



HOW TO ANSWER THIS VERY COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTION

Some interviewers like to keep the interviewee 'on their toes' with unusual or quirky questions, but sometimes even the most simple questions can be tough to answer.

So, tell us a bit about yourself...

Seems simple, right?

In theory, yes – but it's also a big question that can be answered in so many different ways!

The most common mistake people make with this question is providing too much information ie talking through their entire employment history.

Here's the most important thing you need to know:

This simple question is a big opportunity for you.

It's your opportunity to shine.

How you answer this question can make an excellent first impression – and to set the tone for the rest of the interview. It also puts you in the drivers' seat which is great!

There are a couple of different ways you can answer this question:

Approach 1

- Start with the present (ie your most recent job and something you're proud of).
- Touch on the past (ie give some background about how you got to where you are in your career, mentioning previous experience as relevant).
- Talk about the future (a chance to demonstrate your motivation and why you're interested in the job).

Approach 2

- Tell them who you are (starting with what is most impressive and most relevant).
- Tell them why you are qualified/suitable (3–4 key points, leave the details for later).
- Tell them why you are here (1–2 sentences about your interest in the job).

Approach 3

- Start with one of your strengths you know the interviewer will be impressed with.
- Tell them how that strength has helped your current or previous employer.
- Provide some data/metrics about what you achieved with that strength.
- Tell them how this job will help you grow your skills even more.

While this question is an opportunity to tell your unique story, make sure you're succinct!

Don't

- Give a long answer that details every job and your entire career history or life story.
- Start your answer by referring to the beginning of your career.
- Summarise your resume.
- Be negative about your current employer or previous employers.
- Mention highly personal information (ie political or religious views, marital status, health conditions, children).
- Launch straight in to why you want the job.

Do

- Provide a brief overview of your work experience.
- Focus on recent work examples.
- Align your experience and skills to this specific job.
- Describe your top strengths or 'selling points' for this specific job.
- Inject a bit of your personality into your answer.
- Demonstrate your interest in the job.
- Write down some key points for your answer (don't memorise them).