

The Top 100 Interview Questions

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These are the hundred questions most likely to come up, pulled from a bank of 536 across 29 themes that I built over 25 years of hiring in healthcare and biotech, and as a business owner interviewing hundreds of candidates.

Each question carries two numbers. Likelihood is how often it actually comes up. Difficulty is how hard it is to answer well. A question can be very likely and still catch people out, and those are the ones worth practising first.

Do not memorise answers to these. Work out what each one is really asking, then answer it with whatever experience you actually have. That is the whole method.

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Motivation & Interest in Role/Company

- 1 Why are you interested in this position?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 2 Why do you want to work here?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 3 What do you know about our company?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 3/5 Light experience helps
- 4 Why should we hire you?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed
- 5 How did you hear about this position?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 1/5 No experience needed
- 6 What interests you most about this role?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 7 What attracted you to apply for this job?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 8 Why do you think you'd be a good fit here specifically?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 9 Why do you want to leave your current job?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 Significant experience helps
- 10 What made you choose this field?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 11 What's your understanding of what this role involves?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 Light experience helps
- 12 What excites you about this opportunity?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Introduction & Personal Branding

- 13 Tell me about yourself.
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 14 Walk me through your resume.
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 2/5 Light experience helps
- 15 Give me a summary of your background.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 Light experience helps
- 16 What makes you unique compared to other candidates?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 17 What are you passionate about outside of school or work?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 18 What's a word you'd use to describe your work ethic?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

19 Tell me something about yourself that isn't on your application.
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

20 How would you describe yourself in three words?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

No Experience / Transferable Skills

21 What experience do you have that would translate to this job?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

22 Tell me about a time from school, sports, or a club that shows you can handle this role.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

23 You don't have much work experience - why should we still consider you?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed

24 What have you learned from being part of a sports team, club, or organization?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

25 What responsibilities have you had, even if they weren't a "real job"?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

26 Tell me about a leadership role you've had in school or your community.
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

27 What did you learn from your involvement in extracurricular activities?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

28 Tell me about a time you had a responsibility that other people depended on you for.
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Teamwork & Collaboration

29 Tell me about a time you worked well as part of a team.
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

30 Tell me about a group project you're proud of.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

31 What role do you naturally take on in a group?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

32 What do you do when you and a teammate disagree on how to approach a task?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

33 Describe a time you had to work with someone whose working style was different from yours.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed

34 How do you handle working with someone who isn't pulling their weight?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 Light experience helps

Logistics & Availability

- 35 What days and hours are you available to work?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 1/5 No experience needed
- 36 When can you start?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 1/5 No experience needed
- 37 Are you open to working weekends or holidays?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 1/5 No experience needed
- 38 Do you have reliable transportation to get to work?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 1/5 No experience needed
- 39 How many hours a week are you looking to work?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 1/5 No experience needed

Failure, Mistakes & Setbacks

- 40 Describe a mistake you made and what you learned from it.
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 41 Tell me about a time you failed.
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed
- 42 Describe a time things didn't go according to plan.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 43 Tell me about a setback and how you bounced back.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 44 Tell me about a time you didn't meet a goal you set for yourself.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed

Career Goals & Growth

- 45 Where do you see yourself in five years?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 46 What do you hope to gain from this role?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 47 What are your long-term career goals?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 48 What skills are you hoping to develop in this role?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 49 What made you choose this career path?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Conflict & Difficult People

- 50 Tell me about a time you disagreed with a coworker, classmate, or teammate.
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed

- 51 How do you handle conflict?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 52 Tell me about a time you had to deal with a difficult person.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed
- 53 Describe a time you disagreed with a supervisor, teacher, or coach.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 Light experience helps
- 54 Describe a time you had to work with someone you didn't get along with.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed

Time Management & Prioritization

- 55 Tell me about a time you had to juggle multiple priorities.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 56 How do you prioritize your tasks when everything feels urgent?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 57 Tell me about a time you had a tight deadline. How did you manage it?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 58 Describe your system for staying organized.
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 59 How do you balance school, work, and personal commitments?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Strengths & Weaknesses

- 60 What is your greatest strength?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 61 What is your greatest weakness?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed
- 62 What strengths do you bring to a team?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 63 What's an area you're actively working to improve?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

Problem-Solving & Critical Thinking

- 64 Tell me about a time you solved a difficult problem.
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 65 Describe a time you had to think on your feet.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 66 Tell me about a time you found a creative solution to a challenge.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 67 How do you approach a problem you've never seen before?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

Leadership & Initiative

- 68 Tell me about a time you took initiative without being asked.
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 69 What's an example of you going above and beyond what was expected?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 70 Describe a time you led a group or project.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 Light experience helps
- 71 Describe a time you saw a problem and fixed it before anyone asked you to.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

Customer Service & Public Interaction

- 72 What does good customer service mean to you?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 73 How would you handle an angry or frustrated customer?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 Light experience helps
- 74 Tell me about a time you went above and beyond for someone you were helping.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 Light experience helps
- 75 Tell me about a time you dealt with an upset customer.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 Light experience helps

Academic & Extracurricular

- 76 Why did you choose your major (or your intended field of study)?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 77 What extracurricular activities are you most involved in?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 1/5 No experience needed
- 78 What was your favorite class and why?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 79 Tell me about a class project you're proud of.
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Adaptability & Handling Change

- 80 Tell me about a time you had to adapt to a big change.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 81 How do you handle unexpected changes to your plans?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 82 Describe a time you had to learn something completely new quickly.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 83 Tell me about a time you had to step outside your comfort zone.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

Stress, Pressure & Resilience

- 84 How do you handle stress?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 85 Tell me about a time you performed well under pressure.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 86 Describe a high-pressure situation and how you got through it.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

Self-Awareness & Feedback

- 87 How do you handle feedback?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 88 Tell me about a time you received tough feedback. How did you respond?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed
- 89 What kind of environment helps you do your best work?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Communication & Interpersonal Skills

- 90 How would you describe your communication style?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 91 Tell me about a time you had to explain something complicated to someone.
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed

Work Style & Fit

- 92 Do you prefer working independently or on a team?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 93 What type of work environment brings out your best?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Phone Screen / Recruiter Specific

- 94 Can you give me a quick summary of your background?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed
- 95 What are you looking for in your next opportunity?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Situational & Hypothetical Scenarios

- 96 What would you do if you realized you were going to miss a deadline?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 3/5 No experience needed
- 97 What would you do if you disagreed with your manager's decision?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 Light experience helps

Closing Questions

- 98 Do you have any questions for me?
Likelihood 5/5 Difficulty 2/5 No experience needed

Compensation & Offer-Stage

- 99 What are your salary or pay expectations?
Likelihood 4/5 Difficulty 4/5 No experience needed

Background & Basics

- 100 Can you walk me through your education background?
Likelihood 3/5 Difficulty 1/5 No experience needed

What to do with these

Pick five. Not fifty. Work out what each is really testing, then build one real story you could tell for each, using something you have actually done. School, sport, a part-time job and a club all count for more than most people think.

If you want help doing that, the first call is free and runs thirty minutes.

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