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# What's your greatest accomplishment?

## Interview Tip #9

How to answer this common interview question if you have little or no work experience.

Relate your answer back to the job you're applying for. Your accomplishment needs to demonstrate skills that are valuable in the job, even if the accomplishment you describe is not work-related. A recent accomplishment has more impact than one from years back. For example: "I ran a road race this year for the first time. I had to train hard for it and fit that in with my studies. It took discipline and planning to complete the necessary training and keep up my grades."

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## HOW TO ANSWER JOB INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS?



### How to Answer Questions About Your Greatest Accomplishments

**Start off by telling the interviewer a story.** Describe the challenge you were up against, your plan of attack and the success you saw on the other side.

**Connect the dots.** Use the opportunity to relate what you've accomplished to the position you're applying for.

the balance

**Focus on achievements.** Focus on achievements that demonstrate you're the best person for the job.

**Don't attempt to be funny, silly or cute.** Take the question seriously and answer it professionally.

**Always be honest.** Don't be tempted to stretch the truth or lay claim to an achievement that wasn't yours.



What is your greatest achievement interview question answer. What is your greatest achievement job interview answer. Greatest achievement job interview question and answers examples. What's your greatest achievement interview. Greatest achievement answers. What is your greatest achievement in life interview question answer. What are your greatest achievement interview answer.

