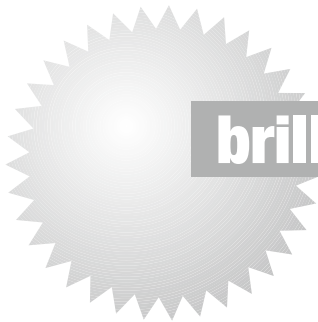


BRILLIANT ANSWERS TO TOUGH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SUSAN HODGSON 5th Edition



brilliant

brilliant answers to tough interview questions

fifth edition

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going to happen frequently for some time to come. I am really committed to the idea of working on research and development for a smaller company – I'm sure it provides a really good opportunity to work closely with other departments and get customer feedback more quickly. I like the atmosphere here too; everyone seems really keen and busy, but there is a real feeling that people are enjoying themselves and everyone has been very friendly.

**brilliant tip**

If you find that sometimes, whatever the topic, you are heading for an over-long or complex answer, it is a good idea to draw breath and check with the interviewer whether they would like you to say more. If they decline your offer, don't feel crestfallen and foolish; you may already have said enough to convince them, or they may have specific questions they wish to ask you later that explore the topic you have been covering. To ask what the interviewer would like also shows you are confident and in control of yourself.

Q We have several clubs and a lot of social activities for staff here. How do you feel about socialising with colleagues?

A I think that always says something good about a company – people will only do this if they want to. I am still friends with colleagues from some of my former posts, and I think it is great to get to know people outside the office and see another side to them. I would describe myself as a sociable person anyway, and I am always happy to join in anything like quiz nights, meals out, or whatever. What social clubs do you have at the moment?

Q Who else are you applying to?

A All the other leading firms of accountants, but I would far rather work for you if I had the choice. I attended one of

your recruitment events and had a chance to talk to staff who you have taken on recently and I am really impressed with the support you give for professional training and qualifications. Even more important to me though, is knowing you have such a large and successful computer-auditing department. That is something which really interests me and would really bring my IT skills and my interest in accounting together.

A I have really applied for anything that might help me get my foot in the door. Anything to do with arts and theatre is so competitive that I don't think I can be too choosy – I accept I will have to work my way up. That's not to say I am not a very strong applicant – I have helped out voluntarily with our last two local arts weeks and of course there's the box office job I had last summer at the Wild Side Theatre. I am really interested in this administrative job you are offering – my experience to date suits it very well.

A No, I have drawn up a list of other companies that would interest me and I have my CVs all ready to go but, after having had a part-time job with you for a while last year, I felt I would really like to work for you. Although it is taking a bit of a risk, I would rather see how things went with my application to you, before I send off any more CVs.



brilliant tip

The head of recruitment for a large retail chain recently commented that many graduates seemed to have applied for anything and everything and it made it hard to work out how they really felt about her company. If you do have to apply very widely, find a way to describe your strategy so that it appears focused.

Q Have you received job offers from anyone else?

A No, not so far, although I do have another interview to go to on Friday.

A Yes, I have just received an offer from Spring Fresh Foods to join their product development division, but I am more interested in your product range and I'm also impressed by your record on environmental issues.

Q If one of our competitors offered you a job now, would you accept?

A I would have to look very carefully at exactly what they were offering, not simply in terms of financial reward, but how relevant it was to my experience and how it might develop my career, but I would really much prefer to work here if I were given the opportunity.

An interviewer is not going to base his or her decision on whether to make you a job offer on what other applications you have in the pipeline, but examining your job-hunting strategy is another way of assessing some of your planning, decision-making and analytical skills. If they are impressed with you at interview, it will be of interest to them that other people may be making you offers and that they could lose out. Don't take any unwise gambles on this one though, like saying you have had other offers if you haven't: if you are level pegging with another candidate (and this can happen, especially where several staff are being taken on at the same time), they may decide you are a lost cause.

Summary and reminders

Try to find out as much as you can about your prospective employer: after all they will want to find out a great deal about you.

- 1 Do your research in advance whenever possible.
- 2 If researching through social media, remember the difference between facts and opinions.
- 3 Make use of the time immediately before your interview either by talking to members of staff or taking note of any publicity about the organisation and its customers that you can find.
- 4 Remember that all this hard work before the interview benefits you too – it helps you work out whether they are the right employers for you, not just whether they think you are suitable for them.



CHAPTER 5

The personal touch

All about what makes you tick and why this matters

