

HOW TO TACKLE 3 TOUGHEST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE & FORMULA TO OVERCOME
TOUGH QUESTIONS AT YOUR NEXT INTERVIEW**

**"GET COMFORTABLE
WITH BEING
COMFORTABLE"**

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Your Next Career With Linda

**YOUR NEXT
CAREER**
With Linda



Hi, I'm Linda Gardner, Career Coach and Founder of Your Next Career With Linda!

Thanks for subscribing to my page.

I hope you had the opportunity to explore my newly launched website and see what Your Next Career With Linda has to offer.

So, a bit about me. My passion lies in helping professionals at all levels to bridge the gap between talents and organizations across industries. I coach aspiring and driven professionals on how to cultivate their personal brand, setting talents (like you!) up for success and fulfilling the next step in their career. Now that I know this is my purpose in life, I am beyond excited to help you find a fulfilling career!

Let's turn the mic over to you as I would like to learn about you and your career aspirations. Feel free to DM me or send an email to even say hello.

To kick start your successful career in 2021, as promised, I'm sharing a little secret with you. I'm offering my official guide on *How to Tackle the 3 Toughest Interview Questions*. You will notice there is bonus gift towards the end of the guide. By following this guide and integrating your response with the given formulas, you will most definitely impress the Employer at your next interview!

PS. Follow me on social media for the latest career advices!



TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

This is often one of the questions that is asked right at the beginning of the interview. The way you answer this question will set the tone for the rest of the interview. Believe me!

Most people feel flustered or get stumped when asked this question, but keep in mind, there is no one right answer. Every response will be crafted differently, and how you structure and build a killer response will keep your Employer hooked.

FORMULA: PRESENT → PAST → FUTURE

Here is the structure to crafting a winning response:

PRESENT - START OFF BY DISCUSSING YOUR CURRENT SITUATION

- Explain your current role in a high-level view of your major and relevant achievements and responsibilities
- If you are not currently employed, tie it back to your most recent and relevant job/volunteer work
- If you are looking to pivot your career, elaborate on acquired transferable skills and certifications/trainings that aligns to the role you are applying for

PAST - HOW AND WHY

- Discuss accomplishments you've achieved during your professional journey
- Give a quick recap of your previous experiences and how they helped you prepare for this role. Be sure to focus on the results. Quantify where possible

FUTURE - WHY

- End it off with a BANG by connecting your background, interests, and qualifications back to the role
- Explain how your professional experience makes you a successful candidate for the Employer by reinstating your goals and career aspirations

PRO-TIP: All points must be relevant and align your responses to the role and Company you are applying for. Basically, you want to be the PERFECT MATCH for the Employer while remaining organic as possible.

SAMPLE RESPONSE: I'm currently working as Sales Representative for Company XYZ. As one of the tenure employees on the sales team, I pride myself to reach my monthly sales quotas by increasing sales by 8% over the last 3 years. Based on my track record, I have proudly led, trained, and supported members on our sales team. Previously at COMPANY ABC, I was working in a similar capacity however in a different industry. I enjoy working in sales as I'm a results-driven professional. Based on my sales experience, I've mentored new members to bring them up to speed on product knowledge and provided guidance on sales tactics. My passion involves delivering excellent service and products to all clients and stakeholders which I found to have strengthened my career aspirations. I have 5+ years of progressive sales experience, robust leadership, and skills of an effective communicator, all of which are strong suits to fulfill the role as the Sales Manager for your Company.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST WEAKNESS?

Although this is a tricky question, you can successfully win the Employer over by adding a positive spin on your response. By strategically crafting your response, it not only showcases how you overcame weaknesses, but it also demonstrates self-awareness which you used as a learning opportunity for career development.

Whether you decide to elaborate on a skill or a character weakness, it should be followed by actions you have taken to improve. Tie it to an example and be authentic when delivering your response as it will show that you have grown personally and professionally.

FORMULA: WEAKNESS + CONTEXT + IMPROVEMENT MEASURE

Here is the structure to crafting a winning response:

SKILL-BASED RESPONSE

- Tie your weakness into action you have taken or currently working to improve

CHARACTER-BASED RESPONSE

- Tie your weakness into steps you have taken or currently working on to overcome these obstacles

PRO - TIP: Although everyone has flaws, be sure to pick a 'wise' weakness that relates to the role you are applying for BUT does not disqualify you from doing the job. Keep in mind to tie it back to steps you are taking to improve your weakness while maintaining positivity.

