

From executivecareerbrande.com

Most Common Questions to Prepare for:

<p>Prepare and Rehearse Your Answers to the Tough Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is your greatest strength? ▪ What is your greatest weakness? ▪ Why did you leave your job, or why were you laid off? ▪ How do you handle stress and pressure? ▪ Describe a decision you made that was unpopular and how you dealt with implementing it. ▪ Describe a decision that you made, or a situation that you were involved in, that was a failure. ▪ What has been the greatest disappointment in your career? ▪ How do you lead organizations? ▪ How do you create a team spirit where everyone feels engaged? ▪ How do you put in place the best processes to get things done? ▪ How do you create core competencies? ▪ Why do you want this job? ▪ Why are you the best person for the job? ▪ What are your goals for the next 5 years, and the next 10 years? How do you expect to achieve them? ▪ What are your salary expectations both long-term and short-term? ▪ How did you prepare for this interview?
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From executiveresumebranding.com – [Top 3 Questions](#)

According to George Bradt, in his Forbes article, [Top Executive Recruiters Agree There Are Only Three True Job Interview Questions](#), your answers to these three questions are the only true indicators of strengths, motivation and fit:

1. Can you do the job? (strengths)
2. Will you love the job? (motivation)
3. Can we tolerate working with you? (fit)

Regarding fit, Kevin Kelly, Heidrick & Struggles CEO, made the point:

“40 percent of senior executives leave organizations or are fired or pushed out within 18 months. It’s not because they’re dumb; it’s because a lot of times culturally they may not fit in with the organization or it’s not clearly articulated to them as they joined.”

Bradt suggests that, in preparing for interviews, job seekers should be ready to provide examples illustrating their strengths, what motivates them about the company and the position, and what makes them a good fit in terms of their own preferences and the company’s needs.

[From Executive-careers.com](http://Executive-careers.com)

Some recommended responses to Interview Questions:

Potential Question	Proposed response
<i>What are your strengths?</i>	You should highlight the strengths the company needs to address its current challenges.
<i>How would you describe your management style?</i>	You could say something like, "I used to prefer a top-down management style, but I've found that when I involve people in a decision it's easier to get their commitment and almost always results in a better outcome."
<i>Why should we hire you?</i>	explain how your strengths align with the company's needs.
<i>How much money are you looking for?</i>	Be careful of this trap. If you ask for too much, you knock yourself out of consideration. If you ask for too little, you sell yourself short. A good tip is to quote third-party research and answer with a range. An even better approach is to ask the interviewer about the company's compensation philosophy (e.g., What are the components and how are they adjusted?)
<i>Failed Projects</i>	<p>You're certain to be asked about failed projects, so don't get caught off guard when the hiring manager tosses that one your way. Be honest without being defensive and beware of giving phony-sounding answers, such as "It really wasn't my fault," or "I warned them it wouldn't work."</p> <p>When telling your interviewer about projects that went off track, be sure to describe the smart corrective action you took, the end result and the lessons you learned. For example, you might describe how you proactively involved others: "As soon as I saw that we weren't going to meet the customer's deadline, I immediately called a meeting with everyone on the project. We were able to renegotiate with the customer and minimize our losses. Ultimately the customer respected our honesty and was able to work with us on a solution." (For more</p>

	<p>advice on how to answer questions about failed projects, read Interview Questions to Avoid.)</p>
<p><i>Your Biggest Flaw</i></p>	<p>Your interviewer will also ask you about your biggest flaw. Mention only one and describe the steps you've taken to correct it. For example, "I'm not good at speaking in front of groups, but I enrolled myself in an executive presentations program and have gotten much better."</p> <p>Beware of mentioning flaws without realizing it. For example, if you say that you seek to avoid conflict at all costs, your interviewer might think you can't deal with conflict or that you have a "head in the sand" management style. Similarly, if the interviewer asks you if you've implemented a specific software package and if you haven't, don't say, "I haven't done it, but I can learn." That's the wrong answer.</p>

Additional Resources:

[2,000 Interview Questions](#) from hr-guide.com – organized by topics, including Achievement, Goals, Leadership, Compensation, Organization, Loyalty, Stress, Environment and much more. *Note: scroll down to the bottom of the web page to find the question categories.*

Questions from the Board of Directors:

This section is recommendations to the Board of Directors on how to interview C-Level candidates. I thought it would provide some valuable insight for the candidate.

