



# How to Answer Interview Questions About Handling Stress

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Whether you want to be an air traffic controller or a gardener, you'll probably run into interview questions about how you handle stress. It's an important issue for just about any workplace.

Almost 60% of U.S. workers report feeling stressed on a daily basis, according to Gallup's latest State of the Global Workplace survey. An alarming 14% say it's gotten so bad they want to hit their coworkers.

Naturally, employers are concerned about this situation. Hiring managers may ask you about how you juggle demanding workloads and unhappy customers. They may even try to find out what's going on in your personal life and how that could affect your behavior.

**You'll probably make a more favorable impression if you think about your answers in advance.** Try these tips for talking about stress during a job interview.

### Tips for Your Interview:

1. **Tell stories.** For any interview questions, you can make your responses more memorable and effective by giving specific examples. Develop a collection of stories so you can pick something relevant to each situation.
2. **Be positive.** Steer clear of any details that might prevent you from being hired. **Talk about how you use stress to your advantage** by letting it motivate you and open up opportunities for change.
3. **Focus on productivity.** Remember that your employer is mostly interested in how stress might affect your ability to do your job. **Finish your story by describing what you accomplished while under pressure.**



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- 4. Gather information.** As long as you're already talking about stress, this can be a chance to find out more about what your future work conditions would be like. Ask the hiring manager what they think the major challenges are for their company and the position you're considering.
- 5. Share support.** You may score bonus points if you show an interest in helping your coworkers deal with stress too. Listen to what they have to say about their company's wellness programs. Maybe you can make some suggestions based on your own experience.
- 6. Look calm.** It's ironic to be discussing stress while an interview is increasing your anxiety levels. Ensure that your body language matches your words. **Relax your muscles and resist the urge to fidget.**

## Tips for Your Work Life:

- 1. Take breaks.** To be successful, it's important to pay attention to what you do each day, as well as what you say during an interview. Start by pausing at least once each hour to keep stress from building up. Stretch your muscles or take deep breaths.
- 2. Use vacation days. Research shows that going on at least one vacation a year helps protect your mental and physical health.** Use your time off to reconnect with your loved ones and explore new places.
- 3. Avoid excess overtime.** Productivity declines dramatically if you frequently work more than 50 hours a week. Prioritize your tasks and limit distractions. Start your day with your quitting time in mind.
- 4. Limit multitasking.** Try to focus on one activity at a time. Otherwise, you risk damaging your brain. **Head scans show that switching between tasks for a prolonged period can lower your brain density, in addition to causing fatigue.**



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5. **Set realistic expectations.** Are you trying to do too much? Calculate how long your main responsibilities take and budget enough time to complete them without rushing.
6. **Stay active. Regular exercise is one of the most constructive ways to relax.** Make it part of an overall healthy lifestyle that will keep you strong and resilient.

It's helpful for you and your future employer to recognize the impact of job-related stress. Your interview could be a starting point for maintaining a healthy and supportive work environment.

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