SAMPLE RESPONSE (SKILLED BASED): I recently switched from another department and was assigned the role as a Payroll Assistant at Company ABC. One of the main responsibilities was to collect weekly employees' expenses and enter MOS Excel for reimbursements. Over the course of a period, I realized I wasn't efficient with my time as I was taking longer than expected to complete this task causing me to be behind in my workload. Although I stayed after hours to complete it, I was overwhelmed and needed to think of a better strategy. I decided I wanted to take a course to improve my Excel skills to become more productive. After doing some research, I spoke to my Manager regarding my plan and she was incredibly supportive of this decision. After completing of the course, I was able to immediately apply it to my work. In fact, I have been helping other members on our team with the knowledge I gained in the Excel course.

SAMPLE RESPONSE (CHARACTER-BASED): When I first started out as a Project Coordinator at Company XYZ, I was excited and eager to gain as much exposure in many facets of the business. I was responsible for coordination and supported my Manager on various construction related projects. Whenever an opportunity presented itself, without a doubt I agreed to take it on hoping to gain as much experience. I quickly learned that it dramatically impacted my work-life balance where I was required to work weeknights and weekends. Soon enough, I became overwhelmed and felt burnt out which effected the quality of my work. I took a moment to re-think my next course of action and came up with a plan to strategically tackle it. I realized that I needed to be aware of my bandwidth and understand what each project entails. I started to use a self-management tools to set realistic expectations which I had presented to my Manager who was also supportive. In the end, I am now more aware of my expectations and my ability to handle multiple projects which have positively impacted my team and Manager.

TELL ME ABOUT A FAILURE YOU OVERCAME

Much like the questions above, this is another tough question. Employers understand that everyone makes mistakes. The key to answering this question is to take ownership of the mistake, explain steps you took to correct it and what you have done to minimize the likelihood of any reoccurrence. This is also a great way to showcase your ability to story-tell your experiences.

FORMULA: STAR Interview Response Technique

Here's the structure to crafting a winning response:

SITUATION - background of the story to give the interviewer a better idea of the challenge

TASK - responsibility or role in the situation/challenge

ACTION – how you handled the situation or overcame the challenge

RESULTS – actions achieved by you. If possible, quantify your success

PRO-TIP: It's a common pitfall to use the word "we" versus "I" as the Employers are focused on what you did and what actions you took rather than by your team.

SAMPLE RESPONSE:

SITUATION: I was working as an Event Coordinator at COMPANY XYZ.

TASK: I was responsible for sending out the Company-wide invitation to our National Annual Kick-Off. Unfortunately, I missed 1 dealership and only realized it weeks leading up to the event.

ACTION: This was an important event to the Company, and I knew I had to come up with a detailed plan and act quickly. I drafted up a few ideas, each consisting a plan of execution and presented it to my Manager after admitting my mistake. Once my Manager and I agreed on the method of execution, I immediately reached out to our contacts to ensure there were enough vacancy for flights, accommodations, catering etc. to accommodate 6 extra employees. Once it was finalized, I personally gave each employee a call and filled them in with all the details.

RESULTS: Despite the time difference and the extra hours put in, I made sure to prioritize it as the event was fast approaching. In the end, each employee was very appreciative as I reached out to them personally and my Manager was also satisfied with the outcome.

BONUS QUESTION: TELL ME ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU RECEIVED CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM FROM YOUR MANAGER. WHAT DID YOU DO WITH THAT INFORMATION?

I thought we can tackle another tough question to help you master the answers as Employers are bound to throw in more than just one behavioural/situational question.

This one is my favourite. I often ask this question to see how well a candidate illustrates their story and how they can turn a negative experience into a positive learning opportunity. Constructive criticism is one area that truly shows the maturity of the individual over the span of their career. The way someone can narrate their story comes down to how they dealt with the situation allowing Employers to see how the candidate approaches different circumstances and if their personality and mindset are an overall fit for the organization.

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BONUS PRO-TIP: Spend the least amount time when describing the Situation and Task as Employers are keen in learning about your responses on Action and Results.

SAMPLE RESPONSE:

SITUATION: Months into my promotion as a Project Engineering Manager at Company XYZ, my team expanded from 3 to 7 members due to an organizational restructure.

TASK: The 4 new employees were reluctant to the way I managed the team. Not only were they not pulling their weight, but they were also impacting other members which resulted in a missed deadline.

ACTION: Ultimately, I had a conversation with the Director of Engineering to discuss the root cause of the issue. After explaining my side of the story, I admitted it was an oversight of mine. After our conversation, I drafted up an execution plan to minimize the likelihood of this happening again. I also took the initiative to enroll myself in an Employee Management course and currently putting tactics to use in my current role.

RESULTS: In the end, my entire team now understands my role and have a newfound respect for my leadership style and objectives have since been consistently met.



READY TO TAKE YOUR CAREER WITH THE NEXT LEVEL?

I am offering a complimentary 30-minute career assessment call where I will take this opportunity to learn about your career goals and how I will help you crush them!

Take action and invest in yourself today!

Book your career assessment call here

Let's Connect!

