

You Said What?!

43 Things Actually Said in Job Interviews

By Rachel Zupek, CareerBuilder.com writer



"I'm not wanted in this state."
"How many young women work here?"
"I didn't steal it; I just borrowed it."
"You touch somebody and they call it sexual harassment!"
"I've never heard such a stupid question."

Believe it or not, the above statements weren't overheard in bars or random conversations -- they were said in job interviews.

Maybe you were nervous, you thought the employer would appreciate your honesty, or maybe you just have no boundaries. Whatever the reason, you can be certain that you shouldn't tell an interviewer that it's probably best if he doesn't do a background check on you. (And yes, the hiring manager remembered you said that.)

We asked hiring managers to share the craziest things they've heard from applicants in an interview. Some are laugh-out-loud hysterical, others are jaw-dropping -- the majority are both. They will relieve anyone who has ever said something unfortunate at a job interview -- and simply amuse the rest of you.

Hiring managers shared these 43 memorable interview responses:

Why did you leave your last job?

"I have a problem with authority." - *Carrie Rocha, chief operating officer, HousingLink*

Tell us about a problem you had with a co-worker and how you resolved it

"The resolution was we were both fired." - *Jason Shindler, CEO, Curvine Web Solutions*

What kind of computer software have you used?

"Computers? Are those the black boxes that sit on the floor next to the desks? My boss has one of those. He uses it. I don't have one. He just gives me my schedule and I follow it." - *Greg Szymanski, director of human resources, Geonerco Management Inc.*

What are your hobbies and interests?

"[He said] 'Well, as you can see, I'm a young, virile man and I'm single -- if you ladies know what I'm saying.' Then he looked at one of the fair-haired board members and said, 'I particularly like blondes.'" - *Petri R.J. Darby, president, darbyDarnit Public Relations*

Why should we hire you?

"I would be a great asset to the events team because I party all the time." - *Bill McGowan, founder, Clarity Media Group*

Do you have any questions?

"Cross-dressing isn't a problem is it?" - *Barry Maher, Barry Maher & Associates*

"If you were a fruit, what fruit would you be?" - *Megan Garnett, Articulate Leadership Team, Articulate Communications Inc.*

"What do you want me to do if I cannot walk to work if it's raining? Can you pick me up?" - *Christine Pechstein, career coach*

"I was a chamber of commerce executive once hiring a secretary. [The candidate asked] 'What does a chamber of commerce do?'" - *Mary Kurek, Mary Kurek Inc. Visibility Consulting*

"Can we wrap this up fairly quickly? I have someplace I have to go." - *Bruce Campbell, vice president of marketing, Clare Computer Solutions*

"What is your company's policy on Monday absences?" - *Campbell*

"If this doesn't work out can I call you to go out sometime?" - *Christine Bolzan, founder of Graduate Career Coaching*

"How big do the bonuses really get once you make associate? I hear it's some serious cash." - *Bolzan*

"[The candidate asked,] 'Can my dad call you to talk about the job and the training program? He is really upset I'm not going to medical school and wants someone to explain the Wall Street path to him.' The dad did call. Then that dad's friends called and I ended up doing a conference call with a group of concerned parents ... long story." - *Bolzan*

"If I get an offer, how long do I have before I have to take the drug test?" - *Bolzan*

"When you do background checks on candidates, do things like public drunkenness arrests come up?" - *Bolzan*

"Can I get a tour of the breast pumping room? I heard you have a great one here and while I don't plan on having children for at least 10 or 12 years, I will definitely breast-feed and would want to use that room." - *Bolzan*

"So, how much do they pay you for doing these interviews?" - *Jodi R.R. Smith, Mannersmith Etiquette Consulting*

Why are you leaving your current job?

"Because I (expletive) my pants every time I enter the building." - *Abbe Mortimore, human resources manager, True Textiles Inc.*

"I was fired from my last job because they were forcing me to attend anger management classes." - *Smith*

Why are you looking for a job?

"Cigarettes are getting more expensive, so I need another job." - *Pechstein*

"My parents told me I need to get a job so that is why I'm here." - *McGowan*

Why do you want to work for us?

"Just for the benefits." - *Jennifer Juergens, JJ Communications*

"My old boss didn't like me, so one day, I just left and never came back. And here I am!" - *Matt Cowall, communications manager, Appia Communications*

"I saw the job posted on Twitter and thought, why not?" - *Rebecca Gertsmark Oren, communications director at The Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity*

What are your assets? (as in strengths)

"Well, I do own a bike." - *Pam Venné, principal, The Venné Group*

What are your weaknesses?

"I get angry easily and I went to jail for domestic violence. But I won't get mad at you." - *Pechstein*

"I had a job candidate tell me that she often oversleeps and has trouble getting out of bed in the morning." - *Linda Yaffe, certified executive coach*

"I am an alcoholic and do not deserve this job." - *Deb Bailey, owner, Power Women Magazine & Radio Show*

"I'm really not a big *learner*. You know ... some people love learning and are always picking up new things, but that's just not me. I'd much rather work at a place where the job is pretty stagnant and doesn't change a lot." - *Michaele Charles, Voice Communications*

When have you demonstrated leadership skills?

"Well my best example would be in the world of online video gaming. I pretty much run the show; it takes a lot to do that." - *Rachel Croce*

Is there anything else I should know about you?

"You should probably know I mud wrestle on the weekends." -- *Venné*

When can you start?

"I need to check with my mom on that one." - *Bolzan*

Use three adjectives to describe yourself

"I hate questions like this." - *Katrina Meistering*

Tell of a time you made a mistake and how you dealt with it

"I stole some equipment from my old job, and I had to pay for its replacement." - *Meistering*

Have you submitted your two weeks' notice to your current employer?

"What is two weeks' notice? I've never quit a job before, I've always been fired." - *Meistering*

Random responses

"One guy [said] 'it would probably be best' if I didn't run a background check on him. Of course, I did, and learned all about his long, sordid past of law-breaking. Our client actually offered him a job as a staff accountant, but quickly retracted the offer when I had to tell them all about his recent arrest for a meth lab in his basement." - *Charles*

"[A] guy said he did not have a mailing address, as he was living in a gypsy camp at the airport." - *Sandra L. Flippo, SPHR*

"I went into the lobby to pick up a candidate. As he stood up, his trousers fell to the floor! [He said] 'Oh, my gosh -- they told me I needed a suit for the interview. I've got no money -- so I borrowed this thing. It's too big!'" - *Beth Ross, executive and career coach*

"Wow -- I'm not used to wearing dress shoes! My feet are killing me. Can I show you these bloody blisters?" - *Bolzan*

"May I have a cup of coffee? I think I may still be a little drunk from last night." - *Smith*

(During a telephone call to schedule the interview) "Can we meet next month? I am currently incarcerated." - *Smith*

"[A candidate] was asked whether he could advocate impartially on behalf of the various universities he would be representing since he had attended one of them. He responded, 'Well, I don't like to poop where I eat, but I thought my education sucked, so I certainly wouldn't put that school above the others.'" - *Darby*

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