



# Common Restaurant Job Interview Questions

To help you prep, we've outlined 12 restaurant interview questions you might be asked to answer, as well as some guidelines on how to answer them. We've also included a roundup of interview best practices you should be aware of before showing up to speak to the hiring manager.

## 1. Tell me about yourself

Walk the interviewer through your experience working in restaurants, the roles you've held and your responsibilities.

If this is your first restaurant job, explain how other jobs and experiences lead you to your interest in the industry.

Be personable. If you seem uncomfortable, how can the interviewer trust you to provide an enjoyable experience for guests?

Include one or two facts about yourself, like maybe where you're from or a hobby. Typically, you should end with this, keep it brief, and say something along the lines of "outside of work, I enjoy fly fishing/am studying archaeology at State/am prepping for a marathon/etc."

This can make you and the interviewer more relaxed, and it makes you appear like a person instead of just another candidate.

## 2. Can you tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult customer and what you did in the situation?

Explain the difficult situation you found yourself in without using language of blame or judgment in any direction.

Walk the interviewer through the decision you made, leading up to, in the moment of the incident, & then what the result was.

If applicable, talk about what happened after. Did the situation get escalated to management?

Did your manager applaud you for your professionalism? Was the customer satisfied with how you handled the situation?

Talk about what you learned from the interaction and how it made you a better employee.

## 3. What do you think about/like about our restaurant?

Name one or two things you like about the restaurant and why you like them.

Be honest and direct, reference something you read on their website or review that you value in a restaurant business.

## 4. Can you tell me about a mistake you've made on the job and how you handled it?

Explain the situation that occurred and the mistake you made.

Talk about the outcome immediately following the situation.

Explain how you made amends in the moment, and what you did in the long run to avoid making that same mistake again.

## 5. Can you tell me about a time where you and a coworker clashed and how you resolved it?

Explain the relationship between you & this coworker.

Had you just met them, or had you been coworkers for years & never really got along?

Talk about the specific situation preceding and during the falling out.

Be honest. Explain where you were at fault and don't pin everything on the coworker.

Describe the resolution of what happened after the conflict.

Talk about what changed on your end and how the relationship improved or (if it did) has since evolved.

## 6. Can you tell me about your proudest moment working in a restaurant?

Speak with a smile. If you're not naturally happy, the interviewer might not think it's that proud of a moment for you. Make sure the story involves someone too! A great answer to this question would be about how you were told by a customer how great you made her family's experience, a way you made your manager's job easier, or how a coworker thanked you for covering for him, which made you feel proud to be a member of that team.

Don't toot your own horn. It's fine if the story is a grand accomplishment of yours, but explain how it had an impact on the restaurant business or guest experience.





## 7. What are the most important skills someone in this role should have?

Come prepared with a few skills you think are essential for your desired role, as well as why they are important.

Be specific to that role, rather than naming skills that would help in any career like “collaborative” or “detail-oriented.”

Don’t ramble. Try to keep the list to just three or four examples.

restaurant job interview questions Man at POS

## 8. How do you think you embody the skills you just mentioned?

Have examples to back up how you embody these traits and skills in your daily life.

Be humble. Explain how you’re capable of meeting the needs of the role with your skills—without bragging!

Own your faults if you don’t yet have a skill the role requires. For example, “confidence is still an area I think I can grow in, but I’ve been working on it, and in my last performance review, my manager said she had seen a lot of improvement, and I’m excited to get even better in this new role.”

## 9. When was a time when you went out of your way to delight a guest

Explain why you decided to go above and beyond for this customer. Was there a mistake that needed to be remedied?

Did you overhear the table was celebrating a special event?

Discuss how the effort was received. Did the customer thank you for going the extra mile? Did your manager commend you for your work?

Talk about how it made you feel. If you felt exhausted or annoyed after meeting this special request, your interviewer might not think you’re the best person for the job.

## 10. Where do you see yourself on a team?

Answer in line with the role you’re interviewing for. For instance, you might want to say you’re a leader if applying for a management job.

Be honest. If you’re applying for that management job and you’re not a natural leader, sub it in for another applicable role like organizer.

Don’t set an expectation for yourself that you’re unable to meet.

Include an example. Whatever answer you give, explain why you gave that position with an example of how you thrive or why you operate best in that position.

## 11. What questions do you have for me?

Ask at least one or two questions about the role. If you truly don’t have any, ask about the restaurant’s operations, the team dynamics, and/or what the interviewer appreciates most about working there.

Commit to following up with questions if you’re on the spot and genuinely can’t come up with any questions in the moment, and ask for the best follow-up contact information.

Don’t ask about certain topics like salary or benefits just yet. Save those for when/if you receive the offer.

Managers don’t want to hire people knowing they’re just in it for the money.

Some sample follow-up questions for any restaurant interview are:

“What are the opportunities for advancement for this role?”

This shows you’re willing to grow in your restaurant career and aren’t an employee who will quickly quit.

“What’s the current team like and how do they work together?” This shows you’re a team player.

“Do you offer any continuing training or education opportunities?”

This lets your interviewer know you’re leaned into the industry and want to get better at your job.

“Was there anything about my resume or application that concerned you or that I could clear up?”

This opens the door for the interviewer to mention issues he wasn’t planning to bring up, so you can clear the air.

## 12. Why should we hire you?

Don’t brag. Instead, try to highlight how your positive attributes can help a restaurant succeed and delight guests.

Give concrete reasons why you’d be a great team addition.

Try citing the obvious must-haves like a good work ethic in addition to other sought-after attributes like a positive attitude.

Keep the response brief (30 seconds or so) and concisely explain why you’re a wise choice for the job.