

Explaining Strengths and Weaknesses in an Interview

FAQ: How to answer difficult questions in job interviews

[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/How do you answer 'What are your strengths and weaknesses' in a job interview](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/How_do_you_answer_'What_are_your_strengths_and_weaknesses'_in_a_job_interview)

Here's what the resume advice company Resume Edge recommends as a sample answer to the question, "What are your weaknesses?"

I prioritize continual growth and improvement. An area on which I would like to focus is managing others who have different expectations from me. What needs to be done in order to complete responsibilities is intuitive for me, so I am learning how to give better direction to others who are not self-motivated.

Click on the links to the right for more of their advice on tough interview questions.

Here is more input and examples people have given for strengths:

- Your strengths should already be noted in your resume and cover letter. Go over them (i.e., the strengths) again with the interviewer.
- One of my biggest strengths is my communication skills. I work very well with all kinds of people, and understand that everyone has different perspectives about projects and work tasks -- so when I work with others I realize that everyone comes to the table with different priorities and objectives. I keep this in mind when I communicate tasks that need to be accomplished with positive reinforcement and awareness of what others are working on.
- A positive attitude will not differentiate you from the crowd. A good attitude is expected of every employee. Also you should back up what you say with an example. For example, don't just say you have good customer service skills prove it by also telling them how you won a company award or received positive customer comment letters for your good service.
- "My strength is my flexibility to handle change. As customer service manager at my last job, I was able to turn around a negative working environment and develop a very supportive team.
- Hard worker.
- Punctual.
- Determined.
- Able to prioritize.
- Believe in myself; self-confidence.
- I have ability to cope with failures and try to learn from my mistakes.
- I like to work in team and have been an active participant and organizer at several places.
- One of my greatest strengths which I've acquired during my education is good analytical and planning skills. This has always benefited me to set goals and try to achieve them. But at the same time I'm driven by the thoughts of success.
- Full commitment to my work.
- Highly energetic.

- Love to learn new things.
- Having good interpersonal skills.
- Well organized and like to be neat with all of my work.
- A good helper towards those who need it.
- I am a team player and work well with others.
- I have great communication skills
- I am a quick learner. I have great problem-solving skills and am willing to learn new things to get the job done.

Here are notes and examples of weaknesses:

- You should answer with things you "are improving upon". Example: I believe I should always be improving upon myself, good or bad. You are answering the dreaded question without looking like an egotistical maniac, and showing the interviewer that you see yourself as a work in progress, trying to better all of your qualities.
- For your weakness, just pick one that is not going to disqualify you from the job, and then follow up with -- this what really matters -- the examples of what you are doing (or have done) to fix your weakness. The most important point here is to show that you learn from your mistakes and your weakness, and you are taking the corrective action to fix the situation -- and stress that! For example, if the job does not require public speaking, you can say that your weakness is you are afraid of speaking in front of the public. Then tell the interviewers that you have joined a Toastmaster club or public speech course to overcome the problem. Remind them that when you identify a problem, you actively take actions to correct it, and that is how you do things.
- Don't try to use a cliché or try to present a strength as a weakness by saying your weakness is that you are a workaholic. No one will believe that answer. Being too emotional will make the recruiter wonder if your interpersonal skills are lacking. Give a true weakness but one of modest size. Shows that you have taken steps to correct the weakness. For example you want to improve your MS Excel skills so you are taking a course on that now.
- I used to have trouble with procrastinating, now I have learned to write down a list of things that I need to do, and keep a calendar to keep track of deadlines, I have found that this not only helps me to finish things on time, but it has also helped me to be more organized.
- A weakness of mine would be the fact that I get nervous when speaking in front of groups. I haven't had a lot of experience with this over the past several years. Although I did join Toastmasters International to help overcome this anxiety -- and feel much more confident today when I need to speak in front of groups and give presentations.
- I'm little egoistic when it comes to winning things and get a little ruthless too.
- Lose patience sometimes when I am not in a position to complete the assigned job in time.
- I have to work on having more patience and giving myself a break because I always want everything done at once.
- Tend to go to any limits while helping my friends.
- I am too focused on my work and I need to find more time to relax.
- I'm too focused on work and need to develop some after hours hobbies.

And examples of combination strength-weakness answers:

- I'm a workaholic person and love to dedicate myself to the work I'm doing. But at the same time I forget to keep a balance between other things which I'm trying to improve on.
- Take whatever is your best quality and also describe it as your worst. It often is, as we are all made up like two sides of a coin. Try it out with different qualities and accomplishments and see how it works. For example ... The best thing about me is that I am able to see the big picture in a situation. The worst thing about me is that I can see the big picture in a situation. This is the best thing because I can remove myself from the emotion of a decision that needs to be made and act accordingly. It is a bad thing because I often can see the conclusion quicker than the other participants in a project and that can cause frustration sometimes amongst them.