From Clevelenterprises.com - Questions to ask C-Level Candidates

<p>The “Anti-refs” Question Think of someone you have had problems with in your career, as we all do, who you would NEVER use as a reference. Tell me the adjectives (to keep short) they might use to describe you and why they had this perception? Then we can discuss how you dealt with the situation.</p>	<p>This is a great backdoor to the weaknesses questions and far more effective. It is very open-ended and often brings up events or problems that they would never volunteer that are indicative of issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gets at potential reference points they will not volunteer and companies, or environments, where they may struggle. • Tests honesty as anyone saying they never had any problems with someone else is probably not being totally honest. • Tests their ability to deal with difficult situations? • Tests their impressions of the resolution of the problem(s) and if the company’s mission still got done in spite of personal issues. • Give you things to ask references about that force more honesty.
<p>Tell me what are the first 5 things you would do if you got this position?</p>	<p>Tests the level they think at, how they go about solving problems, how quickly they will dig in. How much research and investigation they will do before implementing changes to be sensitive to the organization, history and other company specific issues.</p>
<p>What accomplishment in your career to date are you most proud of?</p>	<p>What level is the accomplishment at? Is it big or small? Does it show skill, luck, focus, hard work, long-term career objectives?</p>
<p>Where would you like to be in 3-5 years in your career? What would you like to be earning?</p>	<p>Shows ambition, ability to think ahead and plan and tests their plans against the company's goals for the person and position.</p>
<p>Tell me how you would go about _____ (installing a new system, implement a new procedure)?</p>	<p>This is a position specific question to test specific technical or managerial knowledge. Too many people do not ask specific deep technical questions, because they do not know them or are worried about offending. You need a few domain knowledge questions that are deep, technical and esoteric enough to</p>



	prove they understand their technical landscape
What do you think are the most important five (3-7) things for you to be successful in this position?	Candidate will most often site what they believe to be their strengths, which may or may not agree with your corporate priorities and goals.
What are some things your current employer could do differently to be more successful?	Sour grapes or constructive criticism? What is the level they are thinking at small or large ideas and concepts? If nothing but complaints they could be a malcontent, who took no action to improve the situation, or would have a negative impact on company morale.
Why are you interested in this job? What do you know about our company?	Genuine interest here or just another job? Shows knowledge of your company Did they do their homework on your company what level of information did they focus on and consider important? Do they talk about a career path that makes sense within your company?
What have been the biggest failures and frustrations in your career?	Brings out attitudes about failure, risk, and self-responsibility versus just blaming others and outside factors. Learning experiences, ability to pick up and move on etc.
Why have you decided to leave your current position?	Dig deeply into this with follow-up questions on their answers? Whatever is driving this is critical to how they see the world and work. What did they do to try to correct what was driving them away? Was it out of their control, or a projection of their own issues?
What risks did you take in your last position?	Studies indicate that people who take risk are generally more successful than those who do not! As optimists are far more successful than pessimists. Discussion on this can be very revealing. In early-stage organizations you will not want to hire people who are not too risk averse, as they may jump at the first new opportunity after learning how up and down things can be. You will also need people willing to fail more rapidly in small ways to help figure out the company's secret sauce.

