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# How NOT to Answer Job Interview Questions. A Parody

Changing jobs during the Great Resignation? Lucie Frost has suggestions on how to tweak the interview process. Boy, does she ever.

If I were to answer interview questions honestly, I would never get the job. That's not to suggest I lie in interviews, exactly. I just do what we all do—what we're expected to do—I give the interviewer what they want to hear.

“Do you prefer to work on your own, or on a team?” the interviewer might ask.

“Oh, good God, let me work alone,” I’d say, if I were being true. “It’s not that I don’t want to see people. I’m fine running into them in the coffee room—assuming they’re not standing between me and my coffee, of course. But actual work? Just leave me in my box doing my thing, if you would.”

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“Oh, it’s not that I don’t like people in certain settings. They’re fun at bars. I just prefer not to have to deal with them at work.”

“So you would rather not have to listen to your co-workers and subordinates?”

“Exactly! Sure, I’ll take their input. I just don’t want to hear their yammering. I think we should all be put on mute during working hours, so we can get some damn work done.”

“How would the team give the input, if they were all muted?”

“E-mail, ideally, though a memo slipped under my office door also works.”

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# The Bullshit Answers

But I'm a good company-gal with well-honed interview skills, so instead, the conversation goes like this.

“Do you prefer to work on your own, or on a team?”

“Well, I think there needs to be space for each. Working collaboratively, brainstorming, giving and receiving feedback, seeking diverse input—those are all critical and all call for a team approach. ‘None of us

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“How much will I regret hiring you and why?”

is as smart as all of us,’ as they say! But it's also important to leave time for reflection and independent focus, so we can each bring our individual efforts and talents to the team.”

Blah, blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah. Blah.

Would that we could be honest about our flaws, when asked about them. Better yet, would that we wouldn't even ask about them. But if they're going to ask, why not just ask it outright—“How much will I regret hiring you and why?” or “What's the most likely reason I would fire you?”, or even “Share with me all the ways in which you suck.”

Instead, we have to deal with the corporate-speak inquiry, “So, what are your greatest areas of opportunity?”

My honest answer?

**One:** I like to do the little jobs I can easily check off the to-do list, and just procrastinate on the bigger stuff. Ideally, my job would consist of all tasks and no projects.

**Two:** I suck at corporate rah-rah bullshit. Please don't ever ask me to participate in the three-legged race for United Way. Just toss me the donation form and let me go back to my corner.

**Three:** I can be self-important. If there's a crisis, you had best let me handle it. If something needs to be written right, just assign it to me in the first place so we can skip all of the back-and-forth. Basically, you should just send Carly Simon running behind me down the office hallway, singing out, "Nobody does it better, makes me feel sad for the rest."

But since I can't be honest about any of that, here's how I will answer: I have a tendency to work too much, to give too much of myself to my job, to take on more than I should—all true, but hardly my biggest flaws, not to mention a response deserving of a hard eye roll.

I know better than to divulge the worst of me. We all know better. It's how the interview dance works. The hiring manager asks some inane questions, and the interviewees spit out some pabulum. The hiring manager then makes the hiring decision, as likely as not based on the interviewee's sense of humor, snappy clothing choices, or acceptable hand shake form. The once-interviewee-now-employee shows up to work and either does or doesn't play nicely with others. If they're likeable, they have a long career. If they're unlikeable, they also have a long career, because HR never lets you get rid of them.

## How Interviews Should Really Work

So if the whole interview process is a silly farce, what's the better option? Hmmmm. What about this suggestion? Send the interviewee on a "business trip" to, say, *Harlingen, Texas*, just because it's an extra hassle to get to. Watch them en route.

Did they forget to bring their driver's license to the airport? Don't hire them. They're absent-minded.

Did they say to the TSA agent, "I actually *liked* getting felt up." No hire. They're a sexual harassment claim in search of a courtroom.

Did they yell at the Southwest lady who told them their plane is delayed because of a crew change? They're just a dick. Trust me, you don't want them anywhere near your office.

How would I fare in a travel-based selection process?

Quite nicely, I'd think. Travel brings out the best and worst in folks, and there's more good in me than bad, on most days.

So should you up and hire me even though I'm someone who lies in interviews, procrastinates, and wants to shiv anyone who says, "Good question!" during a business meeting? Sure, because despite all of that, I'm a damn good employee. Spend a day in an airport with me, and you'll know that's true.

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Should you hire me even though I lie in interviews, procrastinate, and want to shiv anyone who says, "Good question!" during a business meeting?

So will I come work for you, you ask?

Oh wow. I don't know. Would I have to work with others?

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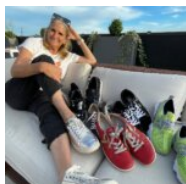
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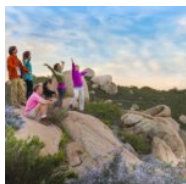


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