



## **Tough Interview Questions: How to Answer Them**

### **How did you hear about the organization?**

The key here is to demonstrate a real interest in the organization – you are not just applying because you happened to see an ad last week or a friend mentioned it in conversation. Cite any contact you have had with its employees, customers, products, etc. which have given you a positive impression.

### **Where do you think you will fit in best?**

This question is designed, in part, to measure how much you know about the organization. Thanks to prior research, you may know of places that need strengthening, areas in which it is expanding, etc. and can base your response on that information. But, unless you are interviewing for a specific job in a department, keep your response general by indicating several areas in which you'd be excited to work.

### **Tell me about yourself.**

This question is always one of the toughest. The only way to handle it is to prepare ahead of time. Work up around a two-minute summary of your past experiences (successes) and challenges (faced and met) and the kind of things which interest you the most. It should be positive, enthusiastic, relevant to the job and not too long.

### **What are your weaknesses?**

Tough. If you try to outthink the interviewer and use things like "I'm impatient" (meaning I like to get things done) or "I tend to work long hours and shortcut leisure," these responses are overused. Think of a couple of areas on which you can improve – not basic to the job – and be quiet. Some employers love to sit in silence after you answer, hoping you'll feel nervous and spout out more negatives about yourself.

### **What are your strong points?**

Don't list more than three, as some employers may ask you to list as many weaknesses as you cite strong points. Cite one or two really strong areas, provide specific examples and relate them to the job at hand.

### **Why did you leave your last job?**

If you say "It was a personality clash," you might as well walk out of the interview. **Never** criticize a past employer or the atmosphere, even when invited to do so. The best answer may be your desire for a job with a better future, the chance for new or broader work experiences, etc.

### **What kinds of people rub you the wrong way?**

Danger. You shouldn't admit much here. It would be safe, however, to say something like, "People who loudly claim they are going to do something and fail to produce" or "People who have a preconceived notion that a task can only be done a certain way."