From boardworksinternational.com – Selecting the right Chief Executive, Questioning the Candidates

<p>1. ‘From what you have so far been able to learn about the organisation what do you see as the most important challenges we face?’</p>	<p>This question is a good ‘icebreaker’ which will also help you to start assessing the candidate from a number of different perspectives.</p> <p>Subsequent questions will help build on any initial impressions that flow from this question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well have they done their homework on the organisation? • Are they able to present their ideas clearly and persuasively? • Are they able to think conceptually? • Do they have a vision for the organisation (and are they, therefore, going to be able to help the board to ‘design the future’)? • Are they a big picture person or are they likely to get bogged down in the nuts and bolts of the organisation’s operations? • What have they learned from their previous experience which they will be able to apply to the benefit of your organisation? • What is their personal style - does it fit what your organisation is likely to need going into the future?
<p>2. ‘If you were in our position and searching for the right individual to head this organisation why would you say that you were the best qualified for the position?’</p>	<p>Candidates’ answers will indicate the extent to which they know their own ability compared with others who they may think could do the job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each candidate should be able to give some evidence of why he or she has some competitive advantage over others – for example, what do they feel they can contribute which others may not be able to. • Answers to this question will also give the panel some indication about the candidates’ level of self-awareness and their breadth of understanding of the challenges of this job. • Self-awareness and emotional maturity are key variables in effective leadership and subsequent questions should aim to build to a confident assessment of these factors.
<p>3. ‘What do you feel has been your greatest career accomplishment to date and how has it equipped you for this position?’</p>	<p>This is an easy opportunity for candidates to speak to their strengths and one they have more than likely prepared for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally they can demonstrate an achievement which has direct relevance to the position you are offering. • What you are looking for are signs of significant direct personal accomplishments that have resulted in some major lasting quality or benefit to the organisations concerned. • Ask for the names of people who can verify such achievements. It is important that what

	<p>they have told you is not just wishful thinking on their part.</p> <p>Be wary of answers that are expressed solely in terms of ‘activity’ or ‘process’ or that simply reflect their ‘involvement’ in a particular situation. You are looking for someone who thinks in terms of results and the tangible impacts they can have or have had on organisational performance.</p>
<p>4. ‘What has been the biggest disappointment in your career to date, and what did you learn from it?’</p>	<p>Be on the outlook for someone who offers up an experience that is trivial. It may signal their reluctance to admit any weakness. Everyone has had some career disappointments that are significant or meaningful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No successful chief executive is perfect and they need to be able to acknowledge their own comparative shortcomings so that they build a management team that complements their own strengths. • A follow-up question, or even an alternative, would be to ask: ‘What are the strengths you would seek in other members of your management team and how would these complement your own abilities?’ <p>Effective and self-aware chief executives are sufficiently confident in their own abilities that they feel able to appoint subordinates who are better than they are in important respects.</p>
<p>5. ‘OK - assume you’ve got the job - what would you do on ‘Day One?’</p>	<p>This is another question that offers you a chance to learn how well they have investigated the organisation and the environment it is operating in and the amount of thought they have put into understanding the challenges of the position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This question can also give you an insight into the way (and the attitude with which) they approach a challenge and their thinking processes. • It is likely to give you a sense of their management ‘style’ (e. g. are they likely to listen and consult or is their inclination to ‘wade’ straight in?). • You may also get a sense from this question as to how creative each candidate is likely to be in the position.
<p>6. ‘If those who you respect in your current work environment were asked their opinion of you, how would they be likely to describe you and your management ability</p>	<p>This question gives you another perspective on candidates’ self-awareness as well as getting them to describe to you the way they see (or would like to see) their management ability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they have a inflated view or are they too hard on themselves? • This offers a further insight into how realistic and self-confident the candidates are. <p>Knowing that you are likely to check this assessment with their referees adds a further incentive to produce a frank and honest answer.</p>
<p>7. ‘Is there anything that you haven’t told us about that we might uncover when we check you out with your referees, or that we might hear</p>	<p>As this question may well put candidates on the ‘back foot’ how well they handle themselves in such a situation could be an important contribution to your decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This question allows, perhaps even forces, candidates to outline past incidents or

