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## How to write about yourself for a new job

"Tell me about yourself." Be honest, in reading that, did you automatically start to feel a little anxious? There's a reason this question (though really more of a statement!) is so difficult to tackle. The "tell me about yourself" interview question can be nerve-wracking because it's so open-ended—and this often makes job seekers feel unsure of how to answer. "It's important to remember that the reason this question is asked is because employers are really looking to see how you would fit into the specific role at the company," says Toni Frana, a FlexJobs career coach. Successfully responding to this question involves tying your answer in with the role you're applying to and preparing a response ahead of time. Here's how! How to Answer "Tell Me About Yourself" - Relate Your Answer to the Job at Hand "Tell me about yourself" is probably better phrased as, "Tell me what brought you to apply for this job, and some of the main qualifications that make you stand out. And maybe throw in something that helps showcase your personality." But that's obviously too long a statement to make, so employers often shorten it to a much broader question. No matter how a hiring manager phrases it, focus on these four aspects in your answer: Your most recent background that is applicable to the job Your top qualifications for the job What makes you interested in the company - Keep Your Answer Short, to About 30 Seconds or Less Start by addressing those four subjects in a draft version of your answer. Once you've got a rough version on paper (or screen), it's time to start narrowing, focusing, and distilling. You're aiming for about 30 seconds from start to finish. (Yes, it should be that quick!) Time yourself to find out how long you're talking, and you'll see that 30 seconds is just about right. Any more than that, and it can start to sound like rambling. It might also help to remind yourself that this is just an introduction to you. During the rest of the interview, even if it's just an initial screening, you'll have further chances to showcase more skills, qualifications, and personality. So don't try to pack it all in at the beginning. - Practice Your Responses Without sounding too rehearsed, you'll want to have a clear understanding of how to answer this question. Practice will help you to. Build your confidence, so you're not shaken or nervous if you're put on the spot. Solidify your own understanding of who you are and what you can offer. Focus your answer so you don't ramble. Show exactly how you think your path has prepared you to work for this particular company. But in order to practice something, you've got to know what you're saying in the first place! Below are three examples of how to answer "tell me about yourself." 3 Sample Answers for "Tell Me About Yourself" 1. Go Step by Step "I'm an innovative recruitment manager with 8 years of experience managing all aspects of employee prospecting—from resume screening and phone screening to benefits—for Fortune 500 companies. I have spent the last 4 years developing my skills, leading to performance recognition and two promotions. I love vetting candidates and determining how they align with an organization's culture and business goals. And although I enjoy my current role, I feel I'm now ready for a more challenging assignment and this position really excites me." 2. Think "Past, Present, Future" Using this simple three-part formula can help you craft a professional, informative answer to "Tell me about yourself." "Well, I'm currently an account executive at Smith, where I handle our top performing client. Before that, I worked at an agency where I was on three different major national healthcare brands. And while I really enjoyed the work that I did, I'd love the chance to dig in much deeper with one specific healthcare company, which is why I'm so excited about this opportunity with Metro Health Center." 3. Answer With the Company in Mind Do some research ahead of time to best know about the company and how your specific expertise and strengths can help them. Putting yourself in the employer's shoes is a great way to stay focused when answering this question. Here's an example: "I was born and raised in this county and have an excellent knowledge of the area, as well as Central and XYZ counties. During the last 9 years with the ABC Freight Company, I have progressed through positions of Package Loader, Courier, Dispatcher, and Team Lead. In my most recent position, I have had the opportunity to complete numerous management training programs, provide supervision and leadership to all positions within the station, and participate in special projects in conjunction with Senior and District Managers. I enjoy being a Lead and the opportunity to empower and motivate my team. Last year I was awarded 'Lead I' for greatest team gains in productivity. I believe this experience and training has prepared me to take the next step and pursue a management position with you." What Not to Say When Answering "Tell Me About Yourself" - Don't Regurgitate Your Resume It may be tempting to nearly read off your entire resume, but don't. You can generally mention where your career started, some jobs along the way, and your most current role, but now is not the time to list them one by one or to talk about every task you had at each job. As we said before, keep it succinct and about 30 seconds long. - Don't Focus on Unrelated Jobs Depending on where you're at in your career, your career history may go pretty far back. If your first job out of college isn't related to your current career, don't mention it. Or, if you've had a career change, you can opt to only focus on the roles that directly relate to your new career area. Mentioning unrelated roles could be a distraction and lead an employer to wonder if you're focused on or experienced for the job you're applying to. - Don't Get Too Personal Steer clear of any personal topics, such as if you do or don't have kids, your marital status, or your religious or political affiliation. Not only are these illegal for an employer to ask you about, but they're not relevant to the job and could even cause your interviewer to discriminate. Want Interview Help? Practicing your answers to tough interview questions and getting guidance on how to best present yourself can make a world of difference in landing a job. FlexJobs members have exclusive access to one-on-one career coaching to help you practice in a mock interview. With their expert advice, you can tweak and perfect your answer to any interview question. Ready to get started? Learn about all the benefits of membership! Hero Images / Getty Images You don't have to follow up with every single individual, but after you are introduced to people who you will be working with closely, it's always a good idea to send along a note. It doesn't have to be complicated: Hi Susan, It was great to meet you today! Thank you for the background information you provided. I look forward to working with you, and please do reach out if you can think of anything else that would be useful to me or if you have any questions. Best, Janna Writing a cover letter is essential when applying for jobs. This is the perfect way to express how your specific skills are relevant to the open position. Wow your future employer with this simple cover letter example format Write a First Draft Writing a first draft makes your letter concise and professional, states The Balance Careers. Organize your thoughts by making a list of what you're trying to convey. Make sure you prioritize certain aspects like your previous job experience and why you would be a good fit for the position. Clearly state what position you're interested in and why. Think about why you're applying and what caught your eye about this specific position. Your cover letter will be easier to write after your thoughts are collected and organized. Customize Your Salutation When writing a salutation, make sure you know who you are writing to. Is this person the owner of the company or a Human Resources administrator? If you're not sure, research the company to find out. Addressing your cover letter to a specific person shows initiative and attention to detail. After your salutation, start your letter with a short introduction of yourself. This gives future employers insight into who you are and the purpose of your cover letter. Write Intentionally Your cover letter should be no more than one page, so keep your points brief. Clearly state what position you are interested in and why. Explain why you are a good fit for the company because of your past job experience. If you have no similar job experience, let the employer know why you are changing career paths. Expand on your skills and give specific examples of how that skill set helped you at your last position. Name projects you've worked on and show results. Close Your Letter End your cover letter with a brief sentence and sign off. Thank the employer for their time and express your interest towards the job again. Let them know you'll follow up with them if you do not hear back within a week and leave your contact information. Sign off with a professional farewell and leave room for a signature if sending a hard copy. Edit and Proofread As you finish writing your cover letter, make sure you take time to edit and proofread your document. Make sure it's structured in a professional format with the company's information, the salutation and introduction, the body of the letter, a brief closing sentence and farewell. Check for spelling and grammar mistakes to ensure a formal result. Make sure all names are spelled correctly, as well. MORE FROM QUESTIONS ANSWERED.NET



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