. Use it to practise. Use it to develop the confidence and clarity to show employers your real value.

Here is to making your next interview the one that lands you the job.

With love,

Vardaan
Director, UK Jobs Insider

WHAT'S YOUR SALARY EXPECTATION?

While this question on salary expectations seems tiny and probably not that important, it is actually quite a tricky one to get right, let alone acing it.

How you answer this can impact your chances of moving forward in the hiring process.

This is how to do it right

1. Avoid Giving an Exact Number Too Soon

Providing a fixed salary figure too early can weaken your **negotiation leverage** later. If you set your expectations too low, you risk **underpricing yourself**. If you aim too high, you might be **screened out** immediately.

2. Salary as a Screening Factor

For many companies, the salary expectation question is a **qualifying filter**. If your number doesn't align with their budget, they may reject your application outright—before even considering your skills and experience. Why take the risk? Play safe and first get the interview, then the offer and after all that we can talk salary.

3. The Best Approach Based on Application Format

- **If the question is optional:** Always leave it **blank**. Salary discussions typically happen later in the hiring process.



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- **If it's a compulsory text box:** A diplomatic response works best. Something along the lines of:
 - *"I'm flexible regarding salary and trust the hiring team's best judgment to determine a fair compensation package based on the role and my experience."*
- **If it's a compulsory number-only field:** Your best bet is to provide a reasonable range. Avoid frustrating recruiters by entering a random number or a range too wide. Rather go for either **a median industry-standard range** or **just adjust the industry range to your experience level and give that number**. You can find this using sites like **Glassdoor**, or simply **ask ChatGPT for an estimate**.

Want my ChatGPT Prompt to help you with this? Comment "YES" and I will share it with you.

Your goal is to **stay in the hiring process** while keeping your salary options open. Salary negotiations will happen at the right stage—when you have more leverage.

Do note, that each case it different and its important to always ensure that you customise this based on your preference for the job and the market/in



WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK IN UK

This question primarily aims to assess your commitment to staying, and your understanding of the local context of the role 🇬🇧

It's an opportunity to showcase your passion for working in the UK, your understanding of the local dynamics and your potential to grow within their company 🙌


So here's how to ace this🚀:

- 📌 Use a Story: Illustrate your future plans with a meaningful anecdote or experience that highlights your commitment.
- 📌 Showcase Alignment: Demonstrate how your professional goals align with the company's mission and the local context (e.g., innovation, sustainability, skills development).
- 📌 Evidence & Forward-Looking: Give evidence of how you've excelled previously in the UK and Emphasise long-term aspirations, showing recruiters you're invested in building a career.
- 📌 Stay Authentic: Be genuine and enthusiastic about your plans, avoiding generic or overly rehearsed responses.



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Sample Answer 🤗:

“From the moment I began studying in the UK, I felt an immediate connection with its culture of innovation and collaboration. One pivotal moment was during my internship at [company/organization], where I worked on [relevant skill/project].

Seeing how my work contributed to [outcome/impact] made me realise the incredible opportunities this country offers for professionals in [your field].

That experience solidified my decision to build my career here. I’m passionate about [specific goal or industry focus] and see myself growing in roles that allow me to contribute to projects that drive progress and innovation in the UK.

I want to be part of the journey toward [industry priority, e.g., Net Zero, technological advancement] and understand the local context of the same evidenced through my work in [Insert relevant UK experience].

So my future plan is to not only stay in the UK to advance my career, or upskill—it’s about becoming a part of a culture that I cherish and lead global innovation in xyz from the forefront.”

Next? Personalise it to your situation, stay conversational and you’re good to go 🚶

Want my FREE interview resources? Write “UKJI” and I’ll forward it to you 🤗

Cheering for your BIG WINS 🤝❤️



WHY SHOULD WE HIRE YOU?

I hate this question, think its a big redflag and highlights a culture of unhealthy hierarchy in line management.

However, this is asked more than you can imagine so here's how you do it right

- **Narrative**

Don't just list qualifications. Share a story that illustrates how your experiences shaped your ability to excel in this role. Stories make you memorable.

- **Homework**

In the story, reference specific challenges or goals the company is tackling. Position yourself as the solution. This shows you're also invested.

- **The Differentiator**

Tell them one thing that sets you apart. Whether it's a niche skill, an innovative idea, or an extraordinary accomplishment.

- **Professionalism**

Avoid arrogance or being defensive. Acknowledge your strengths but pair them with a genuine enthusiasm to contribute, and grow.

- **Your Vision**


Paint a picture of how hiring you creates a win-win scenario: their challenges get solved, and you thrive in your dream role.



