

**TOP 15
GRADUATE
INTERVIEW
QUESTIONS
WITH
SAMPLE
ANSWERS**

**—
P O N N Y S H L A M**

Top 15 Graduate Interview Questions with Sample Answers

By

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Introduction

When it comes to job interviews, many soon-to-be graduates are dragged by the feeling of anxiety, frustration and overwhelm when it comes to finding practical and relevant career advice and tips dedicated to fresh graduates.

The truth is, **EVERYONE** can handle interview questions with ease – no matter how tricky they seem to be! You just need to understand the rationale behind why these questions were asked, prepare thoroughly before attending an interview, and communicate effectively and persuasively during interviews.

In this short and condensed eBook, I have highlighted the top 25 most commonly asked job interview questions for graduates and entry-level positions, and provided you sample answering structures to demonstrate on how you can answer each type of questions **tactfully yet authentically**.

With the answering structures, you can **adapt the answers according to your particular background**, experiences, personality as well as the position for BEST RESULTS.

This eBook is an abstract version of my new Kindle eBook: [First Job Bible: Strategies and Answers to Top Job Interview Questions for Graduates](#). It also serves as a complementary training material of my **6-hour Advanced Interview Skills Video Training Program** of [Career Storytelling: The Complete Job Interview Guide](#), where I teach Job Search Success step-by-step to Graduates and Young Job Seekers. Every topic from finding your career options, Resume & LinkedIn profile writing, Job Interview hack with NLP techniques to Confidence strategies would be covered in this comprehensive course.

Let me guide and accompany you on your job search journey!

Thank you for reading this and if you need any additional help, feel free to email me at hi@ponnylam.com.

Job Interview 101

As one of the most trusted selection methods in recruitment, Job interviewing is an integral part of the selection process which can be defined as:

Two human beings having an exclusive conversation to exchange information and feelings relevant to a position.

Therefore, the ultimate goal of an interviewee is to make the interviewer **thinks & feels like hiring** you.

It is your responsibility to make yourself memorable. It is about how you convey the logical reasons and contagious passion that you and your qualifications are a good fit for their culture and their needs; and whether you can show and paint a picture in their mind on what you can do for them if they hire you.

This involves effective **Career Storytelling**, which you will learn how to do so by leveraging my *Career Storybank method*.

5 Types of Behaviourial-based Interview Questions

We know interviewer must identify the core skills and competencies that the job required before conducting any job interviews. Thus, interview questions are designed to assess around these 5 clusters of competencies:

1. **Task Questions:** Which are about hard skills, task handling, and technical knowledge related to your core job duties
2. **Thought Questions:** Which are about ideas, logic, and mental abilities
3. **People Questions:** Which are about relationships and emotional intelligence
4. **Self-Management Questions:** Which are about your state of resourcefulness, like stress and time management
5. **Intention Questions:** Which are all started with “Why” to understand your rationale in your decision making like your reasons for choosing a position, company or industry.

To answer these questions effectively, you need to demonstrate that you have “been there, done that”. How cool would that be if you already have a collection of competency-based Career Stories ready before you attend an interview, so you can just pick the one you like as you go?

Rules of Thumbs When Responding to Job Interview Questions

- **Be authentic:** Avoid sounding too robotic even if you are recalling a memorised story. Tell the story as if that is happening right NOW and make sure when telling the story, your energy level matches with the content you are delivering.
- **Keep it conversational:** Use simple languages and short sentences for easy listening
- **Frame** your Career Stories with STAR approach to get your messages across
- Keep your answers rich in content to arouse listeners’ interest, but still be concise and straight to the point. Remove irrelevant details.
- **Variate your sentence structure:** Don’t start every sentence with “I” which might give an impression that you may be too ego-centric
- **Describe “how you make things happened”** more than “how life is happening on you”; a go-getter who take the responsibility in life

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Top 15 Graduate Job Interview Questions with Sample Answers

“Tell me about yourself.”

****Keep it within 1.5 minutes***

Sample Answer:

“Sure and I am glad to be here today. **[Quick 3 lines to put an Adjective to your Face]** You can call me _____ and it means _____ (if your name or nickname has special meaning). I discovered my passion and talent in _____ (the field of interest) since age _____ so I chose _____ as my major.