<p>from another source, but which could be relevant to our decision whether or not to appoint you?’</p>	<p>problems that could cause embarrassment if they surfaced unexpectedly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates must be clear that their answers to this question will not be viewed as a ‘hanging offence’. • Potentially embarrassing or compromising incidents or problems, once on the table and explained, are likely to be more acceptable to the panel than those not disclosed and later discovered indirectly.
<p>8. ‘Given other chief executives you know of or have read about in the public, private or not-for-profit sectors, who do you most admire and would most like to emulate?’</p>	<p>This question enables you to probe the candidates’ long term business and personal goals and also helps to give you a picture of their standards for achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be wary of any example that seems to have been chosen to impress but has very little apparent relevance to what you have come to know of the candidate’s approach to management.
<p>9. ‘If a well known nationally circulated periodical or a relevant industry journal profiled you, what would be the central theme of the article?’</p>	<p>This allows you to assess still further how the candidate sees themselves – particularly their principal attributes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A follow-up question designed to give you a sense of how candidates would deal with the news media, and what is their relationship with the media in their present role, should be considered. Eg: What in your experience is the most effective way for a Chief Executive to deal with the news media?
<p>10. ‘Given what you know about the requirements of this role what resources will you need in order to achieve what is expected of you?’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This helps assess the candidates’ ability to realistically project the staffing, financial and other requirements that will allow them to accomplish specific goals. • It also enables you to consider the inclination and capacity of the organisation to support the aspirations and judgment of the different candidates.
<p>Questions for References The considered views of a candidate’s superiors, peers and direct reports, based on questions such as those described at the end of this article, are vital additional information to help make an assessment of the vital ‘soft’ qualities of leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you were an investor, funder or sponsor putting \$1 million into this organisation, given what you know about this candidate would YOU want him/her to be responsible for its effective utilisation? • Does the candidate lead consistently in a way that inspires followers to trust him or her? • Does the candidate hold people accountable for their performance and promises? • Is the candidate comfortable delegating important tasks to others? • How much time does the candidate spend developing other leaders?

From mileslehane.com – Board questions for c-level interviews

(Leadership preparedness question)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before going into specific questions could you give us a “snapshot” perspective about your background and how you believe this has prepared you for this potential position? Please focus your thoughts on an organizational level and how those experiences have added to your leadership capabilities?
(Looking for key word descriptors such as “collaborative”™ etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please describe and define your Leadership Style and Approach in an organizational setting. Feel free to utilize examples/situations of how you reached a strategic goal through your leadership?
(General information on future first year vision of role)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you were selected as our next Chairman and we were looking back over your first year of leadership, what might we be summarizing in an evaluation?
(A tactical question)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on your knowledge of where the organization has been over the last few years, and where we are today, what is your vision for the next few years for the Board and the organization? Any specific initiatives that you would bring to your leadership in the first year or so?
(A visioning question)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please share your global perspective on the future of our industry and your thoughts on how organization may support our members and assist the industry as we move forward?
(Look for style and confidence without bragging)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please share with us why you believe you should be selected for this position and cite reasons why these attributes are important to the current and future success of the organization.

Interview questions to ask a CEO

<p>Alignment "What is the most important aspect for you to join a company?"</p>	<p>The purpose of this question is to discover the alignment of the CEO's vision and talents with what the company needs. If the CEO states that he is looking for a stable, growing and employee-driven company, a match is more likely. An overly controlling CEO might not make sense in a participatory work culture.</p>
<p>3-Month Plan "What do you plan to accomplish in your first three months?"</p>	<p>Overhauling business operations is likely a bit of a practical stretch. A good response should convey that the candidate has a vision and plan to offer, a proven reputation for consistent success and consideration of the big picture for the company.</p>
<p>Client Relationships "How do you go about entertaining high-net-worth clients?"</p>	<p>In smaller organizations, CEOs are often involved in building relationships with counterparts at other potential partner or client organizations. A good response, suggests the Job Interview Advice site, showcases necessary personality skills and the charisma to develop and maintain strong business relationships. Smaller advertising agencies, for instance, often maintain a modest number of client accounts. Each account is vital to the business, and the CEO is often a part of managing the relationships with leaders at client organizations.</p>
<p>Stakeholder Balance CEOs must consider all stakeholders when making business decisions. These include company shareholders or owners, partners, clients and customers, employees and others. Business decisions often affect multiple stakeholders in different ways.</p>	<p>The best response to a question about stakeholder balance is a specific example of a time when the candidate has successfully negotiated a delicate situation to satisfy both owners or investors and the marketplace (customers or clients).</p>

