



CAREER SERVICES

First Interview Questions



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“Tell me about yourself.”

The first question at all interviews is not a question, but a request. “Tell me about yourself.” You have been told all your life not to brag about yourself, so you become uneasy. Get over it. This is about exuding confidence and putting your best foot forward! Do not think of it as bragging, but good marketing. Three minutes should suffice. Any longer you may be perceived as a motor mouth.

Be Prepared

- Have your response ready and stick to it.
- Don’t memorize it—you will sound stilted and fake.
- Follow an outline and fill in the details.

Where to Start

- Start no earlier than college unless you did something spectacular before then.
- Example: “After graduating from high school...”

Words of Caution

Preparing helps you to avoid giving away information that could prejudice the interview. Such information is sometimes illegal for the interviewer to ask.

- Avoid mention of any member of your family; of religion; political affiliations; marital status; sexual orientation; and/or most disabilities.
- Avoid divulging any personal information that has nothing to do with your ability to fulfill all the functions of the job.
- Never share any weakness or deficiency or use demeaning words or phrases to describe yourself—even jokingly.

Topics for Discussion

- Why you chose to attend Marshall University.
- Elaborate on what you listed in the skills section of your resume and point out how they match the skills the prospective employer is searching for.
- Talk about what you gained from the most routine jobs. *Example: “I have employed marketing and customer-service skills in the restaurant field. In my most recent position, I marketed appetizers, desserts, and other add-ons to customers’ orders which added value to their dining experiences. I would like to apply the same sales savvy to this job.”*
- Outstanding achievements and/or experiences.
- How well your preparation fits the needs of the organization.
- Communicate your desire and enthusiasm for the job you are applying for and back it up with examples you found while researching the company.
- Provide information about experiences you were successful at, i.e. sports, travel, leadership, etc.
- State your work philosophy.
- Give examples highlighting your team skills.

Final Advice

- Practice your script to become comfortable with it and not feel you’re bragging.
- Never lie about yourself, or embellish. You will get caught by a good interviewer.