

Internship Interview - Tips & Possible Questions

1. **Arrive for Your Interview About 10 Minutes in Advance**
2. **Turn Your Cell Phone OFF or to Vibrate & keep it away!**
3. **First Impressions Have a High Impact**
 - Professional/ Business Casual dress code.
 - Long Pants-No sweats, no jeans. Nice shirt.
 - Shoes-Closed toe and comfortable
 - Mild Perfume, Simple jewelry
 - Hair-pulled back and/or neatly groomed
4. **Bring a copy of your resume for the interviewer**

The following are possible questions you may be asked that you will want to be prepared for.

Some of the simpler questions could be:

- What are your favorite classes?
- What are your favorite subjects?
- What are your career goals?
- Are you involved in any extracurricular activities?
- Why are you interested in doing an internship?
- Are you okay working nights and weekends?
- If your teachers were here, what would they say about you?
- Are you planning on going to college after you graduate?
- If so, do you know what you want to study?

The following are more thought-provoking questions that you want to be prepared for. Included is some advice about answering them plus some sample answers.

Tell me about yourself (almost every interviewer will start off with this question).

The question is a way to break the ice and make you feel more comfortable during the interview process. It's also a way for the interviewer to get insight into your personality to help determine if you're a good fit for the job.

- Sharing too much or too little information isn't a good idea. The interviewer doesn't want to know everything about you, but disclosing too little can make him or her wonder why you aren't more open. Read on for advice on how to respond to this question — and, importantly what not to say in your answer.
- One option for your response is to share some of your interests which don't relate directly to your career. Examples might include a hobby which you are passionate about like quilting, astronomy, chess, choral singing, golf, skiing, tennis, or antiques.
- Interests like long-distance running or yoga which help to represent your healthy, energetic side are worth mentioning.
- Pursuits like being an avid reader, solving crossword puzzles, or brain teasers, will help to showcase your intellectual leaning.
- Volunteer work will demonstrate the seriousness of your character and commitment to the welfare of your community.
- Be ready to share three or four of the personal qualities, skills, and areas of expertise which would help you to excel in the job for which you are interested.
- Make a list of your strengths before you go into the interview, so you know what you will share. Look at the job description and match it with your skills.
- It's important to avoid any references to topics that would cause concern about your ethics, character, productivity, or work ethic. You also don't need to share personal information about your family.

What motivates you?

When you answer this question, be honest — but also keep your audience in mind.

While you may be motivated by receiving a regular paycheck, that answer is not very inspiring from an interviewer's perspective. It can be hard to think of a good answer for this question on the spot since it requires a bit of self-reflection.

Sample answers:

- I like to be part of a team with a lot of bright people who have interesting ideas.
- I love preparing and giving presentations. Being in front of an audience and seeing them respond to my ideas is a real thrill, and making that connection is inspiring and exciting.
- Results drive me — I like it when I have a concrete goal to meet, and enough time to figure out a strong strategy for accomplishing it.
- I'm motivated by digging into data. Give me a spreadsheet and questions, and I'm eager to figure out what's driving the numbers.
- Learning new things has always been a great motivator for me. In every job/class/situation I've had or been in, I believe I've always been able to learn something new, or discover a new way to look at a problem.
- I'm very deadline-driven and enjoy having the opportunity to figure out a new organizational system that will help keep me on track to meet the deadline.
- I like providing mentoring and coaching to my classmates. I'm everyone's go-to person when they have a question or need a second opinion, and I am always happy to help.
- I am motivated by the desire to meet a deadline. Setting and reaching deadlines gives me such a sense of accomplishment. I love creating an organized schedule for completing a task and achieving my deadlines.

Do you prefer to work independently or on a team?

When the interviewer asks, "Do you prefer to work independently or on a team?" during a job interview, he or she wants to know if you are a team player or whether you would rather work on your own. Some people do their best work as part of a group, while others prefer working independently. A question like this aims to assess your personality and your preferred method of completing a task.