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Sample Answer

"I deserve this job because I bring a unique mix of experience, passion, and innovation that aligns with your mission. At my last company, I didn't just manage projects—I turned a struggling product line into a revenue generator by identifying gaps in customer feedback and spearheading a redesign that increased sales by 30% in six months.

Your commitment to [specific goal or value of the company] resonates deeply with me because I thrive in environments focused on [shared value]. For eg, when I noticed inefficiencies in a previous team's workflow, I introduced a streamlined process that saved 200 hours annually, benefiting both the team and the company's bottom line.

While I'm proud of my accomplishments, what excites me most about this opportunity is the chance to apply my skills to [specific challenge or project the company is facing] and grow alongside a team that values [insert company value]. I believe that together, we can achieve remarkable results."

Do note, this is just a sample answer for reference. Next? Personalise your response, make it conversational and you have the perfect answer!



WHEN CAN YOU JOIN US?

This question is either asked in the later interviews or comes up in the screening call right at the beginning.

It might seem straightforward, but your answer plays a key role in deciding whether you'll be hired or not. Here's how to handle it strategically:

1. Avoid Saying "As Soon as Possible" (Unless the role specifically asks for that)

While it may sound eager, saying "as soon as possible" can come across as desperate or disorganised. Instead, provide a clear and confident response that reflects your readiness while maintaining professionalism. For eg:

"I'm really excited about this opportunity and can start within two weeks to ensure a smooth transition from my current responsibilities."

2. Don't Overemphasise a Long Notice Period


If you have a longer notice period, avoid presenting it as an obstacle. Employers may perceive delays as a sign of low availability. Instead, address it proactively and positively:

"My notice period is 8 weeks, but I'm committed to working with my current employer to expedite the process and start as soon as possible. I'm also open to collaborating during the transition if that's helpful and pull my notice to an early date."



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3. Emphasise Flexibility: Frame your answer as flexible and cooperative:

"My contract requires 4 weeks' notice, but I'm happy to negotiate with my current employer to adjust timelines to suit your needs." or "I can start within three weeks, but I'm happy to adjust if your timeline requires a quicker transition."

4. Freelance/Consultants: Show preparation and commitment:

"I'm finalising my current engagements and can be ready to start in 10 days."

5. Reinforce Your Enthusiasm and Professionalism with something like:

"I'm very excited to contribute to your team and will ensure a seamless transition to prioritise joining you as soon as possible."

Unlike my usual captions, there's no sample answer here, because there is no one answer that'll fit all the situations. Ultimately, it's about delivering a well-structured answer that demonstrates confidence, reliability, and enthusiasm—qualities every employer values.



IF POSSIBLE, WHAT ANIMAL WOULD YOU BE?

This question is either asked in I used to hate curveball questions!

During my interview with a dream company, I found myself in a situation where I was asked about what animal would I be? I was dumbstruck and of course messed it up. Turns out, curveball questions are everywhere.

Went to one of my professors and these are his 5 tricks to ace these annoying questions:

🕒 Trick 1: When feeling stuck, take a breather. Take a moment to collect your thoughts – it makes a difference! And let your confidence shine, don't be afraid to tell your interview that you would like a moment to collect your thoughts and present a well-rounded answer. This highlights self-awareness, austerity of speech and confidence.

🤔 Trick 2: Seek clarity on the question. It's absolutely fine to ask for more details. Say something like, "I want to make sure I'm on the right track. Can you elaborate on what you mean by ?" or "I would like to ensure that my answer meets your expectations, could you further elucidate on ___"



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💡 Trick 3: Engage in thinking out loud. Use the interview as a chance to showcase your problem-solving skills under pressure. Unpack the question in front of the interviewer, this is one of my personal favourites. Highlighting your understanding of each term in the question and turn it into a discussion with the interviewer instead.

🎯 Trick 4: If faced with an unfamiliar concept, focus on what you do know. Instead of outrightly admitting you don't know, emphasise your existing knowledge or discuss your approach to finding a solution.

✉️ Trick 5: Follow up after the interview. Send a brief email or text expressing gratitude for the question and share a more refined response. It demonstrates your commitment to delivering your best, but this one is a bit risky cause you don't want to look like you are over-compensating for not knowing something. So make sure to exercise your caution and take this on a case to case basis.

These were a really good starting point, building on these I cracked over 2 interviews within a month. Want my exact preparation checklist along with a FREE call to help you strategise your next interview? Share this reel with me and write "curve" and I'll take care of it!



HOW DID YOU ARRIVE AT THE QUANTITATIVE METRICS MENTIONED IN YOUR CV?