[Achievements/internships] Throughout my college years I have been actively involving in business as well as international exposures – Like I had internships with _____ (employers) where I learnt _____ and gained valuable industry knowledge. Moreover, in year 3 I went to _____ for academic exchange/ overseas service trip where I gained valuable life experiences and enriched myself culturally.

[Activities/ Leadership] I also took responsibilities of several social organisations, such as _____ to polish my people skills and problem-solving. As a team we have successfully achieved _____.

[Characters] I consider myself/ My friends would describe me as a _____ (name your top 3 strengths/personality traits) person. That’s why I am attracted to this position which requires someone who is/has _____ (top 3 key contributes you find from job descriptions) and with a vision to _____ (some keywords of the company’s vision if applicable), which sounds really exciting to me to start me career in.”

“Tell me about your biggest challenge as a college student and how have you handled it.”

[TASK QUESTION]

[SELF-MANAGEMENT QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“One of my biggest challenges as a college student was prioritisation. **[Describe the context and why it happened]** During college, I had a 20-hour lecture schedule, I worked part-time, and I also held leadership positions in various social organisations. Although I consider myself self-disciplined but I was pulling myself too tight on managing my responsibilities and expectations from whom I work with. **[Self-awareness]** I soon realised that I needed to stay on top of my priority list instead of being led by my rigid plans. **[Actions for improvement]** I researched and learnt that Energy Management is more important than just time management. Ever since then I make reasonable time plans accordingly to my energy levels, say studying in the morning when I can focus the most, part-time work in the afternoon when I feel social, and team meetings of social organisations are always over dinner when we are the most creative. This has been very effective thus far and improved my efficiency tremendously. I still use it to this day (show them your planner). **[Lessons learnt]** I’m glad I learned this skill early on in college, and going through that challenge has helped me prepare for the upcoming challenges that will occur in the workplace.”

“What are your strengths?”

[TASK QUESTION]

[SELF-MANAGEMENT QUESTION]

**Relate your answers to the skills and qualities required for the position*

Sample Answer:

“I personally pride myself on my ability to _____, _____ and _____. These qualities are polished further through my internship/leadership experience at _____. **[How they can help your job]** I believe these strengths would allow me to perform _____ in this role. As a fast and proactive learner, I also dedicate myself in continuous learning which allows me to keep growing and improving together with the company in the long term.”

“Tell me about your weaknesses.”

[SELF-MANAGEMENT QUESTION]

**Choose qualities that are not critical to your role or that you have already overcome*

Sample Answer:

“Actually there are a lot that I want to improve myself on. One of them is Public Speaking. **[Improvement Actions]** I used to be really shy, but through joining Toastmasters as well as many practices, now I’m getting better.”

OR

“I’m always impatient and want things to happen fast, which put many tensions on myself as well as onto other people. **[Improvement Actions]** I have learnt to adjust myself so as long as we have given our best, we can relax and don’t attach too strongly

to the results. This mindset adjustment is helpful in maintaining my peace of mind as well as my relationships.”

“Tell me about a suggestion or initiative you have made.”

[THOUGHT QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“During my internship, the marketing team were asked to suggest ideas for increasing the brand awareness through social media channels. **[Proactive actions]** Although I was not in the marketing team, I volunteer myself to the meeting and raised several suggestions. **[Explain your idea]** They took one idea of mine, which was to go Facebook Live during one of our product creation process for followers to have a sneak peek. **[Results]** That experiment was quite successful with >100 attended the live sessions, and the Company page gained 300 new fans right after that Live session.”

“Tell me about a time when you went above and beyond.”

[THOUGHT QUESTION]

[SELF-MANAGEMENT QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“Thank you and it’s a great question. During my internship at _____, in which I held the position of _____, I was put on a special assignment on customer feedback analysis. **[Describe the challenge]** In 3 weeks the 2 of us had to complete the 2000+ questionnaires verification and analysis. **[Your actions]** I came in early and stayed late every day from that point forward. Even though I wasn’t getting paid overtime, I was willing to give my extra to get things done. **[Rewards/ Results]** After all

the hard work, we ended up completed the assignment two days before the deadline with high recognition from our supervisors, which was really encouraging.”

