

THE FORMULA: PAB FORMULA

P - POSITION

Who are you now and how much experience do you have?

A - ACHIEVEMENT

One specific result you are proud of. Use a number if possible.

B - BRIDGE

Why did this role and company catch your attention? Connect your story to them.

KEY PHRASES

I currently work as...	Я зараз працюю як...
I have X years of experience in...	Маю X років досвіду у...
I am particularly proud of...	Я особливо пишаюся тим, що...
What brought me to this field was...	До цієї сфери мене привело...
I am looking for an opportunity to...	Я шукаю можливість...
This role appeals to me because...	Ця посада мене приваблює тим, що...

TIPS

- + Keep your answer to 60-90 seconds (130-160 words). Time yourself.
- + Start with the present, not your autobiography or childhood.
- + Use facts, not generic adjectives: "I reduced costs by 20%" beats "I am hardworking".
- + Speak directly about your achievements -- in English this is not boasting, it is expected.
- + Always end by connecting your story to THIS specific role and company.

INTERVIEW CRIMES: WHAT NOT TO SAY

x "I was born in Kyiv in 1995. I went to school..."

Autobiography instead of a professional introduction. Nobody asked about your childhood.

x "As you can see from my CV, I worked at X and then at Y..."

Just reading the CV. The interviewer has already read it. Tell a story, not a list.

x "I am a hard-working, responsible and communicative team player."

Overused adjectives with zero proof. Every candidate says exactly this.

x "Hmm... good question... well, I guess... basically... you know..."

Filler speech signals you are unprepared. Silence is better than "basically".

THE FORMULA: RAC FORMULA

R - RESEARCH

State one specific fact you know about this company (product, mission, recent news).

A - ALIGNMENT

How does your experience connect to their work or values?

C - CONTRIBUTION

What specifically can you bring to the team? "I can help you by..."

KEY PHRASES

I have been following your company because...	Я стежу за вашою компанією, тому що...
What particularly attracts me is...	Мене особливо приваблює...
I believe my skills align with...	Я вважаю, що мої навички збігаються з...
I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to...	Я радий можливості зробити внесок у...
From what I understand about your mission...	З того, що я знаю про вашу місію...
I can bring... to your team.	Я можу принести вашій команді...

TIPS

- + Research the company before the interview: website, LinkedIn, recent news.
- + Connect their work to YOUR skills -- show you chose them, not just any company.
- + Generic ambition is a red flag. "I want to grow and develop" is what every candidate says.
- + Explain what you will BRING, not just what you want to GET.
- + One strong, specific reason beats three vague ones.

INTERVIEW CRIMES: WHAT NOT TO SAY

x "Because I need a job and your company seems like a good place to work."

Generic and shows no research. You could say this about any company in any city.

x "Because it is a big and well-known company with a great reputation."

A compliment is not a reason. It says nothing about why THIS role fits you specifically.

x "I want to develop my career and learn new things in a dynamic environment."

Every single candidate says this. It is completely meaningless without specifics.

x "I found this position on LinkedIn and it matched my skill set."

Shows zero genuine interest. You are describing how job boards work, not why you care.

THE FORMULA: SER FORMULA

S - STRENGTH

Name one specific strength that is relevant to this role. Just one -- go deep, not wide.

E - EVIDENCE

When and how did you demonstrate this? A real situation from your work history.

R - RESULT

What was the measurable outcome? Use numbers: costs reduced, deadlines met, revenue increased.

KEY PHRASES

One of my key strengths is...	Однією з моїх ключових сильних сторін є...
I have always been able to...	Я завжди вмів...
For example, in my last role I...	Наприклад, на попередній посаді я...
I take the initiative to...	Я беру ініціативу і...
This resulted in...	Це призвело до...
I have consistently received feedback on...	Я постійно отримую відгуки щодо...

TIPS

- + One or two fully developed strengths beats a list of five empty ones.
- + Always follow the strength claim with a concrete example -- no example, no credibility.
- + Choose strengths that match what is in the job description.
- + Quantify whenever possible: "20% reduction", "delivered 3 weeks early", "4.9 rating".
- + Avoid personality adjectives alone: "I am a team player" proves nothing.

INTERVIEW CRIMES: WHAT NOT TO SAY

x "I am a perfectionist. I always want everything done to the highest standard."

Overused and transparent. Interviewers hear this as a disguised weakness every time.

x "I am hardworking, responsible and a good communicator."

Three adjectives, zero proof. This is heard from every candidate and proves nothing.

x "My strengths are leadership, problem-solving, communication, attention to detail and time management."

You cannot prioritize, and you have said nothing real about any of them.

x "I think I am good at everything, really. I adapt to any situation."

No self-awareness. Interviewers see this as either dishonesty or immaturity.

THE FORMULA: WAP FORMULA

W - WEAKNESS

Name one real developmental area.
Choose something peripheral to this role,
not a core skill.

