



Interviewers: bored with the same old interview questions? Ask these instead.

• By [Chris Russell](#)

Are you stuck in an interviewing rut? There are thousands of interviews happening this very second across the globe. Ever wondered what other companies are asking during those interviews? I did, so I set about posing this question to my network. I received dozens of great responses, and picked these as my favorites:

“What sacrifices have you made in order to be successful?”

This question is used usually in the second interview (once the candidate has met all mandatory criteria for the role). This question helps us understand the kind of person the candidate is. If the candidate describes that they've worked late nights or weekends it shows that they are extremely driven individuals. In addition, if the candidate discusses how they sacrificed their own advancement for the greater good of the company (i.e., missed out on a commission or bonus opportunity because they knew it wouldn't be good for the company or team as a whole) this shows that they are a strong team player. It is an extremely revealing question and one that most candidates don't necessarily expect.

Taylor Dumouchel | Career Expert at Peak Sales Recruiting

“I'm not sure if you're the perfect fit for this role. I'm curious to hear why you think you'd be a great candidate?”

This is a great question because it's an objection. I want to see how they handle objections like they would from a potential client or from a co-worker with a contrarian opinion. It's also a way for me to see if they've done their homework on my company and their depth of understanding for what it would take to be successful in this role.

Jordan Wan | Founder/CEO of CloserIQ

“If you found a new plan that has a 50% chance to help your client 10 fold, but a 50% chance to backfire and lose them tons of money, would you follow through with the plan?”

I love this question because it gives us an idea of how much of a risk taker the person is. The answer for this question tells a lot about how the person thinks and if they will be a good fit. Most individuals would expect to not take the risk and that's what they would expect we want to hear. However, only the true risk takers will be comfortable saying they want to take the risk and those are exactly the type of people we want.

Russab Ali | Founder, SMC Digital Marketing

“What is the one thing that does not appear on your application, that you would like us to know?”

I believe that how the applicant responds to this questions gives good insight on their ability to think on their feet and turn a negative situation into a positive one.

Edna Ma, MD

“What do you think our customers want the most from our company?”

Ask this to determine if candidate truly understands your business. It's a great way to see if they did their homework.

Linda Swindling | Workplace Communication Author

“Imagine I am your grandpa and you just landed this job. Explain to me what you do.”

My job as an interviewer is to select the best fit for both the company and the position. Is the candidate creative? Can the candidate solve problems? Can

they think on their feet? By forcing the interviewee to explain the job they are interviewing for in simple terms, I can discern how well they truly understand the position they're applying for. Did they do their research? Their answer also tells me whether they are able to break down more complicated concepts and simplify them.

Brad Nierenberg | CEO, Red Peg

“What’s the biggest accomplishment you’re most proud of?”

Based on the answer here, I can determine this person’s idea of what hard work and accomplishment is. If the hardest thing they did was graduate, but without “extra credit” i.e. doing something else simultaneously, then I think this person is probably content with being average and not willing to put in the extra work needed to be truly successful and help our organization to be the best.

April Davis | Owner and Founder of LUMA (Luxury Matchmaking)

“What skills will make you my boss one day?”

As a digital entrepreneur and small business owner, it is important for me to hire people that not only want a job, but have a vested interest in their own future. Therefore I want to know what skills I can personally teach and mentor them in to help them be “bigger than me” or even be my boss one day.

Kara Carrero | Author, Consultant, & Podcaster

“Describe a time that you used a skill or talent to take a project or task to the next level.”

It’s a great question because it’s behavioral, so they will describe something they actually did, rather than hypotheticals. In addition, this should be an easy

question for someone to answer, because preparation for an interview should include being able to present their best work. If they can't answer it, I'd worry about their preparedness in general. Lastly, hearing about how they understand and leverage their own strengths for their job is good to know for not just getting the job done, but also for personality and talent fit.

Michelle Petrazzuolo | Owner of Level Up Prep

“What is one of your pet peeves and how do you handle the situation?”

This question catches the interviewee off guard and makes them think before answering. It will also show the individual's personality and what really makes them tick. More than the standard “Where do you see yourself in five years?” this question will give you a sneak peek into how they will interact with others around them in an everyday work environment.

Taylor Janszen | American Freight Furniture & Mattress

“What could be better about your current situation?”

This question is relevant to both active and passive candidates. . Most people I work with are not actively looking for new roles when I recruit them, and it is especially helpful in those situations because it gets them to think about areas they are not entirely satisfied in with their current employer. That opens their minds to potential opportunities yet also allowing them to evaluate if a move makes sense or not for them personally. It helps ensure the right candidates are interested because I can gauge their needs and compare them to what my clients/position has to offer. When I can do this effectively I can make company-employee matches great for both parties.

Becca Garvin | Find Great People, LLC

“Before we finish, what questions have I not asked that you wish I had asked?”

This allows the candidate to understand that I am giving him or her an opportunity to make the best possible case for him/herself. It is a nice, positive way to end the interview. Sometimes, however, I will be surprised by an unexpected piece of information that gives me more insight into a candidate.

For example, one candidate mentioned that she been CFO during the time when her company went through an IPO and she will also dealing with a husband who was dying. She brought out the topic to show me that she knows how to handle stress and can manage her time. I never would have known to ask that question had I now asked my “Finish” question.

Larry Stybel | Stybel Peabody, an Arbora Global Company.

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About the Author [Chris Russell](#)

Considered the 'mad scientist of online recruiting' by his peers, Chris is an entrepreneur and former corporate recruiter based in Connecticut. When not writing you might find him bass fishing from his kayak on the lakes & rivers of New England.