

WHAT'S YOUR INTERVIEW I.Q.?
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By

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EMPLOYER'S VIEW

DO YOU LOOK RIGHT FOR THE JOB?

- Personal Appearance: Dress, Grooming
- Manner: Confident, Courteous, Positive
- Paperwork: Neat, Complete, Accurate

CAN YOU BE COUNTED ON TO DO THE JOB?

- Attendance
- Quality
- Punctuality
- Consistency

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR THE EMPLOYER

- Skills
- Employment Experience
- Abilities
- Volunteer Work
- Life Experience
- Training



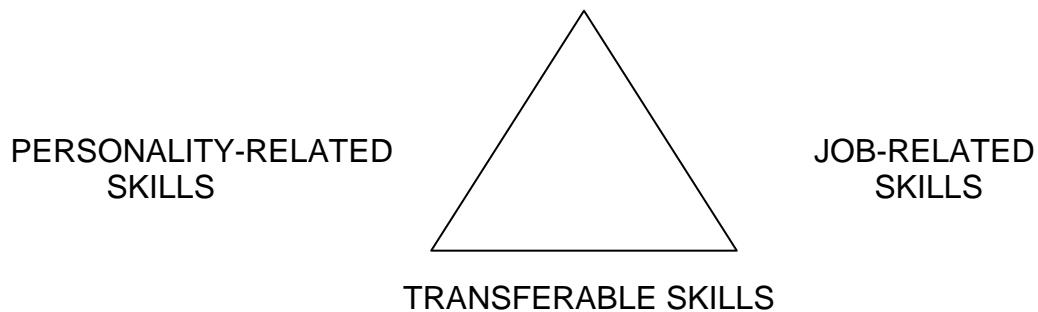
SKILLS TRIANGLE

What is your definition of a “skill?”

Here are a few different definitions:

- Skill: *
- * ability to do something well
 - * something you enjoy doing
 - * an ability that you have right now
-

I. Three types of skills comprise the skills triangle:



II. Identifying your skills

a) Transferable Skills-Transfer to any industry

Skills that may be taken from one job or life experience to another are called transferable skills. Examples include: keyboarding skills, editing skills, care-giving skills, and keeping financial records.

b) Personality-Related Skills

Assessments such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Keirsey Sorter can assist you in identifying these skills. Everybody has these types of skills. These skills are natural and don't have to be learned. Some examples include: being detail-oriented with data, being organized, or being outgoing.

c) Job-Related Skills

These skills are specific to a job or industry and are learned. Typically, these skills may have a certain vocabulary or lingo associated with them. For example, a computer programmer may write code using “JAVA,” or a medical assistant may be “skilled working with pulse oximeter equipment” or “set up nebulizer treatments.”

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS These skills transfer to any industry

	Strong Skill	Next Job		Strong Skill	Next Job
<u>KEY SKILLS</u>			<u>WORKING WITH DATA</u>		
SELLING	_____	_____	ANALYZE DATA	_____	_____
MANAGE MONEY	_____	_____	AUDIT RECORDS	_____	_____
UNDERSTAND / CONTROL BUDGETS	_____	_____	BUDGET / NUMBERS	_____	_____
MANAGE PEOPLE	_____	_____	CALCULATE / COMPUTE	_____	_____
SUPERVISE OTHERS	_____	_____	CHECK FOR ACCURACY	_____	_____
MEET DEADLINES	_____	_____	CLASSIFY THINGS	_____	_____
MEET THE PUBLIC	_____	_____	COMPUTER SKILLS	_____	_____
SPEAK IN PUBLIC	_____	_____	COMPILE	_____	_____
NEGOTIATE	_____	_____	DETAIL-ORIENTED	_____	_____
ORGANIZE / MANAGE PROJECTS	_____	_____	EVALUATE	_____	_____
SOLVE PROBLEMS	_____	_____	INVESTIGATE	_____	_____
ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY	_____	_____	KEEP FINANCIAL RECORDS	_____	_____
<u>WORKING WITH THINGS</u>			LOCATE ANSWERS, INFORMATION	_____	_____
ASSEMBLE THINGS	_____	_____	RECORD FACTS	_____	_____
BUILD THINGS	_____	_____	CONDUCT RESEARCH	_____	_____
CONSTRUCT / REPAIR BUILDINGS	_____	_____	SYNTHESIZE INFORMATION	_____	_____
DRIVE / OPERATE VEHICLES	_____	_____	SPREADSHEETS	_____	_____
GOOD WITH HANDS	_____	_____	WRITE CODE	_____	_____
OBSERVE / INSPECT	_____	_____	WORKING WITH DATABASES	_____	_____
OPERATE TOOLS / MACHINES	_____	_____			
REPAIR THINGS	_____	_____			
USE COMPLEX EQUIPMENT	_____	_____			
WORKING WITH COMPUTERS	_____	_____			

