



## Questions that may come up at interview

- 1 - Why should we employ you?
- 2 - What will you bring to the job?
- 3 - What contribution could you make?

### Answers to Crucial Questions

Remember, an organisation will want to employ you because it believes you will help solve its problems better than the other applicants. Organisations rarely admit to having problems so the question is often implicit. But, you must have a clear answer in your mind to the question 'what problems can you help us to solve and how would you help us solve them' you will then be ready to answer more indirect questions such as:

We have known for a long time that traditional Interviews are not very accurate at selecting the best people for a job. In fact, traditional interviews are only 4% better than choosing with a pin! Never the less traditional selection interviews continue to be the most frequent method of selecting people.

- 4 - How would you see the job developing in the next two years?
- 5 - Why do you want to work for us?
- 6 - What aspect of our advert attracted you to this job?
- 7 - What makes you think you can fit in with the culture of this organisation?

Another crucial question is:-

8 - Why do you want this job? The answer does not have to be profound but it does have to be clear and lucid (eg the work seems interesting, it is near to home, it offers security etc). The answer must be positive and forward looking. 'Because I am fed up with my present job' would not be a good reply. A better reply might be 'well I have got the work in my present job very well under control and I am looking for something with more challenge'.

Sometimes employers ask about other applications so be prepared to answer questions such as:

- 9 - Are you currently making other applications?
- 10 - Have you been invited to any interviews?
- 11 - Have you had any job offers?
- 12 - If you received any other job offers which would you choose?

Two other crucial questions are:

- 13 - When could you start work here?
- 14 - Do you have any holiday commitments?

### Other interview questions

You should sketch out answers to the following groups of questions:

Questions asking you to describe yourself. Use these as an opportunity to project key points about yourself. Your personal stocktaking should help identify these points. Do not give factual descriptions such as. I am thirty three years old, I am six foot two inches tall, I went to Glossop High School etc. Many of the questions are variations on four main

themes:

Open descriptions, strengths, weaknesses, perceptions of others.

#### Open-descriptions

- 15 - Describe yourself in one word
- 16 - What three major qualities do you possess?
- 17 - Tell me about yourself.
- 18 - What kind of person are you really?
- 19 - If you were to write your own obituary what would you write?
- 20 - Tell me about your management style.

#### Strengths

- 21 - What are your strengths?
- 22 - What are your three major skills?

#### Weaknesses

- 23 - What are your weaknesses? - use this question as an opportunity to say something positive about yourself e.g. 'I think I sometimes try too hard' or 'Some people say I am too conscientious'
- 24 - What personal characteristics do you have that get in the way of work?

#### Perceptions of others

- 25 - How would a friend describe you?
- 26 - How would an enemy describe you? - see comments for 23 ...'I'm not sure that I have any enemies but a critic once said ...
- 27 - How would your subordinates describe you?
- 28 - How would your superiors describe you?
- 29 - How would your husband/wife/partner describe you?
- 30 - How do you think your referees have described you?

The next group of question concern your past work experience. You should be able to answer the following questions about your present job or your previous job if you do not currently have a job.

- 31 - How would you sum up the contribution you have made to your present employer?
- 32 - What are your major responsibilities in your present job?
- 33 - Tell me something about the culture of your present organisation?
- 34 - What would you most like to change about your present organisation?
- 35 - What is your greatest achievement to date?
- 36 - What is your greatest failure to date?
- 37 - What is the biggest problem you have had to overcome?
- 38 - What is the most interesting assignment you have ever had?
- 39 - What kind of decisions are most difficult for you?
- 40 - What kind of decisions do you find easiest?
- 41 - What have you learned from your current job?
- 42 - What do you like most about your present job?
- 43 - What do you like least about your present job?
- 44 - How well have you fitted into a team?
- 45 - What sort of contribution do you make to a team?
- 46 - How well do you get along with colleagues?
- 47 - Describe a colleague.
- 48 - Describe your boss.
- 49 - What are the qualities you like to see in people to whom you report?
- 50 - What sort of people do you find most difficult to work with?
- 51 - How do you go about trying to work with difficult types of people?
- 52 - What kind of people do you find it easiest to work with?
- 53 - Who was the last person to make you very annoyed?

- 54 - What was the last thing that annoyed you at work?
- 55 - Do you enjoy being in charge of people?
- 56 - What do you expect from subordinates?
- 57 - How do you manage organisational politics?
- 58 - Do you see yourself as a change agent? Give me an example.
- 59 - Are you an innovative person? Give me an example.
- 60 - Are you an analytical person? Give me an example.
- 61 - How do you typically react when an important deadline approaches?
- 62 - Give me an example of a situation where you had to be extra persuasive.
- 63 - Give me an example of a situation where there was no procedure and you had to make a decision.
- 64 - Give me an example of a situation where you had to be ruthless.
- 65 - Explain to me how you have kept costs down in your area of responsibility.
- 66 - Give me an example of a situation where you spotted a new opportunity.
- 67 - Give me an example where you had to change things radically.
- 68 - Describe a situation where your work was criticised. How did you react?

Some employers may be interested in your career and your ambitions. They are likely to ask some of the following questions:

- 69 - What do you see as the next step in your career?
- 70 - Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?
- 71 - What are your long-term career aims?
- 72 - How ambitious are you?
- 73 - If you had a private income and did not need to work, how would you spend your time?
- 74 - Looking back on your career, would you have done anything differently?
- 75 - Looking back, would you have chosen a different career?
- 76 - Looking back at your life, what one thing would you want to change?
- 77 - What would you not want to do? Why?
- 78 - What are your main sources of motivation? Why?
- 79 - How important is money to you?
- 80 - How important is recognition to you?
- 81 - How important is status to you?
- 82 - What gave you most satisfaction in your last job?
- 83 - What are your major outside interests?
- 84 - Are you a member of an outside group or organisation?
- 85 - What newspapers do you read? Why?
- 86 - Name a person you particularly admire. Why?

Some organisations like to see evidence that you are interested in self-improvement. They may ask some of the following questions:

- 87 - What languages do you speak?
- 88 - What countries have you visited?
- 89 - Are you computer literate?
- 90 - Have you initiated any personal development in the last two years?
- 91 - What training have you undertaken in the last two years?
- 92 - What is your greatest training need?
- 93 - What are the most significant professional or commercial changes that are likely to affect your work in the next five years?
- 94 - How do you keep up to date with technical developments in your field?
- 95 - What is the question you would least like us to ask?
- 96 - If you are so good why are you looking for a job?
- 97 - Why aren't you earning more at your age?
- 98 - Is your current salary an appropriate reflection of your potential? If not why not?
- 99 - have you considered self-employment? If so what makes you think you can do it. If not why not?