Notes on interviewing

- This question unfortunately has become a staple in the interview process and is an easy way out for an interviewer who can't think of any other questions. The reason this is a bad question is simply this: If someone has a weakness that could jeopardize his chance of getting the job, he will never reveal it. So the only answers that this question receives are false answers intended to placate the interviewer. A good interviewer won't ask this question. I'm always tempted to answer this way: "Mr. Interviewer, I always have a hard time with that question. What would your answer be to the question?"
- A good interviewer wouldn't dream of asking someone this question. As the interviewer, you will not get truthful answers from the weakness part of the question, and as the interviewee, you can end up coming across as egotistical and boastful when answering about your strengths. A good interviewer shouldn't want to make you uncomfortable.

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[Next](#)] [[Last Job Interviews page](#)]

[How do you answer 'What are your strengths and weaknesses' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 2678

[How do you answer 'Tell me about yourself' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 1678

[How do you answer 'Why did you leave your last job' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 1393

[What questions will be asked in a second interview?](#)

Popularity: 1367

[How do you answer 'Why do you want to work here' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 1169

[How do you answer 'Describe yourself' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 1058

[How do you write a thank-you letter after an interview?](#)

Popularity: 859

[How do you answer 'Why do you want to leave your current job' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 847

[How do you answer 'How did you handle your most challenging experience in your previous job' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 689

[How do you answer 'How would you relate your key competencies to this position' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 614

[How do you answer 'What are your short-term and long-term career goals'?](#)

Popularity: 608

[How do you answer 'Where do you see yourself in five years' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 541

[How do you answer 'Describe your personal qualities that suit the requirements of this position' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 487

[How do you answer 'What is good customer service' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 478

[How do you answer 'Describe an ideal working environment' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 475

[What questions should an interviewer ask?](#)

Popularity: 436

[How do you answer 'Define teamwork' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 407

[How do you answer 'Describe your standard of success' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 403

[How do you answer 'Why did you apply for this position' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 347

[How should you tell an interviewer you would handle an irate customer over the phone?](#)

Popularity: 343

[What should you wear to a job interview on a hot summer day?](#)

Popularity: 335

[How do you answer 'Describe your weaknesses' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 325

[How do you answer 'What makes a good team' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 321

[How do you answer tough interview questions?](#)

Popularity: 312

[How do you answer 'What are three words that describe you' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 302

[How do you answer 'How did you go about planning for a recent event or project you handled' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 298

[How do you answer 'Why should we hire you' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 297

[How do you answer 'How did you handle a time you prioritized a personal matter over work' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 296

[How do you answer 'What motivates you' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 291

[How do you answer 'What are your short term and long term goals' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 284

[When is it appropriate to call back after an interview?](#)

Popularity: 276

[What should you and shouldn't you do in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 268

[What kind of questions should you ask when being interviewed for a call center position?](#)

Popularity: 262

[How do you answer 'Describe your work ethic' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 240

[What questions are important to ask at the end of the interview?](#)

Popularity: 239

[How do you answer 'What did you enjoy the most about your last job' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 229

[How do you answer 'Describe an important decision you made in the absence of your boss' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 224

[What questions will an interviewer ask?](#)

Popularity: 221

[What sort of note should you send after the interview?](#)

Popularity: 216

[How do you answer 'Describe a time you influenced others in a group' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 210

[How do you answer 'Market yourself' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 208

[Should you write a thank you letter after an interview for a part time job for a grocery store for example?](#)

Popularity: 205

[How do you politely ask what a job pays?](#)

Popularity: 202

[How do you answer 'Describe a time you solved a problem' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 201

[How do you answer 'What is good or bad feedback' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 199

[How do you answer 'How would you resolve a conflict' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 198

[How do you answer 'What about this job attracts you' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 198

[How do you answer 'Why have you held so many jobs' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 197

[How do you answer 'Where do you see yourself in five years' if your plan has no relation to this job?](#)

Popularity: 195

[Does being asked to do a phone interview mean you have a good chance of being hired?](#)

Popularity: 195

[How do you explain being fired due to a workmens compensation issue?](#)

Popularity: 189

[How do you make yourself different from every candidate applying for the same position?](#)

Popularity: 188

[How do you answer 'What can you offer us that other people cannot' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 185

[How should a student dress in a practice job interview?](#)

Popularity: 182

[How do you answer 'How do you handle criticism' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 180

[How do you answer 'What are your goals' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 172

[How do you answer 'What contributions can you make to this company' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 172

[What do you do if you do not hear back from an interviewer?](#)

Popularity: 171

[How do you answer 'Why do you want this position' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 167

[How do you answer 'How do you plan a typical day at work' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 165

[How do you research a company?](#)

Popularity: 165

[How do you answer 'What did you think of your last boss' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 157

[If you have a supermarket interview what might be asked in a second interview?](#)

Popularity: 151

[Is it a good idea to keep calling if you haven't been formally rejected and the job is still open?](#)

Popularity: 144

[How do you answer 'Why are you qualified to work here' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 120

[How do you answer 'What do you think is your biggest achievement and why' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 116

[How do you answer 'Describe your strengths' in a job interview?](#)

Popularity: 114

[How do you describe yourself and the role you envision playing in the growth of your potential employer?](#)

Popularity: 109

[How should you answer 'give an example of when you have either given or received good customer service'?](#)

Popularity: 108

[What does an employer want to hear if they ask what you consider to be most important when working with customers?](#)

Popularity: 105

[\[Next\]](#) [\[Last Job Interviews page\]](#)