



**“Tell me
about
yourself.”**

Be prepared to answer the easiest of the “hot seat” questions!

Here is a simple and effective way to prepare your response to “Tell me about yourself.”

Prepare your response in three steps and then put the steps together.

- 1) **Identify the THREE most important qualities of the job you are interviewing for.** Begin your answer by stating that you have these qualities.

If it is a **sales job**, the most important qualities might be:

- The ability to communicate well with people.
- The ability to set goals and stay on track.
- The ability to handle rejection.

So you would say: “I am an extravert who interacts well with people. I like to set and attain goals and I’m very persistent.”

- 2) **State where you last worked** (or say the job that was most relevant to the position that you are applying for now) **and pick one or two things you achieved at that job.** For example: “I worked as a sales rep for the XYZ Company and I was their top salesman for three years running. Last year I sold over 1 million dollars of product in a brand new territory which set a company record high.”
- 3) **Explain why you want to work for the particular company you are applying for.** Show specific knowledge about the industry and the company that you are applying for. Show enthusiasm about the company. Example: “I want to work in pharmaceutical sales because it’s an area where I can use my ability to create solid, long-term relationships with clients. I’ve been studying your company’s performance in particular because you concentrate on cancer treatment drugs, which is an area that is growing at the rate of 17% a year. That gives you a solid base to introduce new products. I’d like to be part of that growth opportunity.”

Continued

NOTES FOR "TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF"

The wrong way to put it is: "I want to work for your company because you have great benefits and pay good commissions" That shows interest in YOURSELF and not interest in the company.

Don't make the reply to this opening question too long. Two minutes tops! You want to interact with the interviewer as soon as possible and if you go over two minutes you are giving a speech, not interacting.

Don't forget to make eye contact. You want to look the interviewer in the eye and connect so don't look down when you give your answer.

THE BIG BONUS

Start by stating their name. End your reply with a question to engage the interviewer. The key to winning at the interview is to get your interviewer talking. At the end of the reply in our example, instead of just pausing and waiting for the interviewer to ask something else, our interviewee could say: "When do you expect your next product to come to market?" This would be a good way of getting the interviewer to start talking.

PUT IT ALL TOGETHER!

If you put 1, 2 and 3 together from our example, and include the interviewer's name and end with a question, you get a reply to "Tell me about yourself" that goes like this:

"Julie, I'm an extravert who interacts well with people. I like to set and attain goals, and I'm very persistent. I worked as a sales rep for the XYZ Company and I was their top salesman for three years running. Last year I sold over 1 million dollars of product in a brand new territory which set a company record high. I want to work in sales because it's an area where I can use my ability to create solid, long-term relationships with clients. I've been studying your company's performance in particular because you concentrate on cancer treatment drugs, which is growing at the rate of 17% a year. That gives you a solid base to introduce new products. I'd like to be part of that growth opportunity. When do you expect your next product to come to market?"