Advice on how to Act in the Interview Process

From An article in CIO.com – [How to Ace an Interview](#)

For any question, a factual response isn't enough. You have to engage the interviewer with stories that make the facts compelling. When you're interviewing for executive-level positions, the hiring manager is looking for someone who communicates well, who's not going to be an embarrassment at a board meeting, and who can lead and inspire his or her staff. Rather than describe the functions for which you were responsible, describe incidents that illustrate how you handled problems and opportunities—and the bottom-line results. Create scenes, characters and action, but stick to the OAR model to avoid too much detail and digression:

O: What was the Opportunity or challenge you faced?

A: What Action did you take?

R: What were the Results?

Practice your responses with the aid of video, audio, a mirror or a trusted friend who'll give you honest feedback about how confident and knowledgeable you sound and look. You have to come across as spontaneous rather than rehearsed. Pat answers such as "I am a participative manager" or "I am a workaholic, working day and night until a project is done" can make you sound like an automaton. Don't go over the line that separates a polished answer from a slick one. In other words, don't try to sound like a superhero by beginning every sentence with "I", "Me" and "My" or by overstating your role.

Memorize key facts and dates—both about the company with which you're interviewing and your work history—so that you don't have to dive into your briefcase for the information.

Finally, don't think of yourself as an applicant for the job for which you're interviewing. You're a unique solution to the company's business problems. Thinking of yourself as a solution will give you confidence in your ability to help the company meet its strategic goals, and your confidence will resonate with the hiring manager during the interview. Thinking of yourself as a solution will also help you define your role in the new company, [negotiate the compensation package](#) you deserve and gain acceptance as a peer when you start working with the management team.

The Big Day

The day of the interview, arrive at least 15 minutes ahead of time. While you wait, think of yourself as the solution the company needs and assure yourself that the interview is going to go well. You should also use your time to observe employees coming and going: Do they look happy to be there?

When you're brought into the office or conference room where the interviewer is waiting for you, walk in with a smile on your face, your head up and your shoulders back. Shake the interviewer's hand firmly. Repeat his or her name with a smile when you're introduced. Repeat the interviewer's name at appropriate opportunities throughout the conversation. Everyone responds to hearing his own name. It makes the interviewer listen more intently.

Don't sit until you're asked. Given a choice of seats, avoid the sofa. You'll sink into it like quicksand. Choose a hardback chair. Sit upright with your hands on your knees. Don't cross your legs or your arms. Crossed limbs unconsciously signal defensiveness.

While the interviewer speaks, show you're listening carefully by nodding your head and thoughtfully rephrasing her sentences. Make certain you understand the questions she's asking. Don't assume they're the ones for which you rehearsed answers. Try to divine what's behind each question. For example, the interviewer may ask if you've handled an SAP conversion, but really she wants to know how smoothly the conversion went, if was on time and within budget.

If you're unsure how to answer a question, take time to reflect on it or ask a clarifying question to give yourself more time to form an answer.

As you interact with the interviewer, stay lively. Gesture often and naturally. Smile at the least provocation. Smiling helps you feel you're doing well. Look the interviewer in the eye. If you're being interviewed by a group, maintain eye contact with everyone, one at a time, changing with each point you make rather than scanning the audience.

The interview is going to go well and you're going to feel increasingly relaxed. But take care not to become too relaxed, which can lead you to make a careless comment or acting too familiar. You should remain deferential throughout the interview. Don't say anything negative about your present employer, even if invited. Discuss [compensation](#) only if asked.

By the end of the interview, you'll probably be asked if you have questions. Whether you're invited to ask questions or not, always ask a few:

- What are you looking for in candidates for this position?
- How would I be measured?
- What challenges would I have to tackle first?

Don't ask for any information about the company that can be found with a simple Internet search.

