

# 55 Most Frequently asked Questions.

Dan Johnston from [PPR Career](#) shared the following list of frequently asked questions on a job interview, as well as advice on what to be prepared for.

**IMPORTANTE:** Es de fundamental importancia que el candidato previo a la entrevista con la compañía contratante, tenga **total** claridad de la compensación que se ofrece. Es de mal gusto y puede dar al traste con la contratación el intentar renegociar la estructura de compensación durante la entrevista. La empresa contratante asume que si el candidato esta siendo entrevistado es porque conoce y ha aceptado las condiciones de compensación que se ofrecen.

<p>1. <b>Tell me about yourself. Use “Picture Frame Approach”</b></p>	<p>Answer in about <u>two minutes</u>. Avoid details, don’t ramble. Touch on these four areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many years, doing what function</li> <li>• Education – credentials</li> <li>• Major responsibility and accomplishments</li> <li>• Personal summary of work style (plus career goals if applicable)</li> </ul> <p>Prepare in advance using this formula:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “My name is...”</li> <li>2. “I’ve worked for X years as a [title]”</li> <li>3. “Currently, I’m a [title] at [company]”</li> <li>4. “Before that, I was a [title] at [company]”</li> <li>5. “I love the challenge of my work, especially the major strengths it allows me to offer, including [A, B, and C]”.</li> <li>6. Second, help the interviewer by focusing the question with a question of your own: “What about me would be most relevant to you and what this company needs?”</li> </ol>
<p>2. <b>Did you bring your resume?</b></p>	<p>Yes. Be prepared with two or three extra copies. Do not offer them unless you’re asked for one.</p>
<p>3. <b>What do you know about our organization?</b></p>	<p>Research the target company before the interview. Basic research is the only way to prepare for this question. Do your homework, and you’ll score big on this question. Talk about products, services, history and people, especially any friends that work there. “But I would love to know more, particularly from your point of view. Do we have time to cover that now?”</p>
<p>4. <b>What experience do</b></p>	<p>Pre-interview research and <b>PPR Career</b> will help you</p>

<b>you have?</b>	here. Try to cite experience relevant to the company's concerns. Also, try answering this questions with a question: "Are you looking for overall experience or experience in some specific area of special interest to you?" Let the interviewer's response guide your answer.
<b>5. According to your definition of success, how successful have you been so far?</b>  (Is this person mature and self aware?)	Be prepared to define success, and then respond (consistent record of responsibility)
<b>6. In your current or last position, what were your most significant accomplishments? In your career so far?</b>	Give one or two accomplishment statements
<b>7. Had you thought of leaving your present position before? If yes, what do you think held you there?</b>	Refer to positive aspects of the job, advancement opportunities, and what you learned.
<b>8. Would you describe a few situations in which your work was criticized?</b>	Give only one, and tell how you have corrected or plan to correct your work.
<b>9. If I spoke with your previous boss, what would he or she say are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?</b>	Be consistent with what you think the boss would say. Position the weakness in a positive way (refer to #12)
<b>10. How would you describe your personality?</b>	Keep your answer short and relevant to the job and the organization's culture.
<b>11. What are your strong points?</b>	Present three. Relate them to that particular company and job opening.

<p><b>12. What are your weak points?</b></p>	<p>Don't say you have one, but give one that is really a "positive in disguise." I am sometimes impatient and do too much work myself when we are working against tight deadlines." Or "I compliment and praise my staff, but feel I can improve."</p>
<p><b>13. How did you do in school?</b></p> <p>(Is the person motivated? What are his/her values, attitudes? Is there a fit?)</p>	<p>Emphasize your best and favorite subjects. If grades were average, talk about leadership or jobs you took to finance your education. Talk about extra-curricular activities (clubs, sports, volunteer work)</p>
<p><b>14. In your current or last position, what features did you like most? Least?</b></p>	<p>Refer to your satisfiers for likes. Be careful with dislikes, give only one (if any) and make it brief. Refuse to answer negatively. Respond that you "like everything about my current position and have acquired and developed a great many skills, but I'm now ready for a new set of challenges and greater responsibilities."</p>
<p><b>15. What do you look for in a job?</b></p>	<p>Flip this one over. Despite the question, the employer isn't really interested in what you are looking for. He's interested in what he is looking for. Address his interests, rather than yours. Use words like "contribute," "enhance," "improve," and "team environment." Fit your answer to their needs. Relate your preferences and satisfiers/dissatisfiers to the job opening.</p>
<p><b>16. How long would it take you to make a meaningful contribution to our firm?</b></p>	<p>"Not long, because of my experience, transferable skills and ability to learn."</p>
<p><b>17. How long would you stay with us?</b></p>	<p>"As long as I feel that I'm contributing, and that my contribution is recognized. I'm looking to make a long term commitment."</p>
<p><b>18. If you have never supervised, how do you feel about assuming those responsibilities?</b></p>	<p>If you want to supervise, say so, and be enthusiastic.</p>
<p><b>19. Why do you want to become a supervisor?</b></p>	<p>"To grow and develop professionally, to help others develop, to build a team and to share what I have learned."</p>
<p><b>20. What do you see as</b></p>	<p>"Getting things planned and done through others and</p>

