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## Answer competency based interview questions star

I've mentioned a few times in *The Simple Dollar* that I've conducted a significant number of job interviews in the past. Although the jobs I usually pick are technical in nature, the most really impactful (and thus truly valuable) interview issues are not technical issues. A great interview question explores the nature of the person you're hiring – honesty, reliability, ability to communicate intelligently and quickly, and so on. Over time, I've gathered a very good stack of questions that I use in almost every interview. Here are twenty-five of the more reliable tools along with one or two tips for each one showing what makes the right answer – and what makes it wrong. Hopefully, the discussion below provides some insightful questions for interviewees as well as some tips for potential job seekers to think about. If you can easily answer these questions, you won't have to worry much in the interview. In the end, I'll give you a checklist of homework for a potential interview to do before a giant interview. First of all, stupid answers to stupid questions. There are many questions that ask job interviewees are very stupid and have obvious answers to them. What's your biggest weakness? It's not a question that ever gets to really honest answers, and mostly it's just going to draw something fake like I'm a workaholic. Interviewers ask those questions because they are supposed to be, but they usually don't provide useful information. Do you consider yourself successful? The answer is always yes. Are you a team player? The answer is always long-term. What's more important, work or money? Work is always more important. It's easy to identify a pointless interview question – is it easy for you to get a very general and canned answer that doesn't reveal anything about you? If so, don't worry about the question and worry about the ones that really matter. Tell me about yourself. It basically just serves to make the person comfortable and gives me a chance to figure out how they talk. It's a question that every interviewee should be ready to answer, so they should be able to deliver a permanent answer here. Have something clear in your head before you go through the door. The best answer highlights aspects of yourself that make you stand out from Joe Average in a positive way. Make a list of the four or five largest, then work it to a thirty-second bit.2 Tell me what you know about us. This question simply tries to determine if the person being interviewed has done their homework. An exceptional candidate will be able to deliver a lot of information to the company, but mostly it eliminates people who don't even bother not to have minimal control – these are the people we don't want. In other words, before you go to an interview, find out what the organization is.3 What distinguishes you from other people who are applying for this job? The answer is usually already known to the interviewer biased again, but it's a chance to actually sell yourself. Most interviewers usually sit back and see how well they do. Occasionally, surprises can be good here, but it can be tricky – if it's something that should have been on your resume, why wasn't it on your resume? You'd better know what's cream in your resume's crop and just list it.4 Describe to me the position you're looking for. It's a homework issue too, but it also gives some clues to the perspective the person brings to the table. The best preparation you can do is read the job description and repeat it in your own words so that you can do so seamlessly in the interview.5 Why do you care about this position? It's actually some kind of trick question because it's just a way to re-ask the second question (what does the company know) and fourth (what do you know about the situation). This is because he says that people give frivolous answers to questions (things like because I'm a person) or that they think about things and give a real question. It's a good question to come up with answers in advance – basically, just come up with a few things that seem interesting to you about your company and your situation and the reasons why you're interested.6 Which aspect of this position puts you in the most indissoluble position? Most people think it's some kind of filter, but it's rarely used that way. It's actually an honest question. No one on earth like every aspect of every possible job – it's just not in us. Place? Timesheet? People? Is the company too big? Is the company too small? Honesty really works here – I tend to hear a real cause of discomfort (especially the one that comes with real-world observation of the company) as a cliché that isn't really unpleasant at all. A good way to answer something like this: I've never worked for such a big company before or heard some strange things about corporate culture or the idea of working for a startup at such an early stage makes me nervous.7 What was the greatest success in your last job?8 What was the biggest mistake at your last job? It is usually good to pair these issues, but the most important is the biggest failure. The best candidate is usually someone who admits to being made a disaster out of something (they're fairly honest and willing to acknowledge mistakes) and that they have learned from it, an incredibly important trait.9 Tell me about the best supervisor you've ever been with.10 Tell me about the worst supervisor I've ever had. These two questions simply seek to figure out what driving style will work best for this person, and also whether this person is likely to treat people. Let's say I work for an organization with a very loose, connected governance structure that if that's the case, I