	Strong Skill	Next Job		Strong Skill	Next Job
<u>WORKING WITH PEOPLE</u>					
ADMINISTER	_____	_____	<u>WORKING WITH WORDS, IDEAS</u>		
CARE FOR	_____	_____	ARTICULATE	_____	_____
CONFRONT OTHERS	_____	_____	BILINGUAL	_____	_____
COUNSEL PEOPLE	_____	_____	VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS	_____	_____
DEMONSTRATE	_____	_____	WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS	_____	_____
TEACH / TRAIN	_____	_____	EDIT	_____	_____
HELP OTHERS	_____	_____	CREATE NEW IDEAS	_____	_____
INSIGHT	_____	_____	INGENIOUS	_____	_____
INTERVIEW PEOPLE	_____	_____	INVENTIVE	_____	_____
KIND	_____	_____	REMEMBER INFORMATION	_____	_____
LISTEN	_____	_____	<u>CREATIVE / ARTISTIC</u>		
MENTOR	_____	_____	ARTISTIC	_____	_____
OUTGOING	_____	_____	DRAW / PAINT / PHOTOGRAPH	_____	_____
PERSUADE	_____	_____	EXPRESSIVE	_____	_____
PLEASANT	_____	_____	PRESENT ARTISTIC IDEAS	_____	_____
SENSITIVE	_____	_____	DANCE, BODY MOVEMENT	_____	_____
SOCIABLE	_____	_____	<u>OTHER</u>		
TACTFUL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOLERANT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOUGH	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TRUSTING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
UNDERSTANDING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

PERSONALITY-RELATED SKILLS

Personality-related skills are skills that come naturally to you; you don't have to work at developing them. You have these skills due to your personality type. Remember that employers value these critical skills!

Check the personality-related skills you have:	Most of the time:	Some of the time:
Ambitious		
Patient		
Assertive		
Learn quickly		
Flexible		
Mature		
Dependable/Reliable		
Thoroughly complete assignments		
Sincere		
Empathetic		
Good sense of humor		
Physically strong		
Resourceful		
Highly motivated		
Intelligent		
Creative		
Leadership / comfortable taking charge		
Enthusiastic		
Persistent		
Self-starter		
Results-oriented		
Ask questions easily		
Able to assess and critique people and projects		
Work best independently		
Logical thinker / logical analysis		
Manual dexterity		
Multi-task with ease		
Strategic thinker		
Sensitive		
Adaptable / spontaneous		
Diplomatic		
Organized		
Efficient		
Best work done in teams		
OTHER:		

SKILLS WORKSHEET

Instructions: In the skills column, list your top skills. For each skill, write key words that help you recall three examples of when you used that skill.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS	EXAMPLE A	EXAMPLE B	EXAMPLE C
Problem-solve	Star Corp.: Created electronic tracking system -tracked \$2M of company purchases	IBM: Instituted new process that doubled label conversion output	Star Corp.: Developed efficient procedure for marketing software
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
PERSONALITY SKILLS	EXAMPLE A	EXAMPLE B	EXAMPLE C
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
JOB-RELATED SKILLS	EXAMPLE A	EXAMPLE B	EXAMPLE C
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

SKILL STATEMENT INFORMATION

80% OF ALL JOB SEEKERS ARE UNABLE TO IDENTIFY AND COMMUNICATE THEIR SKILLS TO EMPLOYERS!!

EMPLOYERS WANT TO KNOW:

- How many people or products were involved
- How many people you assisted
- How long the results lasted
- Size of the budget
- How quickly the task was accomplished
- Percent or amount of increase or decrease
- Savings of time and/or money

This type of communication is most effectively packaged as a...

SKILL STATEMENT

Skill statements contain the following 5 components:

1. *State the skill*
Identify your specific skill
2. *Describe the setting*
Give your job title and the name of the company where you worked.
In a problem solving skill statement, add the problem here.
3. *Tell the story by describing the action and reinforcing with measurable data*
What did you do? Give details! Add numbers-quantify.
How many? How long?
4. *Emphasize results*
Why or how was this situation significant to the employer? Identify increases or decreases....
5. *Offer a link to the job you are targeting (Optional)*
Tell them you will bring this skill (mention the skill from step one again) to the company.

