

“Tell Me about Yourself” - Teaching Notes

A. What is a “Tell me about yourself” question?

In job interviews, the self-introduction question marks the formal start of the interview and invites you, the applicant, to sketch a profile of yourself in terms of assets relevant to the position you are interviewing for.

B. How to Prepare and Structure your Answer

When you are introducing yourself, the interviewer would like you to focus on the reasons why they should hire you. You are expected to highlight **knowledge, abilities** and **skills** that are relevant to the **job description**.

Use a **three-part** structure for introducing yourself - **opening, body** and **ending**. The **opening** can cover your basic information, like name, study level and major, and why you chose your degree programme. In the **body part**, you can relate your strengths and past experiences to the job description. Focus on two to four selling points that make you stand out. In the **closing part**, you need to stress why you are a good fit for the role in one to two sentences.

C. Common Problems and How to Deal with Them

Problem 1: Irrelevant Content Because of Openness of the Question

Solution 1: Your self-intro should be rooted to your professional life that relates to the job description. Generally, interviewers do not expect to hear about your personal life.

However, some interviewers wouldn't mind if you mention your free time activities to show that you have a work-life balance.

Problem 2: Lack of Proper Structure

Solution 2: You are advised to structure your response in three parts, that is, your basic information in the opening, 2-4 selling points in the body and stressing why you are a perfect fit at the end.

Problem 3: Unnatural Delivery

Solution 3: You can consider listing your answer in point form. With a few key points, you will become more conversational and sound more authentic when giving your self-intro.

D. Concluding Remarks

The “Tell me about yourself” question is an almost must-have question in a job interview and it usually comes first. Your answer will create a crucial first impression because it is the first time the interviewers listen to you talk. Prepare your self-introduction, practise with it and be ready to deliver an impressive answer in a job interview.