

THE “TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF” QUESTION

What is the one question you know you will get asked at the beginning of each and every first interview?

"So, tell me a little bit about yourself"

My clients continually share with me that although it seems like this should be an easy question to answer, they struggle with exactly what to say!

The really good news is that I am going to give you a short script to answer this question and you will only have to fill it out once! It will work for multiple interviews. This is a simple way to break down what to say each time you are asked to share a little about yourself.

You will want to keep your response to something you can say in under a minute. This ensures you don't lose your listener.

Your template begins with a statement such as:

"Well, as you can see from my resume, I have..."

What you state from there should first include any relevant academic information, years in the industry or position, and short highlights of the key positions you have held. It may sound something like this:

"Well as you can see from my resume, I have 15 years' experience in the construction industry. After graduating from Purdue University with a bachelor's degree in construction management, I was hired by Turner Construction to work as a project manager in their hospitality division. That's where I got my feet wet in project management. I quickly developed a reputation for bringing projects in on time and under budget. Then I was recruited by company X..."

Continue with this theme through to your current position. Invest the most time talking about your previous positions that are most relevant to the position for which you are interviewing. In most cases, this will be the position(s) you have held in the last 5 to 7 years.

Your template ends with the statement:

"I am really excited to be here and to learn more about the qualities you are looking for in a top candidate. Would it be okay to talk about that now?"

Your interviewer(s) will love your positive attitude and you will get to learn more about the position right from the horse's mouth, so-to-speak. Jot down the key position points they share with you because these are your talking points for the rest of the interview!

Don't forget to practice your template several times out loud until you feel comfortable. This will reinforce your confidence, too.

By using this simple technique, you will calmly and confidently answer this question and impress your interviewer in the process.

--Mary Elizabeth Bradford