Examples of the Best Answers

- I am equally comfortable working as a member of a team and independently.
- I truly enjoy the variety of being able to work by myself on some projects and a team at other times.
- I have experience with independent and team-based work, and I see the value in both approaches.
- In high school, I enjoyed playing soccer and performing with the marching band. Each required a different kind of team play, but the overall goal of learning to be a member of a group was invaluable.
- I am comfortable working alone and in a group depending on the situation. If the task is easy enough to tackle on my own without requiring collective brainstorming, I am happy to work on my own. However, if the assignment is a high priority one or is too much for one person to handle, I welcome working with a team to tackle the project together. In my experience, most projects require a combination of independent work and brainstorming depending on their various elements.

What is your greatest weakness? (Never say you have no weaknesses, everyone has them).

What's the best way to talk about weaknesses at job interviews? When asked about your weaknesses, it's important to respond carefully. You don't want to cast any doubt on your ability to do the job. However, you also don't want to come across as arrogant or dishonest by claiming that you don't have any weaknesses.

There are several different ways to answer when you're asked during a job interview what your greatest weakness is. You can mention skills that aren't critical for the job, discuss skills you have improved on, or turn a negative into a positive.

Examples of the Best Answers

It's important to note that the term "weakness" isn't used in the sample answers - you always want to focus on the positive when interviewing.

- When I'm working on a project, I don't want just to meet deadlines. Rather, I prefer to complete the project well ahead of when it is due. While this means I never miss a deadline, it also means that sometimes I can find myself rushed when I'm working. I've since learned to slow down, be more patient and give each project the careful attention it deserved.
- I like to make sure that my work is perfect, so I tend to spend a little too much time checking it. However, I've come to a good balance by setting up a system to ensure everything is done the first time correctly. I also time myself when I work to prevent myself from spending too much time on one project, and guaranteeing I'll have enough time to get to the rest of my work.
- I've learned to make my perfectionism work to my advantage. I have become proficient at meeting deadlines, and with my attention to detail, I know my work is accurate.
- Numbers have not always been my strong suit. Fortunately, I have found websites like Khan Academy which has helped hone my number crunching skills (note: make sure you have used the website in case you are asked how it works).
- I used to like to work on one project to its completion before starting on another, but I've learned to work on many projects at the same time, and I think it allows me to be more creative and effective in each one.

Best Questions for YOU to ask at the Internship Interview

Before going to the internship interview, research the business that is interviewing you.

Write up a few questions to ask them about their business - Questions to Demonstrate Your Interest in the Company

- What would some of the tasks be during the internship?
- What does your onboarding process consist of?
- How do you go about training a new associate?
- How would you describe a typical day in this position?
- What is the company's management style?
- Who does this position report to?
- How many people work in this office/department?
- Do you have a policy for helping new members of the team get on board?
- What are the biggest challenges of this job?
- What are the biggest rewards of the job and working for this company?

After the interview, send a thank-you email to the interviewer (you should have gotten a business card from them), thanking them for attending and taking the time to speak with you.

Follow-Up Email Example

Subject Line: Evan Jones Internship Interview Follow-up

Dear Mr. Williams,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about the opportunity for an internship with your organization. It was exciting for me to get a glimpse of [Name of firm's] company culture and mission during our conversation. I'd like to reaffirm my interest in the entry-level internship position you described to me.

I have attached an updated copy of the resume I gave you during the interview, and am happy to provide references at your request. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Evan Jones
555-111-1234
evan.jones@xyzmail.com

When writing the email, remember the following "DON'T'S":

- Do not: Try to be cute or funny.
- Do not: Use your smartphone to write and send this message. It is too easy for unintended changes to be made by the software when autocorrect "fixes" the errors it finds. This kind of changes can make you look inept and unable to use something as simple as email.
- Do not: Use a silly address email address like MillieJMBA@, SurferDude1@, or other unprofessional address that will not connect with your application or resume.
- Do not: Use @AOL, @Hotmail, @MSN, and @Yahoo -- those addresses look "old" to most people now. Do NOT use those email addresses for your job search in the future!
- Do not: Try to be casual or informal by using a subject such as "Hi!" or "Greetings!" These subjects have two major problems: They don't look professional, and, they are often caught in spam filters and never seen by a human.
- Do not: Use unprofessional or informal language.
- Do not: No emoticons :-(and no texting language (LOL).
- Do not: Close informally with language like -- See you soon!

Remember: Dress for success, Look them in the eyes, Speak confidently, Be prepared