“What is your biggest achievement?”

[TASK QUESTION]

[SELF-MANAGEMENT QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“I was once asked to give a presentation to share my experience on Time Management with 200+ college freshmen. **[Why it’s biggest]** At first, I thought I wouldn’t be able to deliver it without embarrassing myself since I have never done a public speaking session to such a large audience. **[Success factors]** But I prepared thoroughly and practised it in front of small groups of my friends until I had the confidence to deliver it to a large group. **[Rewards]** I was really pleased with the positive response on the day from the audience, and I feel motivated to speak up more on future occasions.”

“Why do you choose this career?”

[INTENTION QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“**[Your Passion]** I have always wanted a job “helping” people improve their lives. **[Experiments]** I took several internships and part-time roles to experiment and see if I really like working in this industry. Among different roles I find myself most suited in _____ **[this career]** where I can utilize my _____ **[your strengths]**. To be successful in a career takes a combination of passion and talents and I’m very happy that this career offers me a platform to provide my values to others.”

“When you have conflicts with your teammates in a group project, how would you handle it?”

[PEOPLE QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“**[Your thought on this]** It is natural to have very different, sometimes opposing ideas within a group. As long as we focus on the common goals, and not going into personal attacks, I believe it’s great that as a group we can consider an issue from different perspectives. **[Related experiences]** Sometimes people do get emotional when they are talking about topics that they are passionate about. **[Your approach]** I would try my best to understand where they are coming from and seek the common ground of opposing views. It is also helpful for me to remind the group what our original objectives and goals are to bring everyone back to a rational discussion.”

“Why was your GPA so low?”

[SELF-MANAGEMENT QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“**[Context]** In my freshmen year, my family went into a difficult financial situation. Back then I worked 30 hours per week to pay the tuition fees. Of course that greatly affect my studies; **[Your adjustment]** but in the 2nd semester I got better in my time management and was able to find jobs that paid higher so I could spend less hour working and focus more on my studies. **[Learnings]** It was difficult, but I learnt a lot in finding ways to optimise the resources we have on hand and be creative and resilience during a challenging situation.”

“Give me one example of when you have used your problem-solving skills.”

[THOUGHT QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“**[Situation]** When I had my internship at _____ (company name and city), there was a time when everyone in office went out for a large-scale event, and I was the only person in the office for 2 hours. **[Tasks]** The phone rang, and I picked up a call from an overseas customer complaining about a technique issue of a product. **[Actions]** Although I was not sure if I could help, I resolved to provide him with some preliminary suggestions from the User Manual which I was working on. I then passed the case to my technical support colleagues when they came back. **[Results]** They were surprised since my suggestions were correct and when they called back, the customer said the issue was already resolved.”

“Tell me about a time you failed, what you learned from it, and how you would respond in a different way if you encountered something similar again.”

[TASK QUESTION]

[SELF-MANAGEMENT QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“**[What failure]** When I was with the Art Society as _____ (your role), our first event was a failure with only 15 students attended it. **[Context]** It was a talk on appreciating the art & beauty in our daily lives, shared by young artists that we collaborated with. **[What went wrong]** We had marketing promotions through multiple

channels, and the online responses seemed to be okay, but eventually very few people showed up. **[Lessons learnt and a different way]** My biggest lesson learnt was that in Marketing we could not be over-optimistic in “Likes” on social media, and we need to make it very easy for our audience to take action, like making every detail like venue, timing, what to expect, any food provided etc crystal clear and accessible so to encourage them to take real action.”

“How do you see yourself in 5 years?”

[INTENTION QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“I consider my next 5 years as my golden years in growing myself into a professional in _____ (your field). **[What are you able to perform then]** By then I would have gained enough technical experience as well as people skills so I can become able to lead a small team for a _____ project. **[what you expect the company to support you]** I believe if the company offers rotation to different departments for me, I would be able to understand the operations in a deeper sense, which supports and enables me in leading cross-functional projects by 5 years’ time.”