Interviewers ask this to test your honesty, attention to detail, and ability to quantify your contributions.

It's not just about validating your claims but also understanding how you approach measuring success.


Best Practices for Answering:

1. Stay Calm: Resist the urge to justify every number immediately. Overexplaining can come across as suspicious.
2. Ask for Clarity: Confidently ask, "Could you share which quantitative metric you'd like to explore in more detail?" This shows composure and professionalism.
3. Follow the ask with a Strong Example: Pick the metric you're most confident about, then use the PPP (Problem, Process, Progress) method to explain the context, your role, and how you arrived at the number.
4. Give a tool/proof of getting to that number as in the sample below (Google analytics, sales reports, annual reports etc.)
5. End With Openness: Conclude with how you'd be happy to provide similar explanations for any other figures in the CV." This reinforces your transparency and readiness.



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Sample Answer:

“Thank you for the question! My CV roughly contains 65 different quantitative metrics, would you would like me to clarify any specific metric or achievement? If not, I’m happy to walk you one of my most memorable ones.

In my previous role as a Marketing Analyst, I mentioned increasing website traffic by 35%. When I joined, the website was underperforming with limited organic traffic. My goal was to develop a content strategy to boost traffic by 30% within six months. I conducted a comprehensive SEO audit, optimised underperforming pages, and implemented a new blog series targeting high-volume keywords. Over six months, we saw a 35% increase in traffic, verified through Google Analytics reports.

This metric is grounded in data I tracked personally to ensure accuracy.”

Let me know if there’s another number in my CV you’d like me to expand on!”

Next? Personalise your response, make it conversational and you have the perfect answer!



MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE IS BASED OUT OF UK MARKET, HOW WOULD YOU FIT HERE?

This question is a constant in an international job seekers life, yet most people mess it up by becoming defensive and losing sight of what's at the core.

Employers ask it to assess your adaptability, how your past experiences translate to their needs, and whether you understand the UK nuances. It's also an opportunity to highlight the value of your international perspective.

My 6 step strategy to ace this question:-

1. Acknowledge the Concern Respectfully and Don't get defensive.
2. Highlight Transferable Skills alignment
3. Demonstrate Willingness to Adapt
4. Reframe international experience as a Strength
5. Personalise to their product/service
6. If your industry is region agnostic then mention it




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Sample answer that does it all:

"I understand that my experience so far has been outside the UK, but this is what sets me apart as a brilliant and unique candidate fit for this role. Working in international settings has taught me to adapt quickly to different workplace cultures, communicate effectively with diverse teams, and solve problems in creative ways. For instance [Insert short story of working with cross-function or diverse teams & relate to the job].

Additionally, I've already taken steps to familiarise myself with UK industry standards, including [mention any relevant training, certifications, networking or research], and I'm confident my ability to adapt and learn quickly will ensure a smooth transition. My fresh perspective combined with a global outlook can contribute valuable insights to your team.

Lastly since my industry is largely region agnostic, I would like to highlight my core skill in (x,y) which will all allow me to specifically contribute to (mention their product/service)"

This response shows confidence, adaptability, and a proactive approach, while reframing the concern as a unique advantage.

It reassures the interviewer that you're ready and eager to thrive in the UK job market.

Do note, that this is just a sample answer, and make sure to customise your responses specific to your interview!



WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST WEAKNESS?

Never thought this question was really asked. Until last week, when a client was messed up an interview because of this question.

When this is asked they want to see how self-aware you are, and how you've actively worked on your challenges. This question also tests your emotional resilience under pressure.

Here my 4 step strategy to ace this question:


1. Stay Genuine but Strategic: Choose a minor weakness that won't disqualify you but shows a balanced level of honesty. Avoid personality flaws or skill gaps that are critical for the role.
2. Show Growth Mindset: Talk about how you've actively worked to improve on this weakness.
3. Keep it complex yet relevant: Pick an area that's in between a strength and a weakness, but not blatantly a strength.
4. Reframe as an Advantage: Where possible, turn your answer into a soft positive. For instance, if you tend to be highly detail-oriented, explain how you've learned to balance it with efficiency over time.
5. Personalise the answer to their products/services



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Sample Answer that does it all:

“You might choose not to hire me because of my initial bias for action. I like working fast and feel that speed is what sets organisation like yours apart, for instance [share how speed is beneficial for one of their product/service]. However, sometimes a bias for action might overcome your ability to dive deeper into detail. Nonetheless, I realised early in my career that balancing precision with efficiency is essential, especially in fast-paced environments. I’ve since developed strategies to manage keep up my speed while ensuring a precise eye for detail by leveraging workflow softwares like [x]. Additionally, setting internal deadlines for tasks and reminding myself of the bigger picture in collaboration with my team helps a lot.

