

# KEY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



The key to success in interviews is **PREPARATION**. The best way to prepare is to make a 'bank' of answers to interview questions. This will help you ensure that you have some good answers, and you can practice them when you have an upcoming interview, which will improve your chances of success! These are generic common interview questions. You should also conduct some additional research on interview questions based on your career choice.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOUR INTERVIEW:

- ✓ Research what the company/organisation does
- ✓ Think about why you would like to work for this company/organisation
- ✓ Use concise, unambiguous language during the interview
- ✓ Do not make false claims; honesty is always the best policy
- ✓ Stress your past accomplishments and the skills you used to get the results you Achieved (e.g. extracurricular activities, sports, volunteering, work experience)
- ✓ Dress appropriately for the type of job you have applied for (e.g. For an office job, consider wearing a suit)
- ✓ Speak articulately and think about your answer before you start talking - it's okay to pause before giving your answer. Always ask for clarification if you don't understand the question!
- ✓ Prepare two/three questions to ask the interviewer at the end of the interview (e.g., ask about any training/personal development opportunities, if there are any upcoming projects you may be involved in).

QUESTION	EXAMPLES/KEY POINTS
Tell me a bit about yourself	Here you will briefly talk about your background (School/College courses if relevant) and talk about your career ambitions.
What are your career goals?	Remember to be positive, be keen and motivated to succeed in this area, and be as specific as possible!
What subjects do you enjoy most at school and why?	Do you enjoy it because it's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Theoretical</li><li>✓ Creative</li><li>✓ Practical</li><li>✓ Makes you think</li><li>✓ Do you enjoy lab work?</li><li>✓ Do you like reading?</li></ul>
Why have you applied for this particular role?	Explain your interest in the job/sector and any work experience completed

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What skills do you think you need to have for this role?	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Good time keeper/being punctual</li> <li>/ Good communication skills</li> <li>/ Flexible</li> <li>/ Good listener</li> <li>/ Problem solving</li> <li>/ Leadership potential</li> <li>/ Motivated</li> <li>/ Committed</li> <li>/ Good at research</li> <li>/ Team worker</li> </ul>
Can you give me an example of when you worked in a team?	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Captain of a sports team</li> <li>/ Head boy/girl</li> <li>/ Lead in delivering a presentation/assembly</li> <li>/ Duke of Edinburgh event</li> <li>/ Chair of a committee</li> </ul>
What was your role in the team and how did you contribute?	Be clear and quantify your answers.
What qualities do you think a good team leader needs?	<p>Aim: Work together to achieve shared goal/succeed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Organise</li> <li>/ Encourage</li> <li>/ Good communication skills</li> <li>/ Confidence</li> <li>/ Work under pressure</li> </ul>
Can you give an example of a time when you took the lead in a team?	Make it relevant and provide details of how you led.
Tell me how you prioritise your homework?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Plan</li> <li>/ Prioritise</li> <li>/ Organise</li> <li>/ Set deadlines</li> <li>/ How do you do this – to do lists, use planner?</li> </ul>
Why is planning and organising important?	<p>Helps to be more:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Effective</li> <li>/ Productive</li> <li>/ Helps prioritise activities and set deadlines</li> <li>/ Reduces stress as you know what you are doing</li> </ul>

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Can you give an example of organising an event at school or at home?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Cake sale</li> <li>/ Charity collection</li> <li>/ Rock Challenge</li> <li>/ School trip/event</li> <li>/ Duke of Edinburgh</li> </ul>
Tell me about a time when things at school or home did not go to plan. How did you learn from this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Flexible</li> <li>/ Positive</li> <li>/ Resilience</li> <li>/ Perseverance</li> <li>/ Motivation</li> <li>/ Determination to succeed</li> <li>/ Work under pressure/stress</li> <li>/ Learn from mistakes</li> </ul>
Tell me about a time when you have needed to communicate with a challenging person.	They are asking this to judge if you have good communication skills. You could use different scenarios; this could be working with a difficult person on a group project in school or college, having a problematic person in your band/ sports team, or a demanding customer in a work experience placement or part-time job. It would help if you used the STAR interview questions technique to ensure a comprehensive answer. Try to avoid being negative about the individual.
What are your key strengths?	<p>List your top 3 and give examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Discuss your strengths that are suited for the role. For example, if you're being interviewed for a Retail job, discuss people skills, communication skills etc. If the job is in Administration, discuss being organised and your IT skills.</li> </ul>
What are your weaknesses?	Hint – don't say 'I'm terrible at time keeping' or anything else that can put the interviewer off you! Be positive and constructive. Say things like 'I don't have much experience in retail; however, I am keen to learn, and I am very enthusiastic, so if I am employed, I will be focussed on developing myself.'
What areas do you feel you need to develop? Why?	Keep this positive and relevant to the role.

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What has been your greatest achievement to date?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Rock Challenge</li> <li>/ Duke of Edinburgh</li> <li>/ Young Enterprise</li> <li>/ Mentoring programme</li> <li>/ Leap programme</li> <li>/ Fund raising activities</li> <li>/ Sport, music, drama dance activities</li> <li>/ Activity outside of school: caring for animals</li> <li>/ Public speaking</li> </ul>
Why should we give you the job?	Talk about any experience you have. If none, talk about your enthusiasm for this career and the relevant skills and qualities you have that the employer is looking for (should be listed on the job advert or person specification).
Have you got any questions?	<p>Questions you may want to ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Is there a fixed period of training for the role?</li> <li>/ Is there a career path in this role?</li> <li>/ Can you give me further details about the training available?</li> <li>/ Where will I be based? (office, mobile, client-side)</li> <li>/ Ask about the team, equipment and facilities that you will be working with.</li> <li>/ What does the company's growth strategy look like, and how does this role fit that?</li> <li>/ Is there a probation period?</li> <li>/ Will I have regular appraisals with my line manager/mentor?</li> </ul> <p>An interview is also the time for you to decide if you want to work for this company. Do you like what you see? If you have any concerns or queries, this is the perfect opportunity for you to raise them.</p>