* Adapted from "A Job Hunting Guide"; Georgia Dept. of Labor

SKILL STATEMENT EXAMPLE

1. *State the skill*

Identify your specific skill.

2. *Describe the setting*

Give the job title and the company where you worked. If the skill is problem solving, put the problem here.

3. *Tell the story by describing the action and reinforcing with measurable data*

What did you do? Give details! Add numbers!

How many? How long? (people, processes or products)

4. *Emphasize results*

Why or how was this situation significant to the employer? What was the benefit of what you did? (Was it two weeks before deadline? Identify increases or decreases.)

5. *Offer a link to the job you are targeting*

Mention the skill from # 1 again.

I will bring my _____ to this position.

Skill: I am very adept at designing spreadsheets using Microsoft Excel.

Setting: As Data Manager for XYZ, Inc., I was faced with the challenge of demonstrating to my fellow employees that a Contractor's proposed construction project was an unrealistic enterprise given the real estate market at the time.

Story/Action: I designed a complex spreadsheet that utilized all information available, including construction budgets, phasing schedules, real estate market and carrying cost information, as a tool to forecast how the project would impact my company's financial picture.

Emphasize Results: With the information incorporated into one comprehensive picture, the spreadsheet convinced my fellow employees that the project was too aggressive for the market conditions. Our company declined the opportunity to fund the construction project. The contractor found financing elsewhere and, soon thereafter, that project ended up in Bankruptcy.

Link: I will utilize my Microsoft Excel spreadsheet skills for the benefit of your company.

STAR TECHNIQUE INFORMATION

Format used by interviewers to gather all the relevant information about a specific capability that the job requires. This interview format is to have a higher degree of predictability of future on-the-job performance than the traditional interview.

S Situation	Detail the background. Provide a context. Where? When?
T Task	Describe the challenge and expectations. What needed to be done? Why?
A Action	Elaborate your specific action. What did you do? How? What tools did you use?
R Results	Explain the results: accomplishments, recognition, savings, etc. Quantify.
'STAR' Technique to Answer Behavioral Interview Questions	

STAR TECHNIQUE EXAMPLE

Situation: "A customer called up complaining that she'd waited more than two weeks for a reply from our sales team regarding a product order."

Task: "I needed to address the client's immediate concern and find out what happened to her order."

Action: "I apologized, got the details and passed them to our head salesperson, who contacted the client within the hour. I investigated why the order hadn't been answered. I discovered that it was a combination of a wrong phone number and a generic email address that wasn't being checked. I let the client know and we offered a goodwill discount on her next order."

Result: "The client not only continued to order from us but posted a positive customer service tweet."

You will want to use this whenever asked "Tell me about a time when..." "Describe a situation in which..." and/or whenever you have the chance!

SAMPLE THANK YOU EMAIL

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Thank you for meeting with me today about the Administrative Assistant position. I enjoyed talking with you and learning more about the position itself. I was also glad to share information about myself with regard to my interest in the position.

It was very interesting to hear about the vision you have of a candidate who would best fit your current needs. The particular impression you presented about someone being able to step right into this role and bring about change, would be a great opportunity for me to utilize my previous experiences reorganizing files and multi-tasking at busy front desk office settings. I would love to bring my energy, my previous experiences working as an Administrative Assistant, and my passion for the healthcare field to your office.

Best of luck with the rest of your search and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Janice Anderson
303-223-4444
janice.anderson@gmail.com

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about yourself OR Why should I hire you?
 - Use a skill statement pertinent to one of the main skills mentioned in the ad OR “Well, in addition to my (mention previous skill given in skill statement), I am also good at (use another skill statement with results).
2. What do you know about our company?
 - Mention information on their company or their latest product that you discovered via your research before the interview.
3. What is it about this job that interests you the most?
 - Relate how you can contribute to the company based on the ad and your research of the company or industry.
4. What is your major strength?
 - Know your strengths (more than one!); match your strengths to what the company needs.
 - Provide a skill statement of a time you successfully used a strength.
5. What is a weakness of yours?
 - In one or two brief sentences, give a weakness and turn it into a positive (e.g., “I sometimes expect everyone in the company to be as dedicated as I am. I’ve learned that not everyone has the same work ethic, and have learned to accept differences.”)
6. What are your salary requirements? OR What were you making at your last job?
 - Research salary prior to the interview (glassdoor.com, salary.com, payscale.com) to have a current range for that position.
 - Determine what you’re your salary needs are and be prepared to give a general range: “In the 50s,” or “\$35-45,000.”
 - “What I was making on my last job was based on a managerial position. This position has less responsibility, and my salary requirements have changed. My research for a position like this shows a range of 65 to 75K and that works for me.
7. Why are you /did you/ leave your last job?
 - Stay as neutral as possible, e.g., “OR “Our department was outsourced and all positions were eliminated”. Do NOT mention personality conflicts.
8. What is the biggest risk that you have taken?
 - Give an example using a skill statement that shows a benefit to the company from the risk you took.