When the interview winds down, ask if the interviewer got the information he wanted. Offer to provide more information, especially if the interviewer hasn't asked you about something in your background that you believe is important to the position. Don't offer references until you're asked for them.

The end of the interview may be your last chance to make it clear you want the job. To do so without sounding desperate, make a positive statement of interest, such as, "I am vitally interested in this opportunity. Are there any concerns you have about my candidacy for the position?" Also ask about next steps. The first impression you make is the most important one of the meeting. The impression you leave at the end of the interview ranks second.

The Follow-Up

Take notes about the meeting as soon as it's over. Note areas where you feel you didn't answer adequately so that you can reinforce the subject matter in your follow-up correspondence. You'll also want to remember who said what as you plan the follow-up process.

Send a letter thanking the interviewer for seeing you, expressing once more why you're a good fit for the job and offering to provide any additional information the hiring manager may need.

Keep following up, methodically but without being a nuisance. The job often goes to the person who wants it most.

From article in Executivecareerbrand.com – [Ace and Brand your Interview](#)

Demonstrate Your Industry and Company-Specific Knowledge	
<i>Research Your Target Industry</i>	Find out what issues and challenges your industry is facing. Determine who the subject matter experts and key thought leaders are.
<i>Research the Company</i> Prepare to intelligently answer questions like “What do you know about our company?” and “Why do you want to work here?”.	<p><i>How and where to conduct your research:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actual job description is one of your best interview preparation tools. Go through the entire description and align each of the qualifications, skill sets, and personal characteristics with what you have to offer in that area. • If you’re working with a recruiter, ask them for all the information they can provide on the company and the position. • Contact the prospective employer to get specifics on the position you are interviewing for or ask for company literature. • Review the company website. • Get a subscription to ZoomInfo’s Fresh Contacts and view the company’s profile. Zoominfo boasts a database of 45 million professionals at 5 million companies. • Google the company name and products related to the position you’re seeking. • Check out the company’s LinkedIn profile. • Tap your own network. Tell them which companies you’re targeting and ask if they have connections they’ll share, see if they know a potential interviewer, and ask them for insider information about the company and job opportunity you’re seeking.
<i>Research the Interviewer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google the names of your interviewers to read up about them and find a few points of interest to break the ice at the beginning of the interview. • They probably have LinkedIn profiles. Review their career history and education, see if you belong to the same professional organizations, see which LinkedIn Groups they belong to, see if you share the same interests. • Look for the interviewer on Twitter. Another way to break the ice at the start of the interview would be to mention something they recently tweeted.

<p>Break the Ice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ready to greet the interviewer with a firm handshake and pleasant, upbeat comment, “It’s a pleasure to meet you” or “Thank you for this opportunity” or “I’ve been looking forward to talking with you”. • Have a question to ask them, based on your research, that will immediately engage them and impress them that you cared enough to find out about them. • Look around their office and find some item to comment about – a photo, diploma, award, etc.
<p>Tell Your Story</p>	<p>Develop career success stories to provide evidence of your brand and value proposition, using the Challenge – Actions – Results (or similar) exercise.</p> <p>Use your practiced stories to deal with behavioral-based questions, such as “Tell me about a time when you . . .”</p> <p>Storytelling Propels Executive Branding and Job Search.</p>
<p>Brand the Interview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce your brand throughout the interview. • Be sure the interviewer knows what your pivotal strengths, passions, drivers, and personal attributes are. • Let them know what differentiates you from the other candidates they’re talking with. • As you work on the interviewing FAQs below, align your answers with your brand and value proposition. • Adjust your written brand positioning statement to comfortably answer the dreaded “Tell me about yourself” initial interview question. Instead of saying <i>“I’ve been leading global business development in consumer goods for over 20 years”,</i> Try something like this: <i>“For over 20 years I’ve been steering new vision to capture record-breaking double-digit revenue, market share, and profit growth for consumer goods startups and multi-billion dollar global brands.”</i> Then be ready to back up your statement with examples – tell your story.
<p>Know What Questions YOU Will Ask the Interviewer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does your best-fit candidate look like? • Why is the position open? • What responsibilities in this job are really going to define success for this person? • What skills and qualities will be most important in this position? • May I see a copy of the job description?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would the hired candidate be doing the first three months on the job? • What are the prospects for growth and advancement? • Are there any major changes coming internally that I should know about? • Where do you see this division/company in the next five years? • How can I demonstrate that I’m a good fit for this position? • What do you (the interviewer) like and not like about working here? • Are there any questions that you have for me?
<p>Keep Your Professional References Informed You’ve picked the right references – people who are qualified to speak intelligently and compellingly about your past performance, qualifications, brand, and good fit for the company.</p>	<p>Let your references know who you’re interviewing with and when, so they’ll be prepared to say what you need them to say when they’re contacted for a recommendation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send your references the same personal marketing communications you sent to interviewers (resume, bio, LinkedIn profile, etc.), so they’ll be on the same page. • Keep your references in the loop as you move through the hiring process. And always, always thank them and find some way to give value to them. Don’t just tap into them for help. Give to get!