“Why do you want to work for us?”

[INTENTION QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

“**[Their key differentiation]** There are several key players in the industry, and what set _____ (company come) apart from others is your focus on corporate social responsibility. **[Why it matters]** Consumers nowadays are highly aware of the possible impact of their buying decisions. In particular, I know from research that _____

(company come) is launching a new project in bridging sustainability and social engagement with the Design of _____ (product name), **[Relation with You]** which I'm highly interested in and would love to contribute if there's a chance."

"Why should we hire you? What makes you different than other candidates?"

[INTENTION QUESTION]

Sample Answer:

"[Your strengths] I understand _____(company name) puts really strong focus on attracting talents like myself who are passionate in _____ (your field), hungry for learning, entrepreneurial and a self-starter (values & capabilities related to the company).

[Your achievements] By my internships and overseas project experiences, I believed I had proved myself as someone who requires minimum supervision, works well in a collaborative team environment, and has shown my strong enthusiasm in this industry.

[Your competitive advantages] When comparing to my peers, I'm more self-disciplined, and what's more, I have been teaching myself on topics of _____ (hottest topics in your field) through online learning. It is important to stay ahead with the technological development and act before they affect our industry and markets.

[Benefits to the team] I'm a fast learner, and you can count on me to research on the latest technologies and share my findings with the team so I can save you time and your team members can leverage on my efforts for better decisions."



More Career Resources

I hope you enjoyed reading this free eBook and get inspired to write up your interview answers with your unique mix of talents and exposures!

However you totally understand that to win job offers and land the job you desire right after college is **MORE than just** crafting the proper interview answers!

Your Next Step 1:

Unlock Advanced Interview Strategies by reading my **New Kindle eBook:**



[Read it on Kindle!](#)

Your Next Step 2:

By now ***you should totally understand*** that to win job offers is ***more than just*** crafting the right interview answers alone!

Empower yourself with a practical life skill that will benefit you forever!



[Career Storytelling:](#) [The Ultimate Job Interview Guide](#)

This course aims to give you a thorough, all-inclusive and actionable Job Hunt Training from the angle of **Mind Mastery - including mindsets, confidence strategies and influencing skills.**

It's like having Yoda by your side to ensure that the force is with you, always.

Stop wasting time in researching job search tips endlessly across the internet. Join **10,000+ graduates from 110 countries** to learn strategies and tactics that are proven to work!

I truly appreciate your effort in reading this far, so I would like to OFFER you a **Special Discount** to get my **Career Storytelling: Complete Job Interview Guide** which valued ~~US\$99~~ at only **US\$15** with the coupon code: **15QAPROMO1**

Praises

Ahmed Mohamed Attya



"I'm glad to finish it as a student I gained a lot of experience and of course i'm going to recommend it to my friends. THANKS!

Dear Future i'm ready <3"

Amelia Jackson



"This course is very comprehensive. I graduated 3 years ago, and I'm surprised to learn so many new concepts and techniques - especially the image styling tips that I needed so much! The Instructor's teaching style is very practical and encouraging. Thank you so much. Highly recommend to all recent graduates."

Stephen



"Very comprehensive and useful. All the fresh graduates should take this course before going to the interview. I really hope that this course is available 5 years ago before I go to work. Thank you so much Ponny."

James Yeung



"I didn't know what NLP is before taking this course...i still don't know now LOL but the techniques are working...I feel more confident now. the one on confidence & peak performance is a MUST WATCH! Only half way thru now but enjoy the course so far."

About Ponny



Career Educator & Purpose Coach

As a former corporate recruiter and university career advisor in the past 10 years, **Ponny** understands deeply the hopes and fears of both the hiring side and the job seeking side. Her holistic perspective of the job scene empowers her to create effective and target-oriented career training and interview skills training to help you achieve your career goals.

Ponny is a pragmatic idealist who strongly believes that each of us has a calling as unique as a fingerprint. It's her personal mission to inspire and empower YOU to discover your true potentials, because by bringing out the best in everyone, together we can contribute to the greater good.

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