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

9. Describe how you would solve a personal problem with another employee.
 - Your answer should mention communication skills. For example: "I would think about the cause of the problem, what I need and why, then set up a time to meet with the employee. I would explain what was bothering me and notice reactions, then ask what they thought and begin a discussion from there, asking also for their ideas regarding solutions."
10. What have you done that improved the bottom line?
 - Give an example of an experience using a skill statement.
11. Name a situation in which you failed and how you went about correcting it.
 - Use an example and focus on the correction and what you learned.
12. What was a recent, significant mistake that you made?
 - Be brief on the mistake and spend a sentence or two telling what you learned. Be sure it is something that can be seen as positive, i.e., bankrupting a company cannot be turned around into a positive.
13. Give an example of how you solved a work problem.
 - Focus on the job you are applying for and provide an example (via a skill statement) showing skills that will transfer to this job.
14. This is a high-pressure job. Are you up to it?
 - Say, "Yes" and mention a skill statement to illustrate a time you handled pressure well.
15. Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
 - Keep your answer general or centered on skill building, e.g., "I want to learn this job as quickly as I can to be productive and assume any additional responsibilities as they come along," or "I intend on continuing to upgrade my skills and grow professionally."
16. You have been out of work for a long time haven't you?
 - Don't be apologetic! For example: "I believe it is important that I get a position that uses my skills and experience in a way that will benefit the company as well as offer job satisfaction. In a tight job market, that takes a little longer, but I believe the time is well spent."
17. Why haven't you found a new position by now? (See above answer)
18. What challenges or developments do you see for this industry?
 - Hopefully your research prior to the interview will help you answer this.
19. You have too much experience for this job. Why do you want it?
 - Tell them, e.g., "I've been a comptroller for many years and now I want to concentrate on what I really enjoy, which is cost accounting. I believe all my experience will be an advantage at your company."

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

20. What is it about your last job that bothers you the most?
 - Give a fact that is neutral, if not positive. “I guess what bothered me the most was co-workers who frequently complained about their jobs to others.”
21. What motivates you?
 - Think of an example that relates to the qualifications for the job. For example: “Doing a good job for my own satisfaction and providing excellent customer service motivates me. If it weren’t for the customers, I wouldn’t have a job.”
22. What are your most important accomplishments to date?
 - Think of what stands out to you in your career AS IT RELATES TO THIS JOB.
23. What qualities do you have that would benefit our company?
 - Focus your answer on the qualifications for the potential job. For example: “In addition to my (name skills mentioned in the job description, which you have, and you may have already mentioned), I am also a good team player (then give an example via a skill statement).”
24. Tell me about a goal you did not meet. Why?
 - Discuss a time when you had to prioritize competing goals and focus on the accomplishment.
25. Name five adjectives to describe yourself.
 - Use the skills worksheets to select five of your top skills as they relate to the job.
26. Name an action you performed that went above and beyond the call of duty.
 - Give an example using a skill statement.
27. Tell me what you liked/disliked about your past bosses.
 - Try to think of something that wasn’t too bad & how you handled it, e.g., “My boss was disorganized sometimes. I made sure I let her know in advance of upcoming meetings and sent e-mails to keep her informed of projects.”
28. As you leave this interview, what is the one last question you want me to ask you?
 - Be upbeat, e.g., “When can you start?” or “What will it take to get you on board?”
29. What makes you unique?
 - Think of a personal quality, relevant to the job, and name a time when you successfully employed that quality.
30. How do you handle frustration on the job?
 - Give an answer that demonstrates your ability to be self-aware and responsible. For example: “First I take the time to notice the frustration and where it is coming from. Sometimes, when I am able, I take a walk to give me time to think. I will usually mull it over for awhile and, when needed, try to get another point of view from a neutral party.”

