

# Green Light Phrases for Job Interviews (and red light answers to avoid)

Adapted from: George Stern's 2025 Resource:  
"What Not To Say in Job Interviews and What to Say Instead"

● **Avoid:** "I don't have any questions."

💡 **Why it's a problem:** It suggests a lack of interest, curiosity, and awareness.

✅ **Better option:** "What does success look like in this role in my first six months?"

● **Avoid:** "I'm not very familiar with your company."

💡 **Why it's a problem:** It indicates you didn't prepare and might not be interested in the role.

✅ **Better option:** "I've done some research on your company and found \_\_\_\_ particularly interesting— I'd love to hear your perspective on it and learn more."

● **Avoid:** "I was let go from my last job."

💡 **Why it's a problem:** Getting fired can be perceived negatively by employers.

✅ **Better option:** "While my last job ended sooner than anticipated, I've used the time to sharpen my abilities in \_\_\_\_."

● **Avoid:** "I'm open to any job right now."

💡 **Why it's a problem:** It could suggest a lack of focus or true enthusiasm for the position.

✅ **Better option:** "I'm eager to apply my strengths in \_\_\_\_\_, and this position seems like a great match."

● **Avoid:** "I don't have any weaknesses."

💡 **Why it's a problem:** Sounds like you lack self-awareness.

✅ **Better option:** "I've made a focused effort to improve in \_\_\_\_, and through actions like \_\_\_\_, I've seen clear results."



● **Avoid:** "I'm bad at time management."

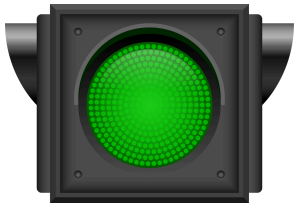
💡 **Why it's a problem:** Don't just list weaknesses—show growth.

✅ **Better option:** "I've made steady progress with time management and prioritization of work by incorporating \_\_\_\_\_ tools into my daily routine to stay on schedule and deliver quality work."

● **Avoid:** "I hated my last manager."

💡 **Why it's a problem:** Speaking negatively about past employers is a red flag.

✅ **Better option:** "My previous role gave me valuable experience, particularly in X, and I'm excited to take on something new."



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● **Avoid:** "How much money will I make?"

💡 **Why it's a problem:** It may give the impression that your primary motivation is compensation rather than a genuine interest in the role.

✅ **Better option:** "I'm excited about this opportunity and would like to understand the compensation range to ensure it aligns with my goals."

● **Avoid:** "I know I'm not qualified for the job, but..."

💡 **Why it's a problem:** You're minimizing your value right away, instead of promoting yourself and your skills.

✅ **Better option:** "Although my experience doesn't check every box, I bring transferable skills, such as \_\_\_\_\_, along with a proven ability to learn quickly and a strong drive to succeed."

● **Avoid:** "I don't have any career goals."

💡 **Why it's a problem:** Employers want to see ambition and direction.

✅ **Better option:** "I aim to make a strong positive impact in this role from the start, while also working toward expanding my expertise in \_\_\_\_\_."

● **Avoid:** "When do I get a title bump or get to climb the corporate ladder?"

💡 **Why it's a problem:** This lacks professionalism and may sound too entitled or too focused on personal advancement or titles.

✅ **Better option:** "Can you describe the typical path for professional development within the company and how employees are supported along the way?"

**Green Light to Success:**  
**Accelerate Your Way to  
a Winning Interview**



Document adapted by:



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