

NAILING COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The Talent Place

Career Coaching & Outplacement



General Interview Questions

Tell Me About a Time You Failed

This question isn't about exposing flaws—it's about demonstrating resilience, insight, and your ability to grow from challenges. Interviewers want to see that you can reflect maturely, take ownership, and apply lessons to future success.

- Own the mistake – Take responsibility without making excuses
- Share what you changed - Highlight a specific improvement or process adjustment
- Connect it to a positive outcome – Show how that failure strengthened future performance

Example: "Early in my management career, I led a cross-functional project where I underestimated how long it would take to align stakeholder priorities. As a result, we missed our initial deadline. I took full accountability and recognised that I needed a more robust stakeholder engagement plan.

So for future projects, I built alignment sessions into the planning phase, added touchpoints across departments, and improved communication through shared dashboards. The next time I led a similar initiative, we delivered two weeks ahead of schedule—and the feedback from stakeholders was overwhelmingly positive. That failure sharpened my strategic planning skills and taught me the value of proactive stakeholder management."

How Do You Deal With Conflict?

Demonstrate emotional intelligence, maturity and a proactive approach to resolution. Employers want to see that you can navigate disagreements constructively, prevent escalation, and maintain strong working relationships.

- Share a real example – Use the STAR method to structure your story
- Focus on active listening – Show how you seek to understand before reacting
- Highlight fairness and collaboration – Emphasise your ability to find win-win outcomes
- Show preventative thinking – How you avoid future conflict through clarity and alignment

Avoid:

- Blaming others or sounding defensive
- Saying you've never experienced conflict
- Overly emotional or vague responses
- Ignoring the impact on team dynamics