

FlexJobs Guide: How to Answer 12 of the Toughest Interview Questions

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FULL TEXT

BOULDER, Colo., Oct. 11, 2021 /PRNewswire-PRWeb/ – Amid the Great Resignation, more than 15 million workers have left their jobs since April 2021. The quit rate is hovering around the highest level in at least a decade, and it's estimated that 65% of employees are currently looking for a new job right now. Given the state of the job market, and to help the many candidates who are actively job searching, the career coaches at FlexJobs have listed 12 of the most difficult interview questions and detailed examples of how to answer each one.

"Under any circumstance, and whether a job interview is conducted in-person or virtually, preparation is always the key," said Brie Reynolds, Career Development Manager and Coach at FlexJobs. "The coaching team at FlexJobs hopes that by sharing examples of how to answer tricky interview questions, job seekers will feel more confident going into the interview process and better prepared for any curveball questions they may be asked," Reynolds concluded.

Below are 12 tough questions that are often asked during a job interview and examples of how to answer each.

1. What is your current salary?

FlexJobs' coaches advise against disclosing one's current salary (or the most recent salary made) to a potential employer at the risk of locking yourself into a cycle of lower pay than you're actually worth. Several states and localities now bar employers from asking this question in an attempt to end pay discrimination, which can happen when employers continuously base a person's salary on what a previous employer paid them.

Even if you live in a state where this question is legal, here are some ways to answer that don't force you to disclose your current salary.

Sample answers:

- "Before we discuss pay, I'd like to learn more about the full scope of the role."
- "I'd be happy to discuss salary and I'm interested to know what you had in mind for the pay range for this role."
- "I'm looking for a range of \$75,000 to \$85,000 for this type of role and I'm very open to talking it through further."
- "Would you be able to tell me more about the budget or range for this role?"

2. Why do you want to leave your current position?

Whatever your reason for wanting to leave, keep it professional and avoid getting personal.

Sample answer: "I've been with my current company for X years and I'm ready to find something new. I also really feel that your company culture is a better fit for me because of your commitment to work-life balance and team building."

3. How did you get along with your former boss?

Even if you strongly dislike your current boss, saying anything negative about the people you work with, especially your boss, should be avoided. If you truly can't think of anything nice to say about your previous boss, talk about the things you were able to accomplish while working with them. It is acceptable to admit that there were some

areas of your relationship that were better than others, but that you learned a lot about your own management and leadership style through them.

Sample answer: "My boss and I had different working styles, but I learned how to meet their needs and learned more about how to lead a team effectively."

4. Why do you want this job?

Be specific about what you admire about the company and why you feel that you're the best candidate for the role. You could mention the company's solid reputation, its diversity policies, and its excellent mentorship programs.

Sample answer: "I'm really impressed with this company's reputation in the industry and I would love to help contribute to your mission."

5. What is your desired work location?

While you can say that you're flexible when it comes to your desired work location, you can also add you would be amenable to working remotely, too.

Sample answer: "I'm open and flexible to the location of this role, and I'm definitely interested in working remotely if the job allows it."

6. What was the corporate culture like at your previous job?

If the corporate culture at your previous position was essentially nonexistent, you can be honest so long as you keep it professional. Mention that your former job lacked company culture, and then highlight all of the reasons (company culture specifically) why you would like to work for this company.

Sample answer: "My previous company didn't have much in the way of company culture and building employee bonds. Your focus on team retreats and rewarding employees is a big reason I'm interested in your company."

7. What are you hoping to gain from this job?

Rather than rattling off how this job will financially benefit you, highlight how you'd like to grow in this position, the things you hope to learn, and the experiences you'd like to have if you were hired for this job.

Sample answer: "I'm hoping to grow my knowledge in this industry, and I would particularly look forward to taking on the tasks of [a], [b], and [c]."

8. What makes you the right candidate for this position?

Answering this question can be especially difficult because it walks a fine line between being proud of your accomplishments and bragging. The best way to differentiate the two is in your delivery.

If you make it seem like you saved your former employer from financial ruin because of an initiative that you single-handedly implemented, then you're bragging. However, if you back up the specific reasons why your work experiences, education, and skill set align with what they're looking for (and use solid examples), then you'll be more successful in showcasing your talents and achievements.

Sample answer: "Because of my background with publishing and my certification, I know that I could complete the tasks required of the job with excellence. In my previous role, I performed similar tasks that wound up increasing our readership by 40%."

9. Tell me about yourself.

Keep this answer brief. Talk a little bit about your early years (i.e., where you're from), education, work history, and experiences. Make sure to keep it short—60 to 90 seconds is more than enough.

Sample answer: "I grew up in the Midwest and I studied at ABC College on the East Coast. I started my career off in sales where I learned a lot about the tech industry. After that, I worked at XYZ Corp where I started to develop my skills in..."

10. What would the person who likes you least in the world say about you?

This question tends to catch interviewees off guard, but there's a trick to answering it. Rather than choosing a negative trait, highlight a quirky characteristic (like impatience, for example) and turn it into something positive. Sample answer: "They'd probably point out that I'm impatient. However, I feel that it makes me a better worker as I rarely miss deadlines, I respond to emails quickly, and I regularly get answers to questions I have."

11. What is your biggest weakness?

While you'll want to steer clear from mentioning anything that could be a dealbreaker for the employer, you can use this as an opportunity to address your ability to overcome obstacles.

Sample answer: "I've struggled with multitasking, choosing to focus on one project at a time. But I've learned that sometimes things need to be done simultaneously, and I've worked hard at being able to easily switch from one project to another."

12. How do you handle or manage stress?

While you want to be honest, take a more positive approach to your answer.

Sample answer: "When I get stressed out, I find it's best for me to take a step back and make a plan of attack. This helps me get a handle on the situation and figure out what I need to do to alleviate my stress and get things accomplished."

For job seekers wanting more personalized advice and guidance specific to their job search journey, FlexJobs offers career coaching, resume reviews, and mock interviews for members and non-members alike.

For more information, please visit <https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/tricky-interview-questions/> or contact Kathy Gardner at kgardner@flexjobs.com.

About FlexJobs

FlexJobs is the leading career service specializing in remote and flexible jobs, with over 100 million people having used its resources since 2007. FlexJobs provides the largest database of vetted remote and flexible job listings, from entry-level to executive, startups to public companies, part-time to full-time and freelance. To support job seekers in all phases of their journey, FlexJobs also offers expert advice and career coaching services. In addition, FlexJobs works with leading companies to recruit quality remote talent and optimize their remote and flexible workplace. A trusted source for data, trends, and insight, FlexJobs has been cited in top national outlets including CNN, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, CNBC, Forbes magazine, and many more. FlexJobs also has partner sites Remote.co and Job-Hunt.org to help round out its content and job search offerings. Follow FlexJobs on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

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