

Tough Interview Questions: Webinar Activities

Score in Your Next Interview THE FUNDAMENTALS



Introduction: This discussion activity was designed to be facilitated after viewing the *Interviewing Tips and Techniques: How to Handle Tough Interview Questions* webinar. If preferred, staff can view the webinar individually and come together for this activity.

This instruction sheet will provide the facilitator with the necessary information needed to facilitate. As the group facilitator you can expect:

Time Needed to Facilitate: This discussion activity requires approximately 45 minutes.

Before You Get Started: Please print and gather all materials needed prior to facilitating.

- *Tough Interview Questions: The Fundamentals- Instruction Sheet* (facilitator details)
- Flip chart and markers.
- Before the group session, prepare flip chart with these bullets:
 1. Do You Have the Skills to Do the Job?
 2. Do You Fit?
 3. Do You Understand the Company and Its Purpose?
 4. How Do You Stack Up Against the Competition?
 5. Do You Have the Right Mindset for the Job and Company?
 6. Do You Want the Job?
- (Optional) *Unlawful Interview Topics - Questions Cards*
- (Optional) *Sample Tough Questions Cards*

Reminder: Throughout the activity, suggested wording for the facilitator is indicated by **(read)**. You can read directly from this script or convey the directions in your own words.

Score in Your Next Interview THE FUNDAMENTALS (DISCUSSION)

After viewing the webinar

Discussion Facilitator Instructions: After the webinar, use the questions below to guide you through discussion of the major points. Each question is followed with some potential answers that you can use to stimulate thought and keep the discussion going. Let the attendees steer the flow and pace of the conversation, welcome the ideas and answers of others, and encourage involvement by all participants.

Tough Interview Questions Webinar: The Fundamentals

You may use all of these discussion questions, or choose those that are most relevant for your group.

Directions (read): While it's fresh in our minds let's discuss what we just learned in this webinar.

Discussion Questions:

Q1: What is the point in asking tough questions?

A1: To see how a candidate acts and reacts when placed in a difficult situation.

Q2: What does doing well in these difficult situations show the interviewer?

A2: It demonstrates how well you might handle a difficult situation while on the job.

Flip Chart Activity

(read) Here are the 6 things an interviewer is assessing in an interview. *(Refer to the pre-written bullets on the flip chart for the next 6 discussion questions. Be sure to ask the group for additional ideas.)*

Q3: Do You Have the Skills to Do the Job? What are some examples of the skills being assessed with skill based questions?

A3: Both hard and soft skills. An employer must first determine whether you have the necessary hard skills for the position, e.g., the programming knowledge for a database administration job or the writing chops to be a newspaper reporter. But the interviewer is also looking for key soft skills you'll need to succeed in the job and organization, such as the ability to work well on teams, communication skills, or the ability to figure things out with some basic training.

Q4: Do You Fit? What is being assessed with these types of questions?

A4: The interviewer is trying to pinpoint not only whether you match up well with both the company's and department's activities but also whether you'll complement the talents of your potential coworkers.

Q5: Do You Understand the Company and Its Purpose? Why is this important for employers to know? How can you demonstrate you have an understanding of the company and their purpose?

A5: If the organization fits well with your career aspirations, you'll naturally be motivated to do good work there -- and stay more than a month or two.

Q6: How Do You Stack Up Against the Competition? What is this referring to?

**Tough Interview Questions Webinar:
The Fundamentals**

A6: You're being evaluated in relation to other candidates for the job. In other words, this test is graded on a curve. So the interviewer will constantly be comparing your performance with that of the other candidates.

Q7: Do You Have the Right Mindset for the Job and Company? What type of attitude do you think most employers are looking for?

A7: Employers are often looking for someone who has a can-do attitude, who wants to be challenged and is internally motivated to do well. An employer can't train for this essential trait, but they can hire for it.

Q8: Do You Want the Job? Why should you have to prove you want the job? You're at the interview after all.

A8: Most employers know better than to believe everyone they interview actually wants the position being offered. They understand some candidates are exploring their options, while others are using an interview with a company they don't care about to hone their interview skills. You have to prove you really want the job.

(read) Knowing what an employer is evaluating and assessing can make preparing for an interview seem less daunting and it can help better focus a jobseeker's preparation. You all did a great job with this part of the discussion. The webinar also touched on brain teaser questions, and while they may still be rare they are quickly becoming more common. Let's talk about these types of questions so that we can be more familiar with them when speaking to our jobseekers.

Q9: What is the point in a brain teaser interview question?

A9: These questions are used to watch your decision making or problem solving process and to see how well you manage the stress of being asked such a difficult question. They also might reveal how well you fit into the culture of the business.

Q10: What type of response is the interviewer looking for?

A10: The interviewer wants you to walk them through your whole way of reasoning.

Q11: How should the interviewee respond to these types of questions?

A11: Don't worry about getting the right answer. The main idea is to show how well you process and organize the information. Talk it out and divulge your thought process.

Q12: Do you have any ideas on how to prepare for these types of questions?

A12: Simply being prepared for the unexpected.

Q13: What are some of the wackiest or most mind binding questions you've heard in a job interview? **This is an open-ended question with no right or wrong answer. This is an opportunity for the attendees to share their experience.

**Tough Interview Questions Webinar:
The Fundamentals**

(read) As the webinar mentioned some questions are unlawful in a job interview. A safe practice for the interviewer is to ask every candidate the exact same questions and not divulge from the pre-scripted questions. Otherwise there could be a misconception of profiling or discrimination. Let's discuss some of the other topics that are off limits.

Q14: Can you recall what topics are off limits in a job interview?

A14: Age, Ancestry/ Race, Credit, Criminal Record, Disability, Family Status, Gender, Military Discharge, Religion

(read) Let's briefly talk about each of these topics and discuss an appropriate response should one of these topics come up in an interview.

Facilitator Note (optional): You can either break attendees into groups or pairs and assign one or more of the above topics to each. If you have printed the *(Optional) Unlawful Questions Cards* pass them to the groups now. Ask each group to discuss the appropriate response for their topic. Give the groups time to discuss and then come back together to report their findings. Ask other participants to contribute or add any other ideas. Offer to do this next question as a group.

(read) If you're asked about your criminal background and you have past offenses, but nothing in your background should prevent you from being able to perform the job, what is an appropriate response?

Example answer: "There is nothing in my past which would affect my ability to perform the duties of this job."

Facilitator Note (optional): You can either break attendees into groups or pairs and assign one or more of these tough questions below as an additional group activity. If you have printed the *(Optional) Sample Tough Questions Cards* give one to each group now. Ask each group to discuss an appropriate response for their question.

1. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
2. Tell me about a time where you successfully managed multiple projects with similar deadlines.
3. Tell me about a time you did not agree with your manager's or supervisor's decision. How did you handle it?
4. What would you do in your first week on the job?
5. If you could be any kind of ice cream what kind would you be and why?

Give the groups time to discuss individually and then come back together to report their findings. Ask other participants to contribute or add any other ideas.

Wrap-up (read): Great job! Thank you all for your participation. You did a wonderful job!

**Tough Interview Questions Webinar:
The Fundamentals**

**Tough Interview Questions Webinar:
The Fundamentals**

Produced By: The NCWorks Training Center