A - ACTION

What concrete steps are you actively
taking to improve? Course, book, mentor,
practice...

P - PROGRESS

What improvement have you seen so far?
Even a small honest result is better than "I
am working on it".

KEY PHRASES

One area I am actively working on is...	Одна сфера, яку я активно розвиваю -- це...
I used to struggle with... but I have since...	Раніше мені складалося... але з тих пір я...
I have realised I need to develop...	Я зрозумів, що мені потрібно розвивати...
To address this, I have been...	Щоб виправити це, я...
I have already made progress by...	Я вже досяг прогресу, завдяки тому, що...
What I have learned from this is...	Що я з цього засвоїв...

TIPS

- + Self-awareness plus an action plan makes you look stronger, not weaker.
- + Keep the answer to 30-45 seconds. Longer sounds defensive.
- + Choose a weakness that is NOT critical to this specific role.
- + Show progress: what you have learned and what has already improved.
- + Never claim you have no weaknesses -- it signals low self-awareness.

INTERVIEW CRIMES: WHAT NOT TO SAY

x "I do not really have any weaknesses. I am a fast learner so I adapt quickly."

Dishonesty or lack of self-awareness. This is the single most common wrong answer.

x "My weakness is that I work too hard and care too much about quality."

A disguised strength. Interviewers see through this immediately -- it is insulting to their intelligence.

x "I struggle with delegating." (said when applying for a team lead role)

You just admitted you cannot do the core requirement of the job you are applying for.

x "My weakness is public speaking. I get very anxious, my hands shake, I freeze completely..."

This became a therapy session. Name it, show the action, show progress -- then stop.

THE FORMULA: VAL FORMULA

V - VISION

What kind of work do you want to be doing in 5 years? Name a specific role or level of responsibility.

A - ALIGNMENT

Why does this company fit into that vision? Be specific about what they offer that gets you there.

L - LINK

How does THIS specific role get you to your 5-year vision? Show the logical connection.

KEY PHRASES

In five years, I see myself...	Через п'ять років я бачу себе...
I hope to be contributing to...	Я сподіваюся зробити внесок у...
This role feels like a strong foundation for...	Ця посада здається міцною основою для...
I aim to develop my expertise in...	Я прагну поглибити свою експертизу у...
What excites me about the next few years is...	Що мене надихає в наступних роках -- це...
I would love to grow into a role where...	Я б хотів вирости до посади, де...

TIPS

- + Show you want to grow HERE, not use this job as a stepping stone and leave.
- + Name a specific kind of growth -- not just "I want to develop".
- + Connect your vision directly to what this company or industry does.
- + Realistic ambition signals maturity. Fantasy signals immaturity.
- + Showing you have thought about your career impresses interviewers.

INTERVIEW CRIMES: WHAT NOT TO SAY

x "In five years I hope to be in your position."

Uncomfortable for the interviewer. Sounds either threatening or naive about career progression.

x "Honestly, I see myself with a stable job, maybe married, with a dog, living outside the city..."

Personal life is irrelevant. They asked about your professional vision, not your life plan.

x "In five years I would love to start my own business. That is my real goal."

Signals you are planning to leave in a few years. Why would they invest in training you?

x "Honestly, I do not know. The future is hard to predict."

Signals no professional direction, no career thinking, no ambition. It is an instant red flag.

THE FORMULA: STAR FORMULA

S - SITUATION

Brief context -- role, company, what was happening. Keep this part SHORT (1-2 sentences only).

T - TASK

What was specifically YOUR responsibility? Make it personal, not team-based.

A - ACTION

What did YOU do? Use "I", not "we". Show your thinking and the decisions you made.

R - RESULT

What happened? Be specific: a number, deadline met, relationship saved, lesson learned.

KEY PHRASES

I faced a situation where...	Я зіткнувся з ситуацією, де...
My main responsibility was to...	Моєю головною відповідальністю було...
I decided to... because...	Я вирішив... тому що...
I took the initiative to...	Я взяв ініціативу і...
As a result,...	В результаті,...
What I took away from this was...	Що я з цього засвоїв -- це...

TIPS

- + Choose a real, significant challenge that YOU personally resolved.
- + The Situation should be the SHORTEST part of your answer.
- + Use "I", not "we" -- they are interviewing you, not your team.
- + Always include the Result. An answer without a result is unfinished.
- + Numbers make results real: "reduced by 30%", "delivered 2 weeks early", "saved 15 hours per week".

INTERVIEW CRIMES: WHAT NOT TO SAY

x "My biggest challenge was my previous manager. They were disorganised and never gave clear instructions."

You blamed others instead of solving a problem. Interviewers immediately wonder what you will say about them.

x "There was a difficult project once. It was hard for the whole team. We all worked a lot..."