<p><b>the most difficult task in being a supervisor?</b></p>	<p>dealing with different personalities.” Show how you have done this in the past.</p>
<p><b>21. You’ve been with your current employer quite a while. Why haven’t you advanced with him?</b></p>	<p>Let’s assume the interviewer has a point here. That doesn’t mean you have to agree with the negative terms of the question. Answer: “What I like about my present position is that it’s both stable and challenging. But it’s true that I’ve grown about as much as I can in my current position. (This response also turns the issue of salary on its head, transforming it from <i>What more can I get?</i> to <i>What more can I offer?</i>)</p>
<p><b>22. Why are you leaving your present position?</b></p>	<p>Never answer with negative reasons, even if they are true. However, some companies have financial problems which may preclude you from staying with them. Frame your answer positively by answering why you want to move to the target company instead of why you left or want to leave your most recent job. For example, instead of answering, “I don’t get enough challenges at [company],” respond, “I am eager to take on more challenges, and I believe I will find them at [hiring company].” I’m not unhappy (at my present employer). However, this opportunity seems to be particularly interesting and I am interested in pursuing it further. Never personalize or be negative. Keep it short, give a “group” answer (e.g. our office is closing, the whole organization is being reduced in size). Stick to one response; don’t change answers during the interview. When applicable; best response is: I was not on the market when <b>PPR Career</b> contacted me and explained what you are doing, it peaked my interest.</p>
<p><b>23. Describe what would be an ideal working environment?</b></p>	<p>Team work is the key.</p>
<p><b>24. How would you evaluate your present firm?</b></p>	<p>Be positive. Refer to the valuable experience you have gained. Don’t mention negatives.</p>
<p><b>25. Do you prefer working with figures, or with words?</b></p>	<p>Be aware of what the job requires and <i>position your answer in that context. In many cases it would be both.</i></p>
<p><b>26. What kinds of people do you find difficult</b></p>	<p>Use this question as a chance to show that you are a team player: “The only people I have trouble with are those</p>

<b>to work with?</b>	who aren't team players, who just don't perform, who complain constantly, and who fail to respond to any efforts to motivate them." The interviewer is expecting a response focused on personality and personal dislikes. Surprise her by delivering an answer that reflects company values.
<b>27. How would your co-workers describe you?</b>	Refer to your strengths and skills.
<b>28. What do you think of your boss?</b>	If you like him or her, say so and tell why. If you don't like him or her, find something positive to say.
<b>29. Why do you want to work in a company of this size. Or this type?</b>	Explain how this size or type of company works well for you, using examples from the past if possible.
<b>30. If you had your choice of jobs and companies, where would you go?</b>	Refer to job preferences. Say that this job and this company are very close to what best suits you.
<b>31. Why do you want to work for us?</b>	You feel you can help achieve the companies objectives, especially in the short run. You like what you've learned about the company, its policies, goals and management: "I've researched the company and people tell me it's a good place to work."
<b>32. What was the last book you read? Movie you saw? Sporting event you attended?</b>	Think this through. Your answer should be compatible with accepted norms.
<b>33. What are you doing, or what have you done to reach your career objectives?</b>	Talk about formal courses and training programs.
<b>34. What was wrong with your last company?</b>	Again, choose your words carefully. Don't be negative. Say that no company is perfect, it had both strengths and weaknesses.
<b>35. What kind of hours are you used to</b>	"As many hours as it takes to get the job done."

