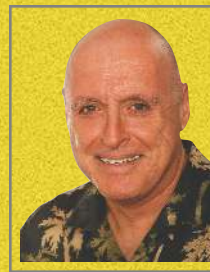


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 821 How to Answer Basic Job Interview Questions — Part 1

If you're applying for a new job, or as Guam's economy improves and you'll be in the market to consider a new position, you'll probably be interviewed and face a long list of questions. I'm Jerry Roberts, we've pulled some of those you'll likely have to answer, and we'll tackle them next, on The Extra Point.

No matter how many times you've gone through a job interview, there is usually still a bit of nervousness on the part of most applicants, just because of the uncertainty of what the questions may be, plus what the interviewer is actually looking for.

Today and tomorrow, we'll look at questions you've probably heard before, and some ideas for how to answer them if you hear them again. Even if you think you'll never ever be applying for another job, maybe you can play along and see how you might answer, if your circumstances were different.

1. Tell me something about yourself.  
This one might be the opening question. Even after decades of use, it still shows up in a lot of interviews and manages to trip up a huge number of applicants. There are three things to deal with here.

a. Be as brief as possible while still giving a decent answer. Don't tell your life story, and keep the answer mostly specific to your work history.

b. It could go like this: "I've been married for 15 years, and my wife and I have two boys and a girl who range from 14 to 10. I started out in the food service industry, where I learned about supply chain management.

The last 10 years I've been in the wholesale business, mostly on the marketing side, which has allowed me to develop relationships throughout the community in the retail and commercial sectors. I'm excited about this

opportunity because of the new plans you've recently announced, that I'd be able to use my strengths in the job, plus there will be challenges to grow."

c. It can be as simple as that. If the interviewer wants to know more, they'll ask.

d. If you can, get the official job description before you go to the interview. Also, do some research on the company you're applying to. Also, if you have a good question that ties into the job description of a special announcement made by the company that might apply to you, you could ask it here.

2. What is your biggest strength?  
Just like the first question, I want to focus my answer for the greatest benefit. I may have many strengths, but the one I'm going to choose is the one that relates closely to the work I'm applying for.

a. If you're going for a job as a marketing manager, the strength I could mention is the ability to understand what attracts people and keeps their attention, or maybe it's team building.

b. If I have a powerful — and brief — story to add here, which backs up my statement, I could add it.

c. Don't exaggerate your claims, and don't be too humble either. They want an answer that shows confidence, and relates to the job they're offering.

If we talked about strengths, what do you think the next one is?

3. What is your biggest weakness?  
So many people hate this question, and so many of them answer it badly.

(Con't.)

Look, as long as the weakness you mention isn't a key prerequisite for the job you're going for, you should be fine. We all have weaknesses. You'll have the confidence to air yours in public.

a. First things first. Play it straight and answer like an adult. "I don't have any weaknesses" is not how to handle it. "I'm too honest" ... "I care too much" ... "I'm a perfectionist" — not how to handle it.

b. There are two things you want to do here. One, list the legitimate weakness. Two, discuss what you did to overcome it. This shows that you are a problem solver. Try this: "Three months ago my Facebook ads weren't pulling the results I wanted. I got some training and our last campaign pulled a 300% return on investment."

"But wait," you say, "That means I was talking about a former weakness, not a current one." If the interviewer is competent, they won't care about the weakness, former, current, whatever. They just wanted to see how you would answer the question.

Those are three common job interview questions, and ways to deal with them. We'll have more tomorrow.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

###

For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: [guamtraining.com](http://guamtraining.com)