Do note, that this is just a sample answer, and make sure to customise your responses specific to your interview!



DO YOU NEED VISA SPONSORSHIP?

For international job seekers, the question “Do you need visa sponsorship?” can be a sensitive point during interviews. Often, the best strategy is to keep the focus on your value as a candidate and wait until later in the process to discuss visa requirements. Here’s how you can navigate this question tactfully while showing commitment, professionalism, and a willingness to work with the employer.

1. Apply Strategically to Sponsorship-Friendly Companies

Before applying, check if the company can sponsor a visa using tools like the UK Work Visa Checker extension. By targeting companies with a history of sponsoring visas, you reduce the chances of encountering visa-related hesitations. This way, you’re applying to places where sponsorship is more feasible, allowing you to focus on proving your value in interviews.

2. Shift the Focus to Your Fit for the Role

When asked about your visa status early in the process, answer with a response that centers on your excitement for the role, commitment to the company, and readiness to make a difference. Here’s a good example:


“I’m really excited about this opportunity and am committed to bringing my skills and experience to this role. I believe my background in [X] and work as a [Y] align well with what you’re looking for. I’m confident we can handle any administrative requirements when needed.”



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This response shows enthusiasm and a solution-oriented mindset, allowing you to delay the sponsorship conversation until later in the hiring process.

3. Emphasize Your Readiness and the Value You Bring

Another approach is to emphasize your readiness to contribute, showing that your skills and experience are what truly matter. A response like the following keeps the conversation focused on your qualifications:

“I’m fully ready and enthusiastic to start contributing to the team. My skills and experience are well-suited for this position, and I’m eager to help the company achieve its goals. If any visa logistics are needed, I’m prepared to manage them collaboratively as we move forward.”

4. If You Have the Right to Work, Reassure the Employer

If you currently hold the right to work in the UK, it can be helpful to confirm this with a straightforward addition to your response:

“And for your certainty, I can confirm that I do have full rights to work in the UK at the moment.”

This keeps things transparent and may even set the employer’s mind at ease without further questioning.

5. Delay the Visa Conversation If Pressed

If the interviewer presses for more specifics about your visa needs, it’s best to remain cooperative but suggest revisiting this detail later in the process. Here’s how to handle it diplomatically:

“I’d be open to discussing any logistical aspects as the hiring process progresses. For now, I’d love to focus on how I can add value and make a positive impact in this role.”


This approach keeps the door open to future discussions while keeping the spotlight on your strengths and suitability for the position.




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When to Bring Up Sponsorship Directly

If you know the company has a sponsorship license, it may be appropriate to bring up visa needs strategically in a later conversation, once it's clear you're a strong contender for the role. By this point, you've had the opportunity to demonstrate your value, making the discussion of sponsorship more manageable and less likely to impact your candidacy.

In Summary,

Delaying the sponsorship question while showing commitment and collaboration allows you to keep the focus on your qualifications, not your visa status. This strategy helps you progress through the hiring stages based on merit, bringing the conversation around to logistics at the right time.

Some more bits:

There are more such tools like: Work Sponsors: UK Visa Sponsor Checker and the Ultimate Sponsorship Checker; so if you don't find this one useful, maybe try the other ones.

At this point in time, this tool can be used for absolutely no cost, so do make sure you get it soon.

Ensure that you use this tool only for reference and don't completely rely on it, always good to double-check when in doubt.

Lastly, this is for informational purposes only, the tool mostly worked okay for us, however, we don't guarantee the accuracy of its results.



WHAT SETS YOU APART?

Easily ace this question using this strategy

When this question is asked, the interviewer is looking to understand not only how you'll bring value to their team but also how well you know your strengths, experiences, and what sets you apart.

This question is your opportunity to highlight what **ONLY YOU** can bring to the role, creating a memorable impression on the interviewer.

Easier said than done, so here's how to do it


1. **Focus on Relevant Strengths:** Choose strengths directly related to the job. Instead of listing generic skills, hone in on what you can contribute that aligns with the role's requirements and the company's goals.
2. **Share a Specific Example:** Giving a concrete example makes your answer more compelling. Share a story or highlight a project that showcases how you applied your unique strengths effectively.
3. **Tie in Company Values:** Tailoring your answer to reflect the company's mission or culture shows you understand and align with what's important to them. This will make your response resonate on a deeper level.
4. **Stay Concise and Confident:** Don't over-elaborate. Keep your response short, focused, and confidently delivered to show self-awareness and clarity in what makes you stand out.