want to hear that the best boss is very hands-off or that the worst boss was the micromanager. On the other hand, if you've come from a strict hierarchical organization, you might want to see the exact opposite – the best boss that has strong guidance and a good relationship, or the worst boss that's basically left the applicant to blow the wind. The best approach is to respond to this as honestly as possible – the interviewer will have a good idea of corporate culture, and frankly, if you try to slip into a company where you don't meet the culture, you'll have a very hard time fitting in and succeeding. These questions can be articulated as what driving style works for you. Another tip: select the positives of all bosses to discuss. Never change the interview on anyone's holiday. The worst boss should have a very small number of specific mistakes, and they are mostly related to different expectations from you, not the wrong character traits. Bashing someone during an interview just reflects badly on you, so don't jump on the ball.11 Tell me about the hardest project you've ever encountered. The interviewer usually doesn't care what the exact project is. The question most looking to see if you've faced serious difficulty and how you defeated it. For most people, it's not their greatest success or biggest failure, it's something they've turned from a likely failure into some kind of success.12 What do you think are the important future trends in this area? It works well for individual positions - technical as well, and leadership as well - and does well for others. It should be pretty obvious what type of job you're applying for, so that this question can be asked. If that's the case, it's easy to prepare – just spend half an hour reading blogs in the areas you're applying for and getting some food.13 Have you done anything in the past year to learn new financial-wellness/things/improve yourself in relation to the requirements for this job? It's a big deal with headlights on your question, as most people just don't have an answer. The best way to deal with this issue is simply to always spend some time working on your skills in any way you can. Write open source code. Attend Toastmasters. Let's take an hour. If you make an effort to improve every year, you will not only have a strong RESUME, but this issue will not be a problem.14 Tell me about your dream job. Don't ever say that job. Don't ever say another specific job. Both responses are very bad - the first sends the warning flags flying, and the second says that the person is not really interested in sticking around. Instead, stick to specific properties - name aspects of what would make your dream work. Some of them have to be the same as what the company makes available, but in fact it's best not to fit in perfectly.15 Have you ever had a serious conflict in a previous job? How did it work out? This mostly looks for honesty and realization that most conflicts on two sides have a story. It also opens the door to people with poor characters to start bashing their former employer, which leaves a bad taste in most interviewer's mouths. The best answer is usually to tell the story, but to show that there are two sides to this story and that you have learned from the experience to try to see the other person's point of view.16 What did you learn from your last position? While it's ok to list your technical skill or two here, especially if your work is very technical, it's very important to mention some non-technical stuff. I learned how to work in a team environment, having mostly working in an individual environment is a good one, for example. You can't have a job where you haven't learned anything, and the interviewer expects you to have learned at least a few things in your previous job that will help you with your current job.17 Why did you leave your last position? Mostly, it's looking for the conviction of the character. A strong, concrete response to any reasonable kind is good here. I wanted to move on, not a strong answer. Downsizing is a good answer, as it is the desire to look for specific new challenges (but specifically, what challenges you want to face). It minimizes the actual discussion of his previous position, as he will be very close to a great opportunity to start beating his previous position.18 Tell me about a proposal you made at a previous job. Since these responses tend to be heavily involved in the peculiarities of the previous position, the details are not really important. What's most important is that you're really involved in making a suggestion and helping to make it happen, ideally with some success stories behind it. Having this indication that you are willing to do the same in this situation, which can do nothing but improve your body. The not being here has some kind of response is usually a significant negative, but you don't do or die negative.19 Have you been asked to leave your position yet? Tell me about the experience. Obviously, it's great if you can answer no, but it's usually a deal breaker if the answer is yes. In fact the yes answer can be turned into a positive – it's a great way to show that you've made mistakes and learned valuable lessons from them. Be honest, no matter what happens, but don't spend time beating up the people who let you go. Don't be afraid to speak up when you're angry about what has happened.20 Did you have to fire anyone yet? Tell me about the experience. The answer is that it's not looking for you to have empathy with others. Take a deep breath or an easy exercise. It shouldn't have to be a choice or an easy exercise. That's what you handle and survived. Don't beat up the person you fired, as clinical as possible for the reasons.21 Are you applying for another job? If you're