

Questions about you

- Q What are your strengths?
What makes you the best candidate for the job?

What are they looking for?
Analytical skills and self-awareness – show confidence but not arrogance

- A Play back attributes that you know they are looking for e.g. adaptable, hard-working, positive, fast decision-making, self-motivated, persistent, keen to learn, team player. Give examples of when you demonstrated these qualities.
Example: 'I am keen to tackle challenges that take me out of my comfort zone, for example when...'
Do include an example of teamwork, because employers will want to feel that you would fit in with others.
Example: 'I enjoy being part of a team, working towards the same goal, for example...'
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- Q What are your weaknesses?

What are they looking for?
Analytical skills and self-awareness – give a confident response; try to be honest and believable.

- A Don't volunteer more than 2 or 3.
It's safest to stick to work-related skills – but nothing that is a key requirement for the job!
- Answer in a positive way - describe weaknesses that could also be perceived as strengths e.g. straight talking, impatient if people are not pulling their weight, can't say no when people ask for help, rather talkative, a bit impulsive - make decisions quickly.
- Or choose something that you are taking steps to redress e.g. if your presentation skills are weak, explain that you are attending a course, or you have been practising etc.

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Q What are your career aspirations?

What are they looking for?
Do you have the drive to progress? Do you have a long-term commitment to the company?

A Show knowledge about the role and career paths within the organisation.

Short term goals - To improve on key skills, to enable you to become effective in the role and progress further - give examples.

Long term goal - To gain XYZ qualifications (if applicable) and achieve a respectable position within the organisation – give specific example.

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Q Describe a specific contribution or achievement you are most proud of and explain why.

What are they looking for?
What drives you and what you particularly value.
Would you be a good fit for the organisation?

A This is a chance to let them see more about you as a person. Choose an achievement from any part of your life, but keep in mind that it should be something that wasn't easy to achieve and that sets you apart from others. For example, raised £2000 for charity by organising an event, completed a marathon, overcame my fear of heights by climbing a volcano etc.

Show how the accomplishment exhibits personal attributes or values that resonate with their business e.g. I believe that my initiative and determination would help me perform well at XYZ.

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Q What are your main interests?

What are they looking for?
Are you a well-rounded person?
Would you be a good fit with the team/clients/organisation?

A Describe interests in a way that highlights relevant positive qualities, helping to position yourself as a good fit for the role and company culture. Evidence of personal development, experience, responsibility or transferable skills acquired through your interests/activities, can give you that extra edge. (See CV Interests & Activities and examples of how to sell yourself).