Employers LOVE to ask questions about your greatest professional achievement or accomplishment... and they expect a detailed example or story in the job interview, so you need to be ready. In this article, I'm going to show you how to answer, "What is your greatest achievement?" with example answers, mistakes to avoid, and more. Let's get started... How to Choose Your Greatest Achievement for Interviews: "What is your greatest achievement/accomplishment?" is a behavioral interview question. To pick the right answer to share, consider your background as well as the job description for the role you're interviewing for. The best answers to this interview question will show the hiring manager that your greatest accomplishment is both impressive and also relevant to their team's needs. Follow these steps to determine what type of achievement you should share in the job interview: 1. Pick an accomplishment that's as recent as possible, and somewhat relevant to this job and career. If at all possible, you should be choosing a greatest accomplishment that happened somewhat recently in your career and demonstrates that you're a great job candidate for this position that you want now. If your most impressive accomplishment is five years ago, you can still use it. But I'd encourage you to think about whether you have a similar accomplishment from the past one to two years, perhaps in your last job. Hiring managers tend to appreciate recent work experience more than distant experience, so job seekers should aim to share recent stories when possible in the interview process. The bottom line is: If you're debating between a few options of achievements to share, you should always choose the more recent story, and the one that's more relevant to the job you've applied for. Then get specific and talk about RESULTS. Show exactly what you achieved and why it was a significant accomplishment. How did it help you? How did it help your team or your employer at the time? If you just graduated and your accomplishment was in an internship or in a university class, what did you learn, what challenges did you overcome, and how did this help you get to where you are today? 2. Pick a professional achievement even if employers don't specifically ask for one. Sometimes employers will ask for your greatest professional achievement, and sometimes they'll leave it open to interpretation and simply say, "What is your greatest achievement?" No matter how they phrase the question, keep your answer focused on a professional achievement. This will do a few things for you: First, it'll make the task of preparing and practicing an answer easier. This way, you only need to have one answer for however they phrase the question. You're 100% ready whether they ask, "What is your greatest professional achievement?" or just for your biggest achievement in general. And, since you're in a job interview, it's best to talk about a professional achievement anyway. So focus on a work-related achievement when you give your example or story, and you won't run the risk of sharing something that the employer finds odd or irrelevant. If you're job searching with no work experience, then your academic experience is the closest thing you have. In this case, you should give an example of your greatest achievement from a class project or from your academic studies. (It could be achieving a high GPA, finishing first in your class, practicing and delivering a speech in front of a class, being the first in your family to graduate with a degree, or anything like that.) How to Deliver Your Answer Now that we've discussed how to choose your greatest achievement, let's look at how to organize and deliver your answer. When answering any behavioral interview questions such as this, it's best to organize your response with the STAR Method, which is short for: Situation, Task, Action, Result. This is a way to structure your answer to make sure hiring managers can follow your story and to make sure you don't get sidetracked when explaining the achievement. You'll notice this format in the sample answers coming up. You start by explaining the general situation. Were you in a previous job? Which role? How long ago did this happen? Then, explain the task at hand. What needed to be achieved or solved? Next, what action did you choose and why? Finally, what was the result, and what did you learn from the experience if anything? That's the best way to explain your greatest accomplishments to ensure that you don't give a long-winded answer that's too confusing to follow. Good answers will be detailed but also concise. Aim for 60-90 seconds or less when answering interview questions about your biggest achievement. Deliver Your Answer With Confidence Interview questions that require you to brag about yourself aren't easy, but you need to be ready to sound confident and show off what you've done. This isn't the time to be humble or timid. When employers ask, "What is your greatest professional achievement?" they want you to sound passionate and proud. So think about a great professional accomplishment that you'd be genuinely excited to talk about. That's the best way to make sure you have the right level of energy when giving your answer. After this, review the details of the story and situation. You want to be specific when telling this story; it's always more impressive to share specific facts and details. I'll give you an example... Which sounds better: A) "My greatest accomplishment is graduating near the top of my class last year." B) "My greatest accomplishment is graduating in the top 3% of my class of over 2,000 students last year, with a GPA of 3.89." The second answer is going to be more memorable and more impressive, so that's why you should review your own story/example you plan on giving to refresh yourself on as many details as possible. The more specific you can be, the more confident and convincing you'll be. Tell Me Your Proudest Accomplishment or Greatest Achievement Example Answers: Now that you have a general idea what to do when you answer these questions about your proudest accomplishments/achievements, let's look at two word-for-word example answers. I'll start with an example for a recent graduate. Then I'll give a second sample answer for job seekers who have previous work experience. Example Answer for Your Greatest Achievement or Accomplishment (Entry-Level): My greatest professional achievement was completing my Bachelor's degree in 4 years with a 3.8 GPA. I had no financial support from my family and had to work a full-time job while pursuing my Economics degree. This taught me to prioritize my time, build great habits and stay focused on my goals. I'm proud of this accomplishment and I feel that what I learned is going to give me a big advantage in my career now. Example Answer for Your Greatest Achievement or Accomplishment (Experienced): My greatest professional achievement was turning around the success of my last employer's Marketing department. When I joined, the entire team was struggling and we were failing to hit our quarterly goals. I was hired to create a new marketing plan, which I designed and implemented without any guidance. Within 6 months, we were achieving 20-25% above our goals, and my marketing plan brought in an additional \$3 million in revenue for the company through the second half of last year. This additional revenue brought the company from an operating loss each quarter to profitability. After you give your answer, you should definitely expect follow-up questions. When employers ask for examples of your greatest achievement, it's to find out about you as a person - your interests, your strengths, etc. This isn't just a question that the interviewer asks and then moves on from. So don't panic when they ask for more details or continue with related questions. The best stories will grab an interviewer's attention and make them curious about other accomplishments, and they'll want to hear more about your previous roles and past experiences. If you hear a follow-up question or a comment like, "oh, tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_", it's a sign you gave a great answer. That's why the interviewer wants to know more. So stay confident and calm, and when you prepare for your interview, you should think about the questions they're most likely to ask you AFTER you share the story of your biggest achievement. What piece of the story are employers likely to want more information about? What might they not understand the first time you tell it? Make Sure to Practice Your Answer Nothing comes out perfect the first time - so make sure to practice a few times before going into your next interview! Go over the key points you want to share, and make sure you can explain the story clearly while transitioning from one key point to another. Note: I don't recommend memorizing word-for-word. That's a good way to panic in the interview, forget a piece, and make a mistake. Instead, I'd do what I described above - think of your story as a series of key points to talk about, and make sure you can remember to hit each point and transition smoothly between them. Make sure you can get from the beginning of your story to the end when explaining your greatest achievement to employers, without forgetting any pieces of your story. Once you can do this a few times, you're ready for the interview. Answering Your Greatest Achievement or Accomplishment in Interviews - Quick Instructions Don't be shy or humble. This interview question is a chance to brag about yourself and share what you're truly proud of professionally. Pick a professional accomplishment whether or not they specifically ask for something professional. Pick an accomplishment that's relatively recent if possible, and something that is related to your current career path and the job you're interviewing for. Choose something that had a large overall impact on your career; something important and significant. Get specific and talk about real results and data whenever possible. What was the impact of your work? After you answer this interview question, be ready for follow-up questions. Even if you gave an outstanding answer, the employer might want to learn more. Practice your answer. Nothing comes out perfect the first time, so run through your explanation for what is your greatest professional achievement before the interview starts if you follow these steps, you'll have a great answer any time an employer asks, "What is your greatest achievement?" and other similar interview questions.

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