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Sample Answer:

"I believe what sets me apart is my ability to transform data insights into actionable strategies that deliver results. In my previous role as a marketing analyst, I developed a dashboard that analysed user behavior, which led to a 15% increase in user engagement in just three months. I'm drawn to this role because of [Company Name]'s focus on data-driven decision-making, and I'm confident my experience and proactive approach will help drive even more impactful insights and strategies for your team."

This answer is concise, highlights relevant strengths, ties into the company's values, and gives a specific example.

Do note, that this is just a sample answer, and make sure to customise your responses specific to your interview!



WHAT IS ONE CHALLENGE YOU FACED AT YOUR LAST JOB AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME IT?

When an interviewer asks this question they want to assess your self-awareness, ability to learn from mistakes, and resilience.

And this is exactly how you show them that:

1. Be Honest but Strategic

Choose a real failure, but ensure it's something that doesn't raise red flags about your ability to do the job. Avoid sharing failures related to core responsibilities of the position you're applying for.

2. Take Responsibility

Own your mistake. Avoid shifting blame to others. The interviewer is looking for someone who is accountable for their actions and can handle challenges with maturity.

3. Focus on the Lesson Learned


Highlight how the failure helped you grow. This is the most crucial part of your answer. Employers are interested in how you've developed as a professional from your setbacks.



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4. Show How You've Applied the Lesson

After explaining what you learned, discuss how you've applied that lesson in your career to avoid similar issues in the future or achieve better results. This demonstrates growth and adaptability.

Here's a sample answer that does it all

"In my role as a project coordinator at XYZ Company, I was tasked with leading a digital marketing campaign that targeted a 15% increase in website traffic within three months. However, I failed to accurately assess the time needed for the content creation phase, which led to a two-week delay in launching the campaign. This resulted in only a 7% increase in traffic instead of the expected 15%."

After this failure, I took the following steps: (Insert 3 actionable best practices)

In the next project, I applied the lessons I learned, and the campaign launched five days ahead of schedule. The outcome was a 20% increase in website traffic, surpassing the original target by 5%. Additionally, I created a more efficient process for tracking project progress, which is now part of our team's standard operating procedure."

Do note, that this is just a sample answer, and make sure to customise your responses specific to your interview!



HOW ARE YOU DOING?

The question "How are you doing?" may seem casual, but in an interview, it holds more weight than you might think. In the UK, where building rapport is key, your answer can set the tone for the entire conversation. It's a chance to make an immediate connection with the interviewer, turning this simple question into a memorable interaction.

1. Start With a Personal Connection

Proper research is essential. If you know something about the recruiter's interests, you can personalize your response. For example, if you discover through LinkedIn or a Youtube or Instagram or a casual conversation that your interviewer is an avid runner, you can say something like:

"I'm doing well, actually! I've been training for a marathon, so it's been a busy but exciting time."

This approach not only answers the question but also builds an instant connection. The recruiter will remember you as the candidate who took the time to find a common ground.


2. Don't go overboard: Don't start talking them through your CV or skills that you've been learning, that is a bit too extra, this is about giving them a taste of your personality while, softly selling you as a cultural fit.

3. Highlight softskills: Whilst this is not the place to talk about concrete technical skills, this is definitely a question where you can subtly sell your soft skills like resilience and adaptability



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4. Always ask the question back! And don't be like, I'm fine thanks. Big no!

Here's a simple sample answer that does all that, using the marathon example from earlier:

"I'm doing great, thanks! Actually, I've recently started running and have resolved to prepare for a marathon within the next 90 days, so that's been keeping me on my toes — both literally and figuratively! It's been challenging since I haven't run before but it definitely has made me much resilient and adaptable. How about you?, How's your week been?"

Well, this is just the tip of the interviewing iceberg and there's a lot ahead.

Cheering for you always!



WHY DO YOU WANT TO LEAVE YOUR LAST JOB?

This question can sound tricky, but it's an excellent opportunity to show your ambition, values, and alignment with the new role.

Here's how to craft a thoughtful answer:

1. Start with a strong line
2. Highlight Growth and Learning with a real story from your career
3. Align skills and experiences with the New Role
4. Focus on Fit
5. Have a strong ending highlighting yourself as the best candidate

Here's a sample answer that does it all:

"I'm eager to take the next step in my career and bring my expertise to a new challenge. In my current role, I led a project to streamline our team's reporting processes, which reduced turnaround time by 30%. This experience taught me the importance of not just improving efficiency but also encouraging cross-team collaboration.


