

How to Answer Interview Questions

By Michael Sterling

Here are eight of the most commonly asked (and basic) interviewing questions. Do yourself and the prospective employer a favor, and give them some thought before the interview occurs.

- Why do you want this job?
- Why do you want to leave your current job?
- What are your personal and professional goals?
- What do you like most about your current job?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What do you like least about your current job?

The last question is probably the hardest to answer: *What do you like least about your current job?*

I've found that rather than pointing out the faults of others (as in, "I can't stand the office politics," or, "My boss is a jerk"), it's best to place the burden on yourself ("I feel I'm ready to exercise a new set of professional muscles," or, "The type of technology I'm interested in isn't available to me now."). By answering in this manner, you'll avoid pointing the finger at someone else, or coming across as a whiner or complainer. It does no good to speak negatively about others.

I suggest you think through the answers to the eight questions above for two reasons.

First, it won't help your chances any to hem and haw over fundamental issues such as these. (The answers you give to these types of questions should be no-brainers.)

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And second, the questions will help you evaluate your career choices before spending time and energy on an interview. If you don't feel comfortable with the answers you come up with, maybe the new job isn't right for you.