<p><b>working?</b></p> <p>(Does the person match job and criteria?)</p>	
<p><b>36. What would you do for us?</b></p>	<p>Relate past success in accomplishing the objectives which are similar to those of the prospective employer.</p>
<p><b>37. What has your experience been in supervising people?</b></p>	<p>Give examples from accomplishments.</p>
<p><b>38. Are you a good supervisor?</b></p>	<p>Draw from your successes. Yes, my people like and respect me personally and professionally. They often comment on how much they learn and develop under my supervision.</p>
<p><b>39. Did you ever fire anyone? If so, what were the reasons and how did you handle it?</b></p>	<p>If you haven't, say so, but add that you could do it, if necessary.</p>
<p><b>40. How have you helped your company?</b></p>	<p>Refer to accomplishments.</p>
<p><b>41. What is the most money you ever accounted for? Largest budget responsibility?</b></p>	<p>Refer to accomplishments. If you haven't had bud get responsibility, say so, but refer to an accomplishment that demonstrates the same skill.</p>
<p><b>42. What's the most difficult situation you ever faced on the job?</b></p>	<p>Remember, you're talking to a prospective employer, not your best friend. Don't dredge up a catastrophe that resulted in a personal or corporate failure. Be ready for this question by thinking of a story that has a happy ending – happy for you and your company. Never digress into personal or family difficulties, and don't talk about problems you've had with supervisors or peers. You might discuss a difficult situation with a subordinate, provided that the issues were resolved inventively and to everyone's satisfaction.</p>
<p><b>43. Describe some</b></p>	<p>Refer to accomplishments. Everyone has had a few of</p>

<p><b>situations in which you have worked under pressure or met deadlines?</b></p>	<p>these pressure situations in a career. Behavior-related questions aim at assessing a candidate's character, attitude, and personality traits by asking for an account of how the candidate handled certain challenging situations. Plan for such questions by making a list of the desirable traits relevant to the needs of the industry or prospective employer and by preparing some job-related stories about your experience that demonstrate a range of those traits and habits of conduct. Before answering the questions, listen carefully and ask any clarifying questions you think necessary. Tell your story and conclude by explaining what you intended your story to illustrate. Finally, ask for feedback: "Does this tell you what you need to know?"</p>
<p><b>44. How do you handle rejection?</b></p>	<p>Rejection is part of business. People don't always buy what you sell. The tick here is to separate rejection of your product from rejection of yourself: "I see rejection as an opportunity. I learn from it. When a customer takes a pass, I ask him what we could do to the product, price or service to make it possible for him to say yes. Don't get me wrong: You've got to makes sales. But rejection is valuable, too. It's a good teacher."</p>
<p><b>45. In your present position, what problems have you identified that had previously been overlooked?</b></p>	<p>Refer to accomplishments</p>
<p><b>46. Give an example of your creativity.</b></p>	<p>Refer to accomplishments.</p>
<p><b>47. Give examples of your leadership abilities.</b></p>	<p>Draw examples from accomplishments.</p>
<p><b>48. What are your career goals?</b></p>	<p>Talk first about doing the job for which you are applying. Your career goals should mesh with the hiring company goals.</p>
<p><b>49. What position do you expect to have in two years?</b></p>	<p>Just say you wish to exceed objectives so well that you will be on a promotable track.</p>
<p><b>50. What are your</b></p>	<p>Refer back to question #48 on goals.</p>

<p><b>objectives?</b></p> <p>(How does the person handle stress? What is their confidence level?)</p>	
<p><b>51. Why should we hire you?</b></p>	<p>This may sound suspicious, negative, or just plain harsh. Actually, it's a call for help. The employer wants you to help him/her hire you. Keep your response brief. Recap any job requirements the interviewer may have mentioned earlier in the interview, then, point by point, match your skills, abilities and qualifications to those items. Relate a past experience which represents success in achieving objectives which may be similar to those of the prospective employer.</p>
<p><b>52. You may be over-qualified or too experienced for the position we have to offer.</b></p>	<p>"A strong company needs a strong person." An employer will get faster return on investment because you have more experience than required.</p>
<p><b>53. Why haven't you found a new position before now?</b></p>	<p>"Finding the right job takes time. I'm not looking for just any job."</p>
<p><b>54. If you could start again, what would you do differently?</b></p>	<p>No need to be self-revealing. "Hindsight is 20/20; everyone would make some changes, but I've learned and grown from all my decisions."</p>
<p><b>55. How much do you expect if we offer this position to you?</b></p>	<p>Be careful. If you don't know the market value, return the question by saying that you would expect a fair salary based on the job responsibilities, your experience and skills and the market value of the job. Express your interest in the job because it fits your career goals – Receptive to a reasonable and competitive offer – don't talk \$'s. It's always best to put off discussing salary and let <b>PPR Career</b> handle that. ANSWER: I'm open to a competitive offer. I'd prefer to discuss the opportunity and allow my recruiter to handle any salary questions.</p>