While I've grown a lot in this role, I'm looking for an opportunity where I can apply my strategic thinking in a more dynamic environment, like [Company Name], where innovation is at the forefront. Your focus on data-driven decision-making and collaboration really aligns with my skills and passion for creating impactful solutions.



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I'm confident that my proven ability to drive results, coupled with my enthusiasm for continuous learning, makes me a great fit for this role. I'm excited to contribute to a team where I can further expand my skills and help achieve [Company Name]'s goals."

This is just a sample answer and you must customise and personalise the answer to your unique interview circumstances.



WHAT IS YOUR 5 YEAR CAREER PLAN?

Hate this question, but the truth is, it gets asked more than you can imagine!

So here's my strategy to get this right, a sample answer & a FREEBIE:

1. Structured Yet Flexible: Clearly outline your path while staying adaptable.
2. Impact-Oriented: Focus on how you'll contribute to the team & company, not just personal achievements.
3. Forward-Thinking: Show awareness of industry trends & future planning.
4. Unique Framework: Use distinctive concepts like "evolutionary leadership" to stand out.
5. Milestones & Metrics: Include specific milestones & measurable outcomes.

Sample Answer:


"My 5 year career plan is both structured & flexible to adapt to new opportunities & challenges. My focus for year one will be mastering my current role, building strong expertise in key areas, & making measurable contributions to the team's success.

In the next two years, I will deepen my skills in [specific areas related to the role], ensuring that I consistently deliver high-impact results in [specific projects]. As I grow, I want to expand my scope of influence by taking on leadership roles, such as managing projects or mentoring colleagues. I aim to do this not just for personal growth but to help drive innovation & efficiency within the team, which will be critical considering the current industry trends [Include new developments in the industry].



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Year 4 & 5 will be flexible & be based around the principal of evolutionary leadership—continuously evolving my skills to stay ahead of industry trends, while also adapting to the company's needs. Whether that means championing new technologies, leading cross-functional initiatives, or developing new strategies, I see myself not just progressing through a set path but making a lasting, positive impact along the way.

Thus, my plan is to grow into a role where I can both innovate & mentor, contributing meaningfully to the company's success while staying adaptable to the changing landscape of the industry."

Note: This sample is just a guide to help you understand the strategy 🙌.

For your answer, make sure to tailor it to your interview context.



ARE YOU A HUNTERER OR GATHERER?

Yet another curveball question

Here's how to get it right:

Consider the core qualities of each:

- Hunters are proactive, goal-oriented, and thrive on pursuing opportunities, making quick decisions, and taking action. They are competitive and enjoy the chase.
- Gatherers are methodical, detail-oriented, and excel in research, analysis, and nurturing. They prefer building relationships, gathering information to make informed decisions.

Crafting a response:

Role Alignment: Tailor your answer to reflect the demands and nature of the role you're applying for. For instance, if the role requires aggressive sales tactics or initiating new business opportunities, you might lean towards identifying as a hunter. Conversely, if the position is more about research, content creation, or customer relationship management, a gatherer approach might be more suitable.

Skills: Emphasise how your preferred style (hunter or gatherer) aligns with the job requirements. For example, if you're applying for a marketing analyst position, you might say: "I'm a gatherer. I enjoy diving into data, collecting insights, and using that information to craft strategies that yield long-term success. This approach will allow me to effectively analyze market trends and develop targeted campaigns that resonate with our audience."


Flexibility: While it's beneficial to identify primarily as one, showing that you can adapt is also valuable. You might add:



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"While I lean towards being a gatherer, I also recognise the importance of taking action when needed, much like a hunter. In fast-paced situations, I'm capable of making quick, informed decisions to seize opportunities."

Story: Drawing from past experiences can make your answer more concrete and relatable:

"In my previous role, I delivered a long-term project that required meticulous research and strategic planning, playing to my strengths as a gatherer. However, I also initiated several successful campaigns that required a more hunter-like approach."

By framing your response this way, you show self-awareness and how your strengths align with the role's needs.



CAN YOU SUM UP YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY IN A SINGLE WORD?

I hate this question because its so reductive and puts unnecessary pressure on the candidate. However, it's still being asked in interviews. So here's how to get it right:

Don't be nervous and understand the recruiter:

Recruiters ask this question to gauge your self-awareness, communication skills, and alignment with the company's values. They're looking for a snapshot of your top qualities and how you'll fit into the role.

Avoid Giving A single Word

A single word is often too simplistic to capture the full scope of your abilities and experiences. It's more effective to provide a response that reflects your strengths and how they apply to the job.