not, I'm looking for that. But people who try so hard to feed me a series of meaningless answers are not. The best way to respond is to say, Yes, in the same way as an interview off paper. We're both trying to find the right place for what we need and what we need. I'm not really sure if I'm qualified for this job. I'm actually satisfied with the current situation, but there have been some compelling aspects of this work that make me want to keep track of it and list those aspects.22 How much do you think this position should pay? For many, it is surprising that this is often not a wage negotiation. In most cases, the person you're interviewing has little control over the last payment you get. It's usually used for reality checking. If you're hiring a janitor and expect \$20K, you'll probably raise your RESUME than and there. At the same time, a highly skilled programmer selling themselves for \$20K could start off with some warning bells. A good answer is usually a goal or a bit on the high side, but not really low or insanely high. I get an idea of the requested rate for the position before I go to the interview and then demand about 30% more.23 Where do you see yourself in your career in five years? This is something of a junk issue, but useful in some respects because it filters people's initiative. The person who answers something along the lines of I'll be successful in this situation is that I'm interviewed either not incredibly motivated to improve themselves or not completely honest. I prefer an answer that involves either promotion or some level of entrepreneurship – powerful organizations thrive on starters. The only problem with potential interviewees is that some companies – weak ones, in general – don't want starters and are particularly afraid of people who dream of becoming entrepreneurs. Talking about promotion so it's usually the safest bet if you're not familiar with the culture, but I personally love it when people are interviewed to talk about entrepreneurship – that means that they're the type that's going to be intense in their success.24 What are the long-term goals – say, fifteen years down the road? It's a big late question because it tells you whether a person is a long-term thinker or not. People who plan for the long term tend to be in a good, mature mental state and often become stronger workers than those who do not have long-term plans.25 Do you have any questions about this job? Not having questions is a sign that you're not really interested in the situation. Thus, your task as an interviewer is to have some questions already in mind when you walk through the door. Most interviewers are happy to answer most of the things you ask them - just make sure the questions are intelligent, though. Do your homework. Here are the things you need to do before each interview which handle almost all of the above issues. Work Work very brief description of yourself that you can bust out of every interview. The great trick is to mention things that are unusual or even unique to you, but stick to things that are either positive or (worst) neutral – keep the negatives to yourself unless they're tied to a big positive. A 30-second line will do. Research the company by visiting its website and find out exactly what they are doing. Good things to read include the company's latest annual report and Wikipedia entry (if they're small). If it's a startup, just try to add it as you can from any source you can get, but if it's really a small startup, don't sweat it if you can't find much information. Research the situation by reading job posting very carefully and looking up every piece that you don't know. You may also want to update yourself to see what the cutting edge areas of the job ad are reading a little if you're not familiar with it – blogs and news sites are a good place to start. You should also get a good grip on your regular starting salary for this type of job looking around for similar jobs near your location. He knows how to match the situation by having the piece of company details found and the job listing and matching them to his skills. Make five of these, 'cause these are going to be silver bullets during the interview. Also, identify at least one thing that makes you uncomfortable with your company and position and think about why it makes you uncomfortable. Always work to improve your skills by participating in activities that hone the key skills you need in the area where you are. Are you in PR? Join a Toastmasters group. Are you an administrative assistant? Do volunteer work for an organization that can use your skills but do things in other ways (the same goes for many traders). Are you a programmer? Contribute to an open source project. Have some questions about the position when you walk through the door. This gives a strong impression during the interview that you are really interested in that situation, which is a big positive for you. Questions of all kinds are good here, but the best ones usually deal with the corporate culture and technical specifics of the work. Don't beat up your last job. If there are specific things in your last job that really, really irritates you, spend some time trying to think positive about it. I know when to go into that previous job probably discuss at least to some extent and be prepared to discuss it without being negative. Look positive and also be able to tell the reasons for leaving as clinically possible. Be honest, above all else. If you put things out of the interview and slip at all, the interviewer will throw the application in the trash. Instead, just try to focus on the positives you already have. If you are For the interview, there's something the organization loves about you. Don't waste time making things up.