From Slesingermanagement.com – [Acing the Interview](#)

Whether you’re interviewing before a search committee or just one person representing the potential employer, there are five important steps you can take to increase the chances you’ll perform well and pass this important test.

Doing Well in the Interview

At the strategic level:

1. Connect your past to the interviewer’s future.
2. Be concise when answering questions.
3. Know the organization before you sit down.
4. Bring three questions.
5. Be animated.

. . . and at the tactical level:

1. Arrive 15 minutes early.
2. Stop by a mirror to check your appearance.
3. Accept a glass of water even if you’re not thirsty.
4. Turn off your cell phone.
5. Avoid cliches.

<p>Tie your past to their future.</p>	<p>The employer will ask you a number of questions about your skills and experience, which will tempt you to give chapter and verse about all the great things you’ve done. Before you submit to temptation, remember this: Interviewers don’t care what you did elsewhere—they probably don’t even know much about those organizations. What they care about is what you can do for them.</p> <p>So do tell about your success in developing a new source of revenue, or influencing a key piece of legislation, or implementing a new strategic plan. But then move on quickly— very quickly—to why this accomplishment will help you be a successful staff member for them.</p>
<p>Be concise.</p>	<p>Many interviews, especially those with members of a search committee, begin with an icebreaker question such as, “Please take three or four minutes to tell us about yourself.” This doesn’t mean they want to know where you were born. When you hog the floor—giving a detailed account of every job you’ve held since college—you keep them from more important questions they won’t have time to ask.</p> <p>So when you get this common question, try a brief, targeted reply like this: “You have my resume, so I won’t walk you through it. But as I think about my career, I realize how much I love to build/lead/manage/turn around organizations. Becoming your next CEO/vice president/director of development is a logical extension of the path I’ve followed over the past few years. That’s why I’m here today, and I hope I’ll have time to elaborate over the coming hour.” If they then want a 15-minute soliloquy, they’ll ask for more details. But keep your answers brief. And keep their questions coming.</p>