Tell a Story that highlights multiple relevant qualities

Instead of a one-word answer, share a concise story using STAR method, demonstrating a combination of skills. This gives the interviewer a clearer picture of your abilities and how you've applied them.


Sample Answer:

"While I can attempt to sum up my professional journey into a single word, it would undoubtedly fall short of capturing the multifaceted nature of my experiences and the depth of my passion for [industry]. My time at [Old Org] serves as a testament to my multifaceted professional abilities.



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During my tenure at [Old Org], I was instrumental in leading a cross-functional team tasked with [specific project]. This endeavor required me to leverage my [relevant skills] to effectively collaborate with colleagues from diverse backgrounds and ensure that the project remained on track. One challenging aspect of this project was [specific obstacle]. To overcome this hurdle, I implemented a [innovative strategy] that not only resolved the immediate issue but also set the stage for future success. By fostering a collaborative environment and encouraging open communication, I was able to inspire my team to think creatively and find innovative solutions. Through this experience, I demonstrated [Mention all key qualities] to deliver [Specific Results].

Pls note that this is just a sample answer and you must customise your response to your specific interview. Need help with interview prep? Comment “yes” and I will DM you a checklist and link to mock interview with me!



WOULD YOU LEAVE THIS COMPANY IF YOU GET JOB AT YOUR DREAM COMPANY?

Another curveball question 😬 & the key to cracking it 😁
(Write "yes" for my FREE interview checklist! 📄)

While this question might seem tricky, it's becoming more common in interviews as companies want to understand your priorities beyond just the allure of a "dream" job title.

When an interviewer asks this they're looking to gauge your values, dealbreakers, and how well you know yourself. They want to see if you're thoughtful about what truly matters to you—beyond just the brand name.

The key is to show that while you're enthusiastic about the opportunity, you have clear principles and standards that guide your decisions.

💡 I often say something like this:


"I'd be thrilled to get an offer from my dream company, but I've learned that some things are nonnegotiable for me. If I knew the worklife balance was consistently off, or if I had to compromise on core values like impact, and working for a larger mission, I'd have to pause and really think about it."



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I also know that a positive company culture is essential for me to thrive. If I felt that personal growth, collaboration, or a healthy work environment wasn't a priority, it would be hard for me to stay motivated and perform at my best. In my previous roles, I have worked hard to foster a similar culture (Insert short story via STAR method) The job might look perfect on paper, but these factors are what keep me energised and committed longterm.

I've realised that a true dream job is more than just the role—it's also about the environment being a good fit for who I am and where I'm headed. Given my skills and experience in [Insert skills and experience], I'm confident that with the right environment, I can deliver exceptional results. So far, throughout the recruitment process, I've seen firsthand the environment and values that drive your organisation, and it's clear that my nonnegotiables are already met. That's why I'm sure I won't have to turn down an offer from my dream company—because everything I've seen so far tells me that this is the perfect fit!"



HOW DO YOUR FRIENDS DESCRIBE YOU?

Another curveball question & the key to crack it

Not a fan of this question but the number of times it has left people confused is quite surprising.

Interviewers ask this to gain insight into your selfawareness, personality, and assess cultural fit. Your answer not just shows your personality, but also the traits you value and how they relate to the role.

Here's exactly how to get this right

Start with a strong line

Indirectly link everything to a soft skillset

Tell stories to substantiate your claims and make it personal

Be sure to maintain a balance between personality and professionalism

Here's my sample answer


My friends describe me as the glue that holds things together, both socially and in getting things done. They often mention my organisational skills and ability to see the bigger picture, which is crucial in both my personal and professional life. For example, I once organised a community trip that required coordinating multiple moving parts—scheduling, marketing, and volunteer management. My friends saw me seamlessly bringing it all together while still being the person who kept the group's energy high and positive. I'm basically sometimes the parent on our group trips!



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They also appreciate my adaptability. Just like in the workplace, where projects evolve and require quick thinking, I'm the one who can pivot plans during a weekend trip without missing a beat, ensuring everyone's still having a great time. This blend of strategic thinking and personal care is why they often say I'm someone they can count on.

Beyond that, they'd tell you I'm the person who never forgets a birthday and always has the best book recommendations—small details that show I'm attentive and thoughtful, qualities I believe are just as important in building strong client relationships as they are in friendships.

The above answer is just a reference point, with best practices to help you build your unique answer. Be yourself, be truthful and make it conversational! Want my list of such similar tricky interview questions? Just comment "Tricky" and I'll DM it to you!



WOULD YOU LEAVE THIS PLACE IF YOU GET A BETTER SALARY?

Another curveball question & the key to cracking it

(Save this for future reference & comment “yay” for FREE full access to my interview resource library!)