No structure, no "I", no result. Tells nothing about what YOU specifically did.

x "We had a challenge with the client... then my colleague had problems... then technical issues... anyway, it eventually worked out."

Rambling with no clear thread. The interviewer lost the story in the third sentence.

x "There were no real challenges. I always manage things without major issues."

Signals inexperience or lack of reflection. Every professional has faced challenges.

Write first, then practise speaking. Aim for natural, confident English.

YOUR ANSWER - WRITE IT HERE

S -- Situation: brief context (role, company, what was happening):

T -- Task: what was YOUR specific responsibility in this situation?

A -- Action: what steps did YOU take? (use "I", show your decisions):

R -- Result: what happened? Include a specific number or outcome:

Full STAR answer -- write the complete response in natural English:

THE FORMULA: GNC FORMULA

G - GRATITUDE

What did you genuinely gain or value in your current role? Start here -- tone is critical.

N - NEXT STEP

What are you ready for now that your current role cannot offer? Frame as forward growth, not escape.

C - CONNECTION

Why is THIS company the right next step? Be specific about what they offer.

KEY PHRASES

I am very grateful for the experience I gained at...	Я дуже вдячний за досвід, здобутий в...
I feel I have grown as much as I can in my current role...	Я відчуваю, що виріс настільки, наскільки міг на цій посаді...
I am looking for a role with broader scope...	Я шукаю посаду з ширшими можливостями...
The company is going through a restructuring, so I am exploring new opportunities.	Компанія проходить реструктуризацію, тому я розглядаю нові можливості.
I am ready for the next challenge, specifically...	Я готовий до наступного виклику, а саме...
What drew me to this role specifically is...	Що привернуло мене саме до цієї посади...

INTERVIEW CRIMES: WHAT NOT TO SAY

x "My manager is a micromanager and the culture is toxic and nobody is happy."

Badmouthing raises a question: what will you say about us when you leave in a year?

x "Honestly, I just need a better salary. My current pay does not reflect my experience."

Leads with money. Shows you will leave again the moment someone offers 5% more.

x "I am just bored. There is nothing interesting happening anymore."

Sounds passive. Frame it as what you want to CREATE next, not what is missing now.

x "To be honest, I got fired. It was a misunderstanding but management did not want to hear my side."

Even if true, blaming others immediately is a red flag. Own it briefly and move forward.

TIPS

- + NEVER badmouth your current employer -- even if every word is true.
- + Always shift from "running away from" to "moving towards".
- + Keep your answer short: 30-45 seconds. Longer sounds defensive.
- + Avoid leading with salary -- it signals you will leave again the moment someone pays more.
- + Prepare this answer carefully -- it is one of the most common interview questions.

THE FORMULA: THREE-QUESTION STRATEGY

Q1 - ABOUT THE ROLE

Ask about expectations, success criteria, or biggest challenges in this position.

Q2 - ABOUT THE TEAM

Ask about team culture, collaboration style, or how the team is structured.

Q3 - ABOUT GROWTH

Ask about development opportunities or what the interviewer enjoys about working there.

KEY PHRASES

What does success look like in this role in the first 90 days?	Як виглядає успіх на цій посаді протягом перших 90 днів?
What are the biggest challenges someone in this role typically faces?	Які найбільші труднощі зазвичай виникають на цій посаді?
How would you describe the team culture?	Як би ви описали культуру команди?
What opportunities for development are there for someone in this role?	Які можливості для розвитку є на цій посаді?
What do you enjoy most about working here?	Що вам найбільше подобається у роботі тут?
What are the next steps in the interview process?	Які наступні кроки у процесі відбору?

INTERVIEW CRIMES: WHAT NOT TO SAY

x "No, I think you have covered everything. I am good, thank you."

Signals no curiosity, no preparation, no genuine interest. This is the worst possible answer.

x "Yes! How much is the salary? How many holidays? Is there remote work? What about the bonus?"

Shows your priorities are perks, not the work. Ask these after you receive an offer.

x "Could you tell me more about the role? What would I be doing day to day?"

The interviewer just explained this. Signals you were not listening during the interview.

x Asking 6-7 questions and going 15 minutes over time.

Reading the room is a skill. The interviewer is wrapping up -- finish gracefully with 2-3 good questions.

TIPS

- + Always prepare at least 5 questions; ask 2-3 based on time and context.
- + Saying "No, I think you covered everything" signals no curiosity and no preparation.
- + Save salary, benefits and holidays for the offer stage, not the first interview.
- + Use polite indirect forms: "Could you tell me...?" not "What is...?"
- + Thoughtful questions leave the final strong impression -- this is your last chance.

Write first, then practise speaking. Aim for natural, confident English.

YOUR ANSWER - WRITE IT HERE

Q1 -- Write your question about the role (expectations / success / challenges):

Q2 -- Write your question about the team or culture:

Q3 -- Write your question about growth or development:

Reflection -- which of your questions do you think is strongest and why?
