

# Interview Prep: Strengths & Weaknesses

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# Today's Overview

- Go over classic behavioral interview question: What are your biggest strengths and/or weaknesses?
- Picking stories to backup your answer
- How to email students/alumni looking to talk
- Best practices for maintaining relationships

# Strengths & Weaknesses

This question can come in various forms...

- “Tell me your three greatest strengths.”
- “What’s your biggest weakness?”
- “What’s something you think you’re good at and something you need to work on?”
- “How would a friend/employer/teacher describe you in three words?”
- “What are the top three qualities a successful investment banking analyst has?”
  - Your answer to this question should correspond to the three qualities you pick out for yourself!! You’re trying to convince them you have the skills you need for this job!

# Strengths & Weaknesses: What To Do

- Show don't tell
  - List them, but follow up with short stories (1-2 sentences) that demonstrate/give an example
- Pick qualities that align with skills that the job will need
  - Take time to consider what skills the job needs, then figure out how to argue that those are your biggest strengths
- Use every word as a chance to sell yourself
- Be thoughtful! Try to come up with unique words that they don't hear a lot
  - Avoid detail-oriented, hard working, team player etc... **rephrase** these
- Pick something related to an experience or unique to you...
  - Time management, collaboration, coachable, good teacher, adaptability
- Weakness should be something that can be turned into a strength / or just a general area of improvement
  - Public speaking, getting really excited about something and forgetting to take a step back, being more quiet / reserved, hard on yourself, brutally honest

# Strengths & Weaknesses: What **NOT** To Do

- DON'T pick three similar words
  - Ex. hard working, dedicated, diligent
- DON'T pick boring, overused words
  - Ex. nice, smart
- DON'T pick overly complicated words
- DON'T pick too alarming of a flaw/weakness
  - Ex. bad communication skills, poor time management, bad teamwork, bad work ethic, bad attention to detail
- **DON'T say you are a perfectionist as a weakness**

# Greatest Failure/Weakness

- Begin by explaining situation
- Explain what you did wrong and the impact it had on the situation
  - Take responsibility but keep this part short, you don't want to overly emphasize how you messed up
- Explain how you recognized your error, fixed the situation, and learned from the experience
- Highlight how you have improved and have turned this weakness into a strength

# Greatest Failure/Weakness: Example

- You over-committed to a group project, missed an internal deadline, recognized you need to communicate more with your team, established daily check-ins, did well on final assignment and developed strong communication and team work skills
- You jumped in too fast on a project, didn't spend enough time planning how to efficiently get it done, ended up spending more time than you needed to, now you know how to make outlines/plans before getting started

# Timeline Update

- Monday, November 7th: Wells Fargo informational session
- Wednesday, November 9th: Moelis & Co One-on-One chats, informational session, MiddWOW round-table talk



# Live Applications

- Wednesday, November 2nd: Girls Who Invest Summer Intensive and Online Intensive Program
- Monday, November 7th: Audax Group Portfolio Company Summer Analyst (sophomores)
- Sunday, November 27th: Goldman Sachs Possibilities Summit
- Tuesday, December 13th: Citi Early ID Program (apply via Citi website)
- Thursday, January 5th: Morgan Stanley Early Insights

# Other

Now is the time for banks to begin offering/opening applications for diversity programs. **These programs are the best way to get early interviews from banks and we highly encourage applying!!**

To find the programs, search “[BANK NAME] sophomore diversity program 2023” into Google.

Additionally, try to get on mailing lists for banks so that you receive information from them. Go on their website and try to find “Students” in the Careers section. Scroll through that info and try to sign up for anything you can!

Try to do this every 2 weeks minimum! Make sure you don't miss opportunities!