



Interviewers will ask you a variety of questions to help them learn about you. The questions will focus on different topics and themes depending on the position they are looking to fill, organization, field, interview stage, and the interviewer's role.

In addition to “tell me about yourself”, the **interviewer** may ask **you** any of these questions. Come prepared to communicate your responses thoughtfully and effectively to these common interview questions.

THE JOB

- Why do you want this job?
- What specifically interests you about our department/organization?
- What are some specific things that you hope to learn and contribute through this role?

CAREER GOALS

- What is your ideal career trajectory?
- What are your short-term goals (3 years) and long-term goals (10 years)?

MORE ABOUT YOU

- Describe yourself in three words.
- What three adjectives best describe your strengths/weaknesses?
- What was your most satisfying accomplishment/greatest satisfaction in life? Greatest failure?
- What does diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) mean to you?

RESEARCH, SKILLS, BACKGROUND

- How would you describe your research/work in 30 seconds?
- What is the significance of your research?
- Do you feel that you have sufficient depth/strength in your discipline?
- What characteristics do you look for when choosing research projects?
- Will your research be fundable? How do you know?

PROJECT MANAGEMENT, PROBLEM-SOLVING

- Describe the organizational system that you use to simultaneously manage multiple projects.
- Share a time when you failed to meet a deadline and how you navigated through that situation.
- Tell us about a time when you engaged in problem-solving during an unexpected challenge.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Describe a time when you were working with a team and your role in the group.
- Share an example of when you and your professor/advisor/supervisor/co-worker had a difference of opinion. How did you navigate the situation?
- How do you prefer to supervise and be supervised?

MENTORING, DEVELOPMENT

- How would you define mentoring? What are your thoughts on its importance?
- What is your approach to recruiting talented students and post-docs to your laboratory?
- What courses/programs would you like to develop?

CURRENT/LAST JOB

- What do/did you enjoy most and least about your current/last position?
- How would your past supervisor describe you?

HR/BENEFITS

- What are your expectations for salary?
 - Tip: Before providing a number, ask the interviewer about the salary range for a hire with similar qualifications, experience, and skillset as yours.
- When can you start?
- *It is important to know when questions are illegal and how to handle them. Review this [resource](#) from Yale University.



Below are questions that **you** may consider asking the **interviewer**.

These questions can be tailored based on the role of the interviewer (e.g. HR recruiter, hiring manager, interviewers in a similar position, department chair, etc.) and the specific stage of the interview process (e.g. phone screening, first interview with the hiring manager, second interview with a panel, etc.). Look through this list and select a few questions that you can plan to ask your interviewer to learn more about the job opportunity, show more of who you are as a candidate, and express your level of engagement and preparation.

THE ROLE

- How would you describe the ideal candidate for this job?
- What do you hope the new hire will accomplish in the first year?
- What will be the challenges for taking on this role?
- What will the reporting structure look like for this role?
- What does a typical day look like in this position?
- What will the onboarding and training process look like for the new hire?

DEPARTMENT/ ORGANIZATION

- How does the department fit in with the overall mission of the organization?
- In what ways does your department/organization value DEIB?
- What are the current and future priorities of the department and organization?
- What are the most important values of this organization?
- How would you describe the work culture of the organization and the team environment?
- What are the organization's sources of funding?
- What are the opportunities for mentoring and growth in the organization?

CHANGES/CHALLENGES WITHIN ORGANIZATION

- What are one of the main challenges that the department is currently facing?
- Are there any anticipated major new developments or changes that will impact this position?

HIRING PROCESS

- What will the rest of the interview process, including the hiring timeframe, look like for candidates who make it to the next round?
- Avoid asking questions that reference salary or benefits during the first interview and direct those kinds of questions to HR.

INTERVIEWER'S EXPERIENCE

- Can you tell me about your career path and how your career has developed at the organization?
- What do you most enjoy about your job?