



The Most Common Interview Question... (and how to answer it!)

The very first question you're likely to get in an interview is, "Tell me about yourself." This is not an invitation to recite your entire life story or go bullet by bullet through your resume. Instead, it's probably your first and best chance to pitch the hiring manager why you're the right one for the job.

A formula that works very well in this situation is called the Present-Past-Future formula. First you start with the present—**where you are right now**. Then, segue into the past—a little bit about the **experiences you've had and the skills you gained at the previous position, ideally what got you passionate about this field**, and finally, finish with the future—why you are really excited for **this particular opportunity**.

Let me give you an example:

If someone asked, "tell me about yourself," you could say:

"Well, I'm currently an account executive at Smith, where I handle our top performing client. Before that, I worked at an agency where I was on three different major national healthcare brands. And while I really enjoyed the work that I did, I'd love the chance to dig in much deeper with one specific healthcare company, which is why I'm so excited about this opportunity with Metro Health Center."

Remember throughout your answer to focus on the experiences and skills that are going to be most relevant for the hiring manager when they're thinking about this particular position and this company. And ultimately, don't be afraid to relax a little bit, tell stories and anecdotes (for another easy formula to use when telling these, see the STAR method on our interviewing handout). The hiring manager already has your resume, so they also want to know a little more about you. Use the outline below to frame your answer.

I'm Currently _____

Before That _____

I'd love the chance to _____