

Questions to Ace

I. Can you tell me a little about yourself?

Don't give your complete employment (or personal) history. Instead, start off with the 2-3 specific accomplishments or experiences that you most want the interviewer to know about, then wrap up talking about how prior experience has positioned you for this specific role.

2. What are your greatest professional strengths?

Be accurate (share your true strengths, not those you think the interviewer wants to hear); be relevant (choose your strengths that are most targeted to this particular position); and be specific (for example, instead of "people skills," choose "persuasive communication" or "relationship building"). Then, follow up with an example of how you've demonstrated these traits in a professional setting.

3. What do you consider to be your weaknesses?

Your interviewer is gauging your self-awareness and honesty. Strike a balance by thinking of something that you struggle with but you're working to improve. For example, maybe you've never been strong at public speaking, but you've recently volunteered to run meetings to help you be more comfortable when addressing a crowd.

4. Can you tell me about a challenge or conflict you've faced at work, and how you dealt with it?

Your interviewer wants to get a sense of how you will respond to conflict. Focus on how you handled the situation professionally and productively, and ideally closing with a happy ending, like how you came to a resolution or compromise.

5. Why are you leaving your current job?

Keep things positive - you have nothing to gain by being negative about your past employers. Instead, frame things in a way that shows that you're eager to take on new opportunities and that the role you're interviewing for is a better fit for you than your current or last position. If you were let go, keep it simple: "Unfortunately, I was let go," is a totally okay answer.

