

# Most Important Job Interview Question Is Asked By YOU!

STRATEGY

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Throughout the job hunting process you will be asked many questions, from “Why do you want to work at our company?” to “Tell me about your current (or previous) boss,” as well as a multitude of similar “qualifying” questions. How you answer each of these questions is of course very important. There is, however, one *single* question that arguably is the *most* important one that will be asked during a face-to-face job interview, and it’s a question that’s *not* asked by a hiring manager. It’s a question *you* ask! **And . . . it’s a question that can actually get you hired!**

Normally, the question you ask—or the one you *should* ask!—will be in response to the question a hiring manager typically poses as the interview is winding down. Usually, the hiring manager’s question goes something like this:

**“Now, what questions do *you* have for me? “**

Most job candidates—erroneously!—consider this merely a “throw-away” question and usually say something inane, such as, “I really don’t have any questions.” Or, “You’ve pretty much answered all the questions I had.”

In my professional experience working with hundreds and hundreds of candidates and hiring managers alike for nearly a decade as a professional “headhunter,” an answer such as this will practically *guarantee* that you will *automatically* be eliminated from further consideration! While there is no *perfect* way to answer the hiring manager’s question, *star* candidates answer it by asking *their own question*, and that question usually goes something like this:

**“Mr./Ms. Hiring Manager, let’s assume for a moment that I am your candidate of choice and, in turn, that your company is my company of choice. It is one year from now and you are doing my performance review. What would I have had to accomplish over the year in order for you to give me the highest performance rating? What would make you know for certain that you made a good hire?”**

How important is it for you to ask a question like this in response to the hiring manager’s “winding down” question? Consider what just one hiring manager recently told me over the telephone following an interview with our candidate.

“I want to make your candidate an offer, Skip,” he said. “You won’t believe the question that she asked *me!*”

Then the hiring manager proceeded to tell me all about the question the candidate had asked. He concluded with,

“That is by far the *best* question I have ever had a candidate ask,” he said. “It not only made me think, but it also shows me that the candidate wants to know what good performance actually looks like. It demonstrates that she has an ‘accomplishment and achievement’ frame of mind.”

The fact of the matter was, of course, I already knew the question that our candidate had asked as the interview wound down. Why? Because we coach *all* of our candidates to take this approach in face-to-face interviews! (Just coincidentally, over the past few months we have had two people get hired *specifically* because they asked this question. How do we know that? Because, once again, the hiring managers told us so!)

Given the challenge and long odds today of actually making it to a face-to-face interview, you need to use every tactic, every “secret,” in your hiring game arsenal. In other words, you need to brand yourself as being unique and therefore *different* from the vast majority of other job seekers. My advice to *significantly* improve your chances of getting a job offer following a face-to-face interview? Memorize this “one question that can get you hired,” and then use it the next time you are on an interview. Then “Link In” with me on LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com/in/skipfreeman](http://www.linkedin.com/in/skipfreeman)) and tell me how the hiring manager responded. I’d love to hear *your* stories!

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**Skip Freeman** is the author of ["Headhunter" Hiring Secrets: The Rules of the Hiring Game Have Changed . . . Forever!](#) and is the President and Chief Executive Officer of [The HTW Group \(Hire to Win\)](#), an Atlanta, GA, Metropolitan Area Executive Search Firm. Specializing in the placement of sales, engineering, manufacturing and R&D professionals, he has developed powerful techniques that help companies hire the best and help the best get hired.