

“Tell me about yourself.” *This is a common question in both networking and interviews.*

- Think of it as an icebreaker—a prime opportunity to build rapport, establish a connection, and leave a positive impression.
- Customize your introduction for the specific job and situation, but always have a polished, general statement prepared.
- Articulate clearly how your background and skills align with the organization’s needs. Use vivid, concrete examples to illustrate your contributions.
- Let your personality shine through. Present yourself as a colleague with whom the interviewer would enjoy working.
- Keep your response concise: 1 to 5 minutes, ensuring it sounds natural and engaging.
- Focus on key highlights. This is not a resume walkthrough. If uncertain, ask if they prefer a general overview or a resume walkthrough.
- Tell a coherent, engaging story that ties your experiences to the job. Make sure it connects to the job and shows your personality.
- Avoid starting with early career details. Focus on the past 5 to 7 years, emphasizing relevant achievements and experiences.
- Think “highlights,” not details. RELEVANCE to the job opportunity is crucial.
- Share interesting personal tidbits, such as hobbies or volunteer activities, if they align with the role or company culture. Steer clear of controversial or overly personal details.
- Exude enthusiasm and confidence. Your energy can be contagious and leave a positive impression.
- Practice your response multiple times to ensure it flows smoothly and feels authentic.

Helpful Tips

Stay Adaptable

Be ready to adjust your response based on the interviewer’s reactions and follow-up questions.

Positive Body Language

Smile. Maintain good eye contact and use natural gestures to reinforce your points.

Close Your Introduction

Tie your story back to why you’re excited about this opportunity and how you can contribute to the team.

Let's Get Started! Use the prompts below to shape your Introduction Statement.

Pinpoint the standout qualities, skills, and details you want the interviewer to remember. Select three or four attributes directly aligning with the job's requirements. These should spotlight your strengths and underscore your fit for the position.

For example: If you're applying for an executive assistant role and are great at organizing, you could say, "Often dubbed the 'Organization Queen' by friends and colleagues, I naturally gravitate toward planning and coordination. I thrive in taking charge of events and projects, and am eager to bring this proactive approach to this role."

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Identify your key strengths, skills, and abilities. Draw on past performance reviews and commendations from colleagues, managers, and friends to identify areas where you shine.

For example: If you're applying for a role that demands innovative problem-solving, share a brief anecdote showcasing your creative approach to overcoming challenges. This narrative should highlight your ingenuity and capacity for thinking outside the box.

List your top two or three strengths, skills, or abilities. Use these to illustrate to the interviewer how you can contribute to the organization and offer specific insights into how you can help achieve its objectives.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- Can you offer brief examples to back up your claims about yourself? These examples don't need to be lengthy; a sentence or two for each is enough.
- Share a recent work experience that creates a picture that shows what type of employee you are or how you excel.
- Wrap up by highlighting how you can contribute to their success, mentioning your strengths and what you seek. If networking, ask for feedback and connections to advance your career.

Example 1:

I'm an engineer at heart, drawn to numbers, creating, and problem-solving. I take pride in tackling projects others deem impossible. In my last role, when faced with intermittent machine issues, rather than opting for costly new equipment as suggested, I proposed a 1-week fix. With management's approval, I assembled a team to brainstorm solutions. Together, we identified and implemented a fix, saving costs and fostering teamwork. Despite appearing reserved, I thrive in problem-solving scenarios, unafraid to bring people together to find solutions. Whether professionally or personally, I'm the one who takes action when told, "It can't be done."

Example 2:

I am not your typical accountant. Yes, I love numbers, and people consider me exceptionally good with them, but I also enjoy being around people and working together in a team. I need to work in a position that requires interacting with others regularly and feeling like we are working toward a common goal. Being able to laugh and have an appropriate sense of humor helps me get through the workday. My coworkers have often commented to me about the positive energy I bring to work and how I always make them feel their opinions are welcome.

Example 3:

I'm known as a "go-getter" who thrives on taking on extra projects while managing primary responsibilities. As a bit of a perfectionist, I set high standards for myself, aiming not just to complete tasks, but to excel in them. I'm always armed with a to-do list, eager to check off each item efficiently. Whether organizing community events or planning for friends, I naturally take on the role of the unofficial planner. These skills have proven invaluable in my previous roles, where event planning was often part of my responsibilities.

Example 4:

I have worked for manufacturing companies for most of my career. I love it because I prefer hands-on work and physical work over sitting behind a computer at a desk all day. I also don't mind some of the repetition of working on an assembly line because I see it as a chance to focus on the quality, not just the quantity. I rarely miss work and check in 15 minutes before my shift starts. Fun fact: In the last 3 years, I have never missed a day of work, so if you want someone you can count on—that's me! I'm interested in this job because I have heard from others that this is a great workplace, and the position fits my skill set.

Example 5:

I am known for being quiet and reserved. That is true, but that works for this type of work. I'm creative, so I like to come to work and put my nose to the grindstone. Of course, I am friendly, but I tend to stay in the background and observe the people and things around me—that's where I get many of my ideas. I love being a designer, and I'm happiest when drawing, painting, crafting, designing, or trying something new that challenges my creativity; that is why I am so interested in this position. To have an opportunity to collaborate with your team and design for this product would be a dream come true. Not only am I creative, I'm very mindful of working within specific parameters while staying within budget. In each job, I have worked my way up from doing basic designs to more sophisticated designs. One of the pieces I am most proud of is one where I collaborated directly with the client from conception to design to the final layout. This project pushed me out of my comfort zone, and the client loved it!

Example 6:

At my core, I'm driven by a deep commitment to making a meaningful difference in others' lives. Helping people every day is what matters most to me. My journey toward this passion began when I initially considered becoming an elementary teacher but discovered nonprofit leadership during my education. Since then, I've actively pursued opportunities to deepen my knowledge in this field, volunteering on committees and boards, and embracing every chance to learn. My dedication to driving positive change led me to ABC Community Nonprofit's mission, which I learned about while volunteering for XYZ Organization. A friend recognized my passion and recommended me for a position there. My curiosity keeps me motivated and engaged in my work and beyond.

Example 7:

I enjoy being a receptionist—it aligns perfectly with my skill set. Meeting new people and handling phone calls are tasks I enjoy, and I excel at multitasking. Organizing and keeping track of things genuinely fulfills me. In my last position, I embraced the opportunity to take on a new role as a receptionist for another arm of our organization. The added responsibility brought exciting challenges, and I appreciated meeting the talented individuals within our organization.

Example 8:

I've always been seen as a natural leader. I thrive in the strategic aspects of HR leadership and enjoy building relationships and helping staff grow in their careers. For example, I mentored an HR assistant who, despite her potential, needed formal education for advanced tasks. We met regularly to discuss her goals and development, and even after she moved on, she regarded me as her mentor. Recently, she called to share that she was offered a director of HR position at her new company. It was rewarding to have played a small role in her success.

As an HR leader, I don't shy away from tough decisions. Good leaders must make difficult calls and stand by them, even when they are unpopular. I push my team to think creatively and strive for excellence, always aiming to work smarter and faster than our competition. I'm proud that my department was the first to implement ABC strategies, significantly boosting our financial success last year.

Example 9:

I earned my degree from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, where I developed a passion for customer service and honed my organizational skills. Throughout my career, I've been recognized for my contributions, enhancing my business acumen, and mastering customized software systems. As an executive administrative assistant to the president, I organized and updated the owner's personal and business investment information, which had been neglected for years. I managed specific projects, tracked their progress, and attended meetings in his absence, actively engaging in all business operations. I am eager to continue utilizing and developing my administrative, organizational, and customer service skills in my next role.