**Recommended Interview Answers**

**Tell me about yourself.**

* Talk about your past work and study experience.
* Your answer could also involve your perceived strengths and areas you are committed to use examples; which demonstrate this from life experiences and work history.
* You could also discuss what prompted you to apply for this position.
* Identify aspects about yourself relevant to the requirements of this position.
* Talk about what your current aspirations/goals, values and long term goals.
* You may want to mention a few major achievements in your life and why they were important to you (as long as they are relevant to the position you applied for).

**Avoid saying:**

“I don’t know what you mean” – Instead ask what in particular they would like to know about.

“There’s not much to say.”

“I don’t really like to talk about myself.”

“I didn’t expect this question.”

Don’t talk about aspiring to be something else (engineer, biochemist, accountant).

**Why did you apply for this position?**

* Discuss career aspirations and or lessons from previous work experience.
* Your view and knowledge of the organization – generally their products/ services, their future prospects, the work environment and culture.
* Your confidence in being able to meet their needs.
* Be sure to demonstrate a high level of enthusiasm and that you have thought about this question.
* You never want to lead them to believe you are there solely for the money/benefits/ bonuses etc.

**Strengths and Weaknesses**

**Strengths**

* Be sure to talk about qualities you have that the employer is looking for, qualifications they posted in the job ad.
* Tell them how you can benefit their company, what you can bring to them.
* **Do not** talk about strengths that have nothing to do with the job.

**Weaknesses**

* **Do not** say that you don’t have any weaknesses or can’t think of one right now.
* Mention a weakness but be sure to tell them how you are improving on it or what you did to turn it into a strength.
* The "weakness" question is popular with interviewers not because they want to torture you but because they're interested in hearing how you tackle challenges.
* The most important thing to remember is that after you name your weakness you MUST discuss what you have done to overcome it.

**Here are a few examples:**

*"I used to have a tendency to procrastinate. So, now I am always sure to set a strict schedule for all of my projects well in advance and I set personal deadlines. This organization has really helped."*

*"Once in a while, I focus too much on the details of a project. So now, when I'm working on a project, I always make sure at the end of the day to sit back and take a few minutes to think about the general scope of my work. It forces me to keep priorities straight and helps me keep the right mindset."*

*"I used to have some problems with organization. So now I carry a schedule book around throughout the day and I also use this Palm Pilot to keep me on track. It's worked out great!"*

**Tell me about a problem that you had with a supervisor or co-worker and what was the end result?**

* Answer by telling them about a situation that was “difficult”, the action you took and what the result was.
* The interviewer is looking for interpersonal skills, how you resolve conflict, and how you communicate with the supervisor or co-work to work out the problem.
* **Do not** mention any names.

**How would a friend or co-worker describe you?**

* This question is about seeing yourself through others eyes.
* Think about some personality traits that would relate or be beneficial to the position that you are applying for.
* You don’t want to mention things like fun and crazy. Try outgoing, hard working, dependable…
* If you can, quote from a coworker ex: “Jane at the Daisy Mart said that I was the hardest working employee there.

**Tell me what you know about this company?**

* As a general rule, before you head to the interview, you should check the company’s website or go to the building.
* As a prepared applicant, you can share with the interviewer the research that you found out about this company. What is the history of the company, what is the product or service they provide?

**What aspects of your work experience have prepared you for this position?**

* Avoid mentioning experience that is irrelevant to the job you are interviewing for.
* You can mention work, educational, volunteer experience, extracurricular activities that you gained/developed skills in relation to the position that you are applying for.

**Why should we hire you?**

* This is where you really need to sell yourself!
* Talk about any and all of the skills that you have to offer the employer.
* What can you offer to the company that the other candidates cannot?
* Use this opportunity to discuss skills the employer may not have asked you about.

Note: These materials have been developed and adapted from a range of sources for the purpose of the Bruce County Job Search Club.