



# Common Interview Questions

## Tell Me About Yourself

- This is one of the most common interview questions.
- Avoid covering personal information (age, where you're from, hobbies, etc.)
- Think of this question as a pitch – one that describes how you are a strong fit for the position.
- Concisely give your **BIO**: 1) Background, 2) Interests, and 3) Organizational fit.

Example: “I am currently a Senior at the University of Maryland where I study Communications and Public Relations. I am particularly interested in Crisis Management and Organizational Branding. I pride myself on my time management and relationship building skills. My education and previous internship with XYZ Media have provided me with the necessary skills to support this role.”

## What is an area of weakness?

- This question is meant to evaluate your self-awareness and your ability to recognize when improvement is needed.
- Briefly describe the “weakness”, and then focus most of the answer on how you are working to overcome it.
- While describing your weakness, also mention how your strengths contribute to your success.
- If possible, give an example of how you are progressing in your professional development.

Example: “I am someone who thrives behind the scenes because of my strong attention to detail. When it comes to presenting, I tend to shy away from the spotlight. However, I have taken steps to improve this by attending public speaking courses. I have already noted improvement. In fact, I recently gave a successful presentation to my community’s town hall meeting.”

## Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?

- Interviewers are looking to see if you have put thought into long term goals.
- Keep your answer general in terms of specific companies, titles, etc.
- Relate your future goals with the position for which you're interviewing.

Example: “I am very excited by this internship opportunity with ABC Company because my goal is to develop myself as a professional in the political field. I am looking for a position where I can take on new challenges and contribute to a team. Eventually, I'd like to assume more project management responsibilities and lobbying experience. But most importantly, I want to work for an organization where I connect with the mission.”

### **Tell me about a time when....**

- Situational questions determine your ability to take action and achieve goals.
- Prepare for situational questions by brainstorming some instances that could relate to the skills needed for the role. Most situational questions will focus on leadership, teamwork, and problem solving.
- Stay organized by following the **STAR** approach – **S**ituation, **T**ask, **A**ction, **R**esult. Describe the situation/task you were presented with, then speak about the action you took, and finally give the result of your actions.
- Professional examples are best, but you can also describe academic examples.

Example: “I currently work for my university’s bookstore. I once needed to assist a customer who was angry because we were out of stock of a certain textbook. I made sure to remain calm and listen to her concerns so that I fully understood the situation. I then explained our timeline for the next delivery, and I told her about our waitlist system. I also directed her to other resources the store offered to meet her needs. These included virtual textbooks and renting. My explanation helped the customer realize she was not completely out of luck and that she would have support. From there, we were able to successfully complete her transactions and she left with everything she needed for her upcoming semester.”

### **Why are you the best candidate?**

- Showcase your self-confidence and preparation.
- Explain what you have to offer the organization.
- Reiterate your skills and past experience relevant to the position.

Example: “I have the experience and drive to excel in this law enforcement role. You mentioned that the ideal candidate must be organized and calm under pressure. I have demonstrated success in those areas through my two years of volunteering with my local police department and emergency management team. I believe that my experience would contribute to your team, and I would welcome the opportunity to work with your agency.”

### **Other Common Interview Questions Include:**

1. What do you plan to contribute to our company?
2. What do you know about the company so far?
3. What interests you about this role?
4. How would a coworker or classmate describe your working style?
5. What is your greatest strength?
6. How do you stay organized?
7. How do you handle stress?
8. Why do you want this internship?
9. What is your proudest achievement?
10. What kind of work environment do you prefer?
11. Tell me about a task you accomplished and your approach, start to finish.
12. What do you hope to do after this internship?
13. What is important to you in a supervisor?
14. What made you want to pursue a career in XYZ?
15. How do you resolve conflict?
16. What is your typical role on a team?