



How to answer
**tough interview
questions**



Interview questions checklist for your next role

You've done your homework on the company, your resume is impeccable and you've been called in for a formal interview. You've done everything you need to prepare, right? Not necessarily. Even the most seasoned interviewee can get thrown off by a tough question, so we've put together some of the toughest interview questions – and spoke to a recruiting expert – to help you provide the best answers.



1. “Why do you want to work here?”

This is one of the [most common conversations that employers](#) have with prospective hires. This question is a great determiner of whether you will align with the company’s values and be a good fit.

“Describe what you find appealing about the position, how you prepared yourself for a career in the organisation and how you believe your present job equips you for the position in question,” says recruitment expert, Amie Duignan. “Also, from your own research, talk about how your values and work culture align.”

2. “Where do you see yourself in five years?”

This is your opportunity to show that you’re loyal and you intend to stay for at least a few years.

The interviewer wants to know you have direction in your career, and that you are goals-driven and motivated to grow.

“The goal of this question is to see whether you are keen to grow,” Duignan says. “Focus on where you’ve wanted your career to go and what steps you’ve taken to get there. This will show you are motivated to make the most of every job you have held.”

3. “What’s your experience like?”

Want to prove to a prospective employer that they should hire you? This is your golden opportunity. “Use this time to explain how and why you tick all their boxes – show them you have the experience they need without them having to ask you a question first,” Duignan says.

“A great way to prepare for this is to read the job description and explain how your experience aligns. Then you can add in extras to show how you match what they are after, plus that you can add extra value to the team.”

4. “What are your strengths and weaknesses?”

Even the most senior candidates struggle with this question. However, if you are prepared it can help showcase your experience, attitude and growth. “When answering strengths, choose relevant and insightful experiences,” Duignan says. “Be specific, share real numbers, be authentic and create relevant stories on your strengths.

“For weaknesses, there’s one fool-proof method: think of something that you struggle with but that you’re working to improve. For example, maybe you’ve never been a strong public speaker, but over the past few years you’ve taken on leadership roles and volunteered to run meetings to help you be more comfortable when addressing a crowd.”



5. “What do you already know about our company?”

This question is all about making sure you’ve done your research and you aren’t wasting the company’s time.

“There will be so much information available on the company, via LinkedIn, Google and recent media articles, so make sure you do your due diligence,” Duignan says. “Draw on recent work they’ve done, how their culture/values align with yours, and any recent products they have introduced.”

6. “What did you like – and not like – about your last role?”

This question is asked to see how well you actually align with what the company is looking for.

“My advice is to answer this question honestly, but make sure you know what you’re saying too,” Duignan says.

“Due to nerves, some people can answer this question by saying one thing but meaning another.

So prepare for this question and clarify what you liked and didn’t like. I also would advise against being too critical or negative about your last role.”

7. “What is one thing you would improve about yourself?”

Similar to asking about your weaknesses, it’s important to talk about something that you are actively working on. Turn your answer into a growth opportunity, describing how you are being proactive to better yourself in that particular area.

“One last big tip: remember that an interview is as much a chance for you to interview them,” Duignan says.

“Make sure you have your own checklist of what you truly want from a job and what matters to you, so that you can find a job that loves you back.”



Try to enjoy the interview process

We hope this advice will be helpful for your next interview. While it's not always enjoyable to answer tough interview questions, interviews also provide an opportunity for you to see how the business operates and whether you will be satisfied working with them.

Changing jobs might happen every few years, but it's still a big life change. Make sure your life insurance policy is kept up to date with all of life's changes. If you need to make updates to your policy, adjust your level of cover, or even take out a policy speak to **Real Insurance today, call us on 1300 377 325.**