<p>Know the organization.</p>	<p>You're not ready to sit down for an interview until you've read key organizational documents that should be easy to get, such as the annual report, the IRS Form 990, the most recent audited financial statements, the strategic plan (assuming it's available to candidates; at a certain point in the process, it should be), the list of board members (if you're interviewing for the CEO or other very senior position), and everything on the website. Don't be caught asking about anything you should have found out from doing your homework. Assuming you know what you're talking about, don't be reluctant to demonstrate your command of a few key facts. You don't have to come off as an expert on all germane topics, especially since some interviewers won't know a lot of details anyway. But do make it clear that you understand the environment you may be entering.</p>
<p>Bring three questions.</p>	<p>If you're concise, the interviewers will complete their agenda and let you use the remaining time to pose questions of your own. Don't pull out a folder containing a list—you're having a conversation, not taking a deposition. But do plan to ask three or so questions. These may be ones that emerged from what you've already been asked, what you've memorized, or what you've written on a small note card. Ask questions that show you have a strategic, creative, and curious mind. Good possibilities include "What are the most significant competitive pressures the organization will face over the next three years?" or "What does the leadership think is the most appropriate financial strategy for the next two years?" Then use the answers to drive home more reasons why you'd be a good CEO/vice president/department director for them. Concisely, of course.</p>
<p>Be animated.</p>	<p>Think about the session from the interviewers' standpoint. If you're talking to the members of a search committee, they may be seeing eight people over one or two days. They're sitting the whole time. Getting up for yet another Diet Coke and a few pretzels becomes the highlight of the day, especially if some of the candidates perform poorly. Or if the interview is with members of the staff, they might be seeing other candidates that day or feeling anxious about getting back to a project that is due soon. The interview is the ideal time for you to be a breath of fresh air. Be energetic without being in overdrive. Bring a warm smile, humor, and a sense of confidence and self-assurance. Shake hands with each and every person who's interviewing you, and don't appear to ignore anyone in the group when you're answering questions. If you're in the running for a CEO position, the interviewers are trying to decide if they want you to lead and represent the organization—that is, them—over the next few years. And if you're interviewing for a senior staff position, they're thinking about whether they want you as a colleague whom they'll work with every day for many years. Even seemingly small things can undermine a successful interview.</p> <p>In the no-detail's-too-insignificant-to-overlook department, here is additional advice to help you perform well.</p>
<p>Come 15 minutes early.</p>	<p>I once arrived on time for a job interview only because I ran the last three blocks. My perspiration and breathlessness made this all too obvious.</p>

Stop by a restroom or someplace with a mirror before you enter the meeting room.	Check your necktie, lipstick, hair, etc. I remember when the members of one search committee commented on the red lipstick on a candidate's teeth—they found it distracting and questioned whether she could represent the group in public.
Turn off your cell phone.	Or if you must keep it on, explain why at the outset. (You could say, for example, "As you know, I currently work at the White House and must be reachable at all times by the chief of staff.")
Accept a glass of water if offered a drink.	Even if you don't expect to get thirsty, it's handy to have when you need a few seconds to think before speaking.
Avoid cliches	And finally, don't even consider uttering the phrase "think outside the box." It's OK to be the only candidate who doesn't mouth this ever-present cliché. It might even get you the job

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Avoiding interview mistakes

Here are a few essential tips to keep in mind about interviews that may not have occurred to you:

<u>Do not ramble</u>	Keep your answers concise and focused. If you keep speaking in the hope that the interviewer will decide when to cut you off when he or she has enough information, you are hurting your chances of securing the position.
<u>Explain how you can compensate for missing a job qualification</u>	If you lack a degree or accreditation wanted by an employer or experience in a certain area, be ready to address the item, because you will be asked how you will handle it. It is the way some employers screen out candidates. If you cannot articulate how you will address the issue, your chances for the position will lessen if not vanish.
<u>Ask smart questions about the organization</u>	You naturally will research the firm in advance of joining it. But just showing you know facts of its setup, missions, goals and accomplishments will not impress an interviewer. Inquire about the history of the position, where the company wants it to progress, and similar areas not covered by the interviewer. If you have no questions to offer, the interviewer may think you do not have the initiative needed to become a quality team player for the company's future.

Tips for C-Level Executives

Increasing your visibility

- **Develop a professional blog** (with photo) and post to it at least bi-weekly.
- **Ensure that your blog is connected** to your LinkedIn profile.
- **Limit your blog** to areas where you clearly are an expert.
- **Write articles** for publication in a variety of places, e.g., EzineArticles.com, trade publications.
- **Volunteer to give breakout sessions** at professional or industry conferences.
- **Post all of your thought leadership activities** to your LinkedIn profile.
- **Ensure your contact information** is on your LinkedIn profile.
- **Create short YouTube "mini-lectures"** where you can demonstrate your thought leadership.
- **Write a book or an e-book** on a subject where you are clearly a thought leader.
- **Ensure that your book is on Amazon.com**, Kindle and elsewhere.