

Job Interview Question and Answers English Tips

Congratulations! You have applied for a job and now you are getting ready for that important job interview. Your English is excellent and you are looking forward to making a good impression on your future (hopefully) boss. Now, you need to make sure that you also have the right type of English for that job interview.

The job interview in English contains specific questions and appropriate answers. It also requires a certain flexibility in your usage of tenses. This feature provides tips on job interview questions and answers in English.

When you walk in the room the very first impression you make on the interviewer can have a great influence on the rest of the interview. It is important that you introduce yourself, shake hands, and are friendly. The first question is often a "breaking the ice" (establish a rapport) type of question. Don't be surprised if the interviewer asks you something like:

- How are you today?
- Did you have any trouble finding us?
- What do you think of the weather lately?

Don't be surprised by the friendly tone. The interviewer wants to put you at ease (help you relax). Answer the question without going into too much detail. The language you use should be simple but polite, for example;

How are you today?

GOOD

I'm fine thank you, and you?

I'm well thank you.

BAD

So, so

OK

Not so well

What is most important?

Talking about your experience and credentials (qualifications) is the most important part of any job interview. Your qualifications include your education from High School on and any special training you may have done in the past. Your experience is any work that you have done that is directly or indirectly related to the job you are applying for.

Education

Remember that your education took place in the past. Therefore you need to use the past tenses, for example:

I attended the University of Helsinki from 1987 to 1993.

I graduated with a degree in agricultural planning.

Etc.

If you are currently a student you should use the following present tenses:

I am currently studying at the University of New York and will graduate with a degree in Economics in the spring.

I am studying English at the Borough Community College.
Etc.

Remember to include any training you may have had when talking about your education. This includes any computer training, correspondence courses, etc. Make sure to mention your English studies. This is very important as English is not your first language and the employer may be concerned about this fact. Assure the employer that you are continuing to improve your English skills by any courses you may be taking, or by saying that you study a certain number of hours a week to improve your skills.

Experience and Qualifications

Work experience is by far the most important topic of any job interview (at least in the United States and Britain). Therefore, it is important to explain what experience you have in detail. Generally, employers want to know exactly what you did and how well you accomplished your tasks. This is not the time to be modest. Be confident, and talk freely about your accomplishments in past employment.

The tenses you should use are the following:

When talking about current employment be careful to use the present perfect or present perfect continuous. This signals that you are still performing these tasks at your current job, for example:

Smith and Co. have employed me for the last 3 years as a salesperson.
I have been creating customer contacts for 6 months.
Etc.

When talking about past employers use the past tenses to signal that you are no longer working for that company, for example:

I was employed by Jackson's from 1989 to 1992 as a clerk.
I worked as a receptionist at the Ritz while I was living in New York.
Etc.

Talking about Responsibilities

Most importantly, you will need to demonstrate your qualifications and skills, which are required for the job you are applying for. The job skills that you have acquired in the past may not have been for the same exact job. Therefore, it is important to show how the capabilities you do have relate to the job you are applying for.

I remember a wonderful example of adapting skills to fit the job desired. I had a student from Moscow who had worked as the manager of an important theater in Moscow. Unfortunately, he had to start from the beginning in New York and therefore wanted to get a job as a rodent exterminator (someone who kills rats!). When asked what kind of experience he had, he replied that, as the manager of the theater, he had had to make sure that the theater was always rodent free and was therefore capable of doing the job well! This is a fantastic example of the type of adaptability most employers in the United States are looking for.

Use the Right Word

Below is a list of great verbs to help you express just exactly what you did with impressive vocabulary. These verbs are used to express responsibilities and tasks performed:

acted
accomplished
adapted
administered
advanced
advised
allocated
analyzed
applied
approved
arbitrated
arranged
assisted
attained
blended
brought
built
carried out
catalogued
changed
classified
collaborated
compared
completed
computed
conceived
conducted
constructed
consulted
contracted
controlled
cooperated
coordinated
corrected
counseled
created
dealt
decided
decreased
defined
delegated
derived
designated
detected
developed
devised
directed
discovered

distributed
documented
doubled
edited
encouraged
engineered
enlarged
escalated
established
estimated
evaluated
examined
expanded
experienced
explored
facilitated
finalized
formulated
founded
functioned
governed
grouped
guided
handled
harmonized
harnessed
headed
identified
implemented
improved
increased
indexed
initiated
inspected
installed
instituted
interpreted
introduced
invented
investigated
justified
led
localized
located
made
managed
maintained
mechanized
merged
moderated
motivated
negotiated
opened

operated
organized
originated
overcame
perceived
performed
pioneered
planned
prepared
presented
presided
processed
programmed
promoted
provided
purchased
raised
recommended
recorded
recruited
rectified
redesigned
repaired
replaced
restored
reversed
reviewed
revised
saved
screened
selected
serviced
set up
solved
sorted
sparked
specified
started
stimulated
strengthened
summarized
supervised
supported
systematized
tested
trained
transacted
transcribed
transformed
tripled
upgraded
validated
varied

verified
vitalized
won
wrote

To describe your skills the following adjectives are useful

accurate
active
adaptable
adept
broad-minded
competent
conscientious
creative
dependable
determined
diplomatic
discreet
efficient
energetic
enterprising
enthusiastic
experienced
fair
firm
genuine
honest
innovative
logical
loyal
mature
methodical
motivated
objective
outgoing
personable
pleasant
positive
practical
productive
reliable
resourceful
self disciplined
sense of humor
sensitive
sincere
successful
tactful
trustworthy

Use these verbs and adjectives and really sell yourself. You only have a few minutes to show how good you really are. By using this precise vocabulary and being

confident can help you make the best impression possible.

These are just the building blocks to a successful interview. Next week I will take a closer look at the actual interview with a dialogue demonstrating successful interview style. [Email](#) me with any questions you may have on taking job interviews in English and in the United States in particular.
of any subjects you would be particularly interested in learning the specific jargon for.