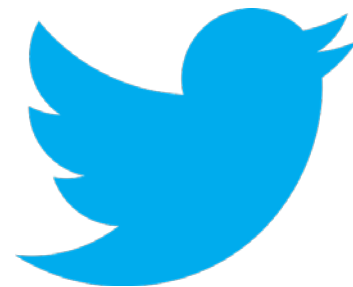
ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

31. Why do you want to change careers at your age? (or at this time)
- Stay positive in your answer and don't get defensive, e.g., "I find that as I grow and change, my needs grow and change too. I keep looking for opportunities to enrich my working life. I think this is the next step in that direction. I also know that a happy employee is a productive employee and I plan to bring my energy for this career to your company."
32. How much are you worth?
- Mention qualities and skills you have that match what the employer wants. For example: "An employee like me, who is responsible, hard-working and focused on client satisfaction, is worth a lot, wouldn't you agree?" Or you may ask, "What are my skills and experience worth to this company?"
33. If I were to talk to your employer today, what would s/he say about you?
- Focus on the qualities and skills that match the potential job, e.g., "That I am very focused on meeting the clients' needs"; OR "That I am a responsible employee and do my job very well."
34. How are you different from the other candidates?
- See answer # 29.
35. What was the latest book you read?
- Choose an inspirational or motivational book, if you have read one. Ideally the book would be connected to the job topic, but if not, pick something neutral, i.e., not extreme on any topic.
36. Would you work if you were independently wealthy?
- Mention that you would still choose to use your skills in some capacity, e.g., "Wish I truly had to make that decision! ☺ I hear that managing money is a full time job. Seriously, if I really loved the job, I would work part-time or as a volunteer."
37. How sensitive are you to criticism?
- Show an openness to communicate, e.g., "I understand we can always learn more and sometimes do better. If the criticism improves my productivity and is offered in a proactive way, I welcome it."
38. What is the most difficult challenge you have faced in your life?
- You may choose to give a relevant personal answer here, but try to come up with a professional one that fits. You can also stick to a more general statement to avoid going into too much detail, e.g., "I am seeking balance among my various responsibilities."
39. What are you doing now to improve yourself?
- Show an interest in on-going education/training or self-improvement, especially related to the job, e.g., "I am taking classes to upgrade my computer skills."

RESEARCH THE COMPANY AND PEOPLE INTERVIEWING YOU!

HOW???

Check the company website as well as:



POSSIBLE QUESTIONS BY THE JOB APPLICANT

These are only suggestions. Be sure to have some **specific** questions that demonstrate your knowledge of the company and/or industry. Do not ask questions that are clearly answered on the company website.

*****Use the information below as a “skeleton” and FILL IN with specifics from your research!!!

REGARDING QUALIFICATIONS

- What do you think are the most important qualifications for this job?
- Do you have an image of the ideal candidate for the position?
- Do you have any questions about my qualifications?
- What specific responsibilities of this job do you think are the most important?

GENERAL

- What would you hope someone in this position accomplish in the first three months on the job?
- What improvements or changes do you hope a new employee would bring to this position?
- What characteristics do you like most in an employee?
- What are the major challenges and rewards of this job?
- What are your goals for the department?
- Would it be possible to have a tour of the company/building?

REGARDING THE HIRING PROCESS

- Will there be a second interview?
- When do you expect to make a decision? OR
- When is the best time to follow up with you?
- May I call you by (date employer gave) if I haven't heard from you?
- May I have your business card?

REMEMBER: THE EMPLOYER IS LOOKING TO SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR THEM!!

NOTE: IT IS **NOT** APPROPRIATE TO ASK ABOUT SALARY AND BENEFITS UNTIL THE EMPLOYER MAKES YOU AN OFFER!

INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

Here is a reminder list for your next interview.

- Do your homework! Research the company, the field and the people you will be interviewing with. Be prepared!
- Dress professionally for the job
- Use the interviewer's name at least once during the interview
- Give a firm handshake, smile, and make eye contact
- Use good volume and a pleasant voice tone and be sure facial expressions, mannerisms, and movements are appropriate
- Maintain good posture
- Exhibit self-confidence (as in well prepared and practiced)
- Be prepared to give short and specific examples of when you used any of the skills listed in the job description
- Give skill statements using the STAR technique (think story)
- Give appropriate responses
- Have several questions ready about the job or company to ask the interviewer
- Thank the interviewer and express an interest in the job
- Ask for the next step – “When do you expect you’ll be making a decision?”
- Ask for a business card
- Give a handshake at the end
- Follow up with a thank you
- DO NOT ask about salary or benefits until you been offered the job