

Why are you leaving your current job?

How to be honest without burning bridges or raising red flags

Date started: _____

Learning Objective

By the end of this episode, you will be able to explain your reason for leaving positively and professionally using the GNC structure (Gratitude, Next step, Connection) in 30-45 seconds.

How do you feel about this question right now, before the lesson?

Circle your confidence level (1 = nervous, 5 = confident):

Обведи рівень впевненості (1 = нервую, 5 = впевнений/а):



nervous



unsure



ok



good



confident

Key Words & Pronunciation

Word	Pronunciation	Translation	Definition	Stress Pattern
diplomatic	/ˌdɪpləˈmætɪk/	дипломатичний		dip·lo·MAT·ic
motivation	UK /ˌməʊtɪˈveɪʃən/ US /ˌmoʊtɪˈveɪʃən/	мотивація	the reason or reasons behind a decision or a course of action	mo·ti·VA·tion
transition	/trænˈzɪʃən/	перехід		tran·SI·tion
opportunity	UK /ˌɒpəˈtjuːnɪti/ US /ˌɑːpərˈtuːnɪti/	можливість		op·por·TU·ni·ty
pursue	UK /pəˈsjuː/ US /pərˈsuː/	прагнути, рухатись до	to actively follow or work towards a goal, career path, or opportunity	pur·SUE

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My notes · мої нотатки

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Interview Crimes · What Not to Say

The question: "Why are you leaving your current job?"

Crime 1 of 4

You say: "My manager is a micromanager and doesn't respect the team. The culture there is toxic and nobody is happy."

Interviewer thinks: "What will they say about us in their next interview? This candidate clearly struggles with workplace relationships."

Better: Never badmouth a current or former employer. Even if every word is true, it raises doubts about your professionalism and judgment. Describe the situation in neutral terms, then focus on what you are looking for instead.

Crime 2 of 4

You say: "Honestly, I just need a better salary. My current pay doesn't reflect my experience at all."

Interviewer thinks: "So they will leave us too as soon as someone offers them more. This person is motivated purely by money, not by the work or the company."

Better: Compensation is a valid reason, but never lead with it. Lead with growth, scope, or fit. If you want to mention it at all, say: "I'm also looking for a package that reflects my experience." Then move on.

Crime 3 of 4

You say: "I'm just bored. There's nothing interesting happening there anymore and I've run out of things to do."

Interviewer thinks: "They sound disengaged and passive. What stops them from getting bored here too? They should be creating interesting work, not waiting for it."

Better: "Bored" signals passivity. Reframe: "I feel I have reached the limit of what I can learn in this role and I am ready for the next level of challenge." Same feeling, completely different impression.

Crime 4 of 4

You say: "To be honest, I got fired. It was a misunderstanding but management didn't want to hear my side of the story."

Interviewer thinks: "They were let go and they immediately blame management. There must be more to this story. This is a risk."

Better: If you were let go, be honest but brief and forward-looking: "My position was made redundant as part of a restructuring." Or: "The role did not turn out to be the right fit. I have learned from that and I know better what I am looking for now." Then move forward.

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Model Answer · Read & Fill in the Gaps

Word Bank:

enjoyed

learned

delivered

reached

ready

broader

drew

"I have genuinely _____ my time at my current company and _____ a great deal about client relationship management and cross-functional teamwork.

Over the past year, I have _____ several key projects successfully and feel I have now _____ the natural ceiling of this role. I am _____ for a _____ scope of responsibility and more complex work.

What _____ me to this position specifically is the combination of international projects and the opportunity to work with a larger, more experienced team."

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Cultural Note

Candidates often either say the salary is too low (which sounds transactional) or speak negatively about the previous employer (which raises red flags). Both approaches shift the focus away from you and onto problems. The stronger move is to acknowledge what you gained, name what you are ready for next, and connect it to this company. The formula: gratitude, growth, pivot.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Move towards something, not away from it. Every answer to this question should sound like an arrival, not an escape.

Check Your Understanding

1. Why is badmouthing a current employer a mistake even if you are completely right about them?

2. If salary is your real reason for leaving, how should you handle this?

3. What are the three steps of a strong answer to this question?

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Phrase Flashcards

Phrase	IPA	Ukrainian	How to use
I'm very grateful for the experience I gained at [company], and now I'm looking for an opportunity to...	/aɪm 'veri 'ɡreɪtʃəl fɔː ðə ɪk'spiəriəns at ɡeɪnd æt .../	Я дуже вдячний(а) за досвід, який отримав(ла) в [компанії], і зараз шукаю можливість...	opens with gratitude. A strategic choice. Starting positive shows professionalism and fair reflection. Always mention what you learned before discussing what comes next.
I feel I've grown as much as I can in my current role, and I'm ready for the next challenge.	/aɪ fi:l aɪv grəʊn æz mʌtʃ æz aɪ kæn ɪn maɪ 'kʌrənt rəʊl/	Відчуваю, що виріс(ла) настільки, наскільки міг(ла) на поточній ролі, і готовий(а) до наступного виклику.	use when you have genuinely mastered your current role. Clear, professional, and forward-looking. No blame, no negativity.
I'm looking for a role with broader scope and more responsibility.	/aɪm 'lʊkɪŋ fɔːr ə rəʊl wɪð 'brɔːdər skəʊp ənd mɔːr rɪˌspɒnsɪ'bɪləti/	Шукаю роль з ширшим охопленням та більшою відповідальністю.	short, clear, and unmistakably professional. Implies you have outgrown your current role without criticising it.
The company is going through a restructuring, so I'm exploring new opportunities.	/ðə 'kʌmpəni ɪz 'ɡəʊɪŋ θruː ə ,riː'strʌktʃərɪŋ/	Компанія проходить через реструктуризацію, тому я розглядаю нові можливості.	factual and neutral. State it simply, then pivot to what excites you about the new role. No need to elaborate.
What drew me to this role specifically is...	/wɒt drʊː miː tə ðɪs rəʊl spɪ'sɪfɪkəlɪ ɪz/	Що конкретно привернуло мене до цієї ролі, це...	the pivot phrase. After saying why you are leaving, always say why you are joining. This shifts the answer from "running away" to "moving towards."

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Answer Builder · Build Your Answer

Structure: GNC structure

G

Gratitude

What did you genuinely gain or value in your current