While I’m not a fan of questions like these, the reality is that these are being asked way more than before. This is because of a culture of job hopping and employers being insecure about employee loyalty.

When an interviewer asks this question, they’re not just testing your loyalty; they’re trying to understand if your professional goals and values align with what their company has to offer. They also want to gauge your emotional intelligence and see how you prioritise various factors when making career decisions.

So here’s exactly how to get this right


In such situations, it's important to communicate that while salary and benefits are important, they are not the only considerations. Between a better offer and a more suitable offer, I would always choose the latter. For me, a suitable offer isn’t just about numbers— it’s about finding a place where my goals, values, and the work environment are in harmony. This way, even if I don’t go for the better offer, I’ll convert this very opportunity into the better offer.



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I genuinely believe that this company aligns more closely with my professional aspirations and values {Insert 1 or 2 specific values}. Throughout the interview process, I've been impressed by the culture here. I've really enjoyed the conversations I've had [Mention 2-3 specific conversations], and it's clear that the people who work here are both passionate and welcoming. For me, working with a team that values collaboration, growth, and mutual respect is paramount. People matter more than just a title or a paycheck, and I've found that this team embodies those principles.

In conclusion, I would love to join your team. I'm confident that with the right package, I can exceed expectations and truly excel in this role.



WHY DO YOU THINK YOU ARE PERFECT FIT FOR OUR COMPANY?

This is exactly how to do it! (I cracked 3 interviews using this format):

Start with a Strong, & Impactful Line

Show Relevant Previous Experience via a Story & Relate It to the Job

Show Core Skills & Qualifications & How They Relate to a Specific Project

Show Your Research About the Company Culture & Fit

Show a Bit of Personality & Align It to the Culture or a Specific Hobby of the Interviewer

Here's a sample that does it all

"I believe I am an excellent fit for [Company] because I thrive in fastpaced, innovative environments where I can leverage my skills to scale results quickly & accurately.

In my previous role at [Company], I led a project that improved operational efficiency by 30% in 6 months by implementing a new workflow management system. This saved the company £20000 annually & boosted team productivity by 20%. These results show my ability to drive impactful changes, which I am eager to replicate here at [Insert a specific project in the new company where this would help].



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I have strong analytical skills & project management expertise, backed by my PMP certification & Agile experience. At [Previous Company], I led a crossfunctional team to deliver a crisis mitigation strategy for a key analytics project ahead of schedule & under budget, aligning perfectly with the crisis management attribute needed for [core deliverables of the new job].

I admire [Company]'s commitment to a collaborative & innovative workplace, particularly your sustainability initiatives. These values resonate with me as I'm also a part of two leading NGOs sharing the same interest. The welcoming environment & colleagues I've spoken to further reinforce this fit.

Outside of work, I am an avid cyclist & enjoy participating in charity bike rides. I noticed many team members share this passion. I believe this shared interest in cycling & community involvement would help me connect well with the team & contribute positively to the company culture."

This is just a guiding sample—add your touch to make it stand out. Practice & research the company well.



WHAT WILL YOU DO IF YOU DON'T GET THIS JOB?

I hate questions like these because I never realised why this was asked.

It was only when I understood what the interviewer was truly seeking with this question that I crafted a fitting response.

With this question, the interviewer wants to know how you deal with professional failure & how resilient you are.

Based on this understanding, my responses changed & that led me to finding a job. Thereafter, I've helped 100s of others to crack through such curveball questions.

These are the steps I took to ensure I aced this question:

Express Disappointment Professionally

"If I didn't get the job, I would be disappointed. However, I would seek feedback on how I could improve & take steps to develop myself in those areas. I'm genuinely excited about the possibility of working for your company[insert why] so I would likely reapply after six months."


Highlight Suitability & Introspection

"I believe my experience in the department & the team makes me a strong candidate. However, if I am not selected, I would reflect on the interview to identify areas for improvement & work on them diligently."



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Focus on SelfImprovement & Networking

"I would surely be disappointed, but I would explore additional training opportunities & pursue further credentials to enhance my qualifications for future advancement. Additionally, I would view this interview as a great opportunity to be able to network with industry leaders like yourselves & ensure I stay in touch in the future"

Do note, these are just guiding points & your unique personality must shine through all of these.

In summary, all you need to do is show you can h&le setbacks constructively & learn from them. Convey genuine interest in the specific role & company. Keep your response professional & focused on growth, mentioning plans for skill development & emphasising your commitment to improvement & reapplying, without mentioning other job applications.

Wants more help with your interviews? I've got an amazing preinterview checklist & an interview guide.



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