



Questions You Need to NAIL!

Another great question has come forward and I think it's timely for many people. The question is "Why have you been out of work for so long?" We will address that one in week 8 (we are now in week 3) Please note that you can forward this email through facebook etc. so if you know of someone who could use this support, please forward it on. The more people I can help, the better my day becomes!

What are Your Top Three Strengths?

This is a tough one for most of us. We have a difficult time admitting we're good at something let alone speaking about it, but in presenting yourself it's important that you can answer this question with confidence without appearing to be egotistical.

You need to start preparing for this question long before the interview. If you are struggling to find what you are good at, start by looking at past performance reviews, speak to colleagues, bosses, family etc. They will tell you very quickly. It's good to note that you have skills and abilities. I like to distinguish them this way. Skills are things that you are good at and abilities are things you love to do. When you have a skill that's an ability, that for sure is a strength. It then becomes easier to talk about something you're good at and love to do. This is the perfect scenario that we strive for.

When you have your top strengths (try to come up with at least 6) then create statements to verify your strengths. For example if you believe you have strength in resolving problems, use that as a heading on a sheet of paper, then write down the problem, what you did to fix it and what the benefit or result was for the company. Develop a few examples for each strength. When this is complete, commit the information to memory.

Without sounding like a broken record (oops...or should I say broken iPod!), your first priority is to find out what the greatest challenges in the role are and match up your achievements from the list you created for yourself. *It's ideal when you can match your strengths with what employers are looking for.*

As a general guideline employers are looking for:

1. Specific skills that match their job competencies. For example:
 - In Sales - your strength may be that you *love the challenge of finding new clients* which would be a great fit for an evolving company that needs to grow their client base.
 - In HR, you may be *passionate about digging up great candidates* especially in sales. That would be great for the same company.
 - As an Admin Professional – you may *love to create systems and order*...again possibly a great fit for an evolving organization.
2. Good business acumen as it relates to the company/industry
3. Ability to demonstrate you have current achievements
4. Confident attitude/Enthusiasm
5. Honesty and Integrity
6. Solid communication skills – verbal and written
7. Good fit with the corporate environment
8. Adaptable to changing business needs
9. Clear purpose, ability to set goals
10. Dedication to achieve excellence

I encourage you to spend time thinking about your strengths. It's good for interviews as you can see but also is a great confidence booster! Next week we will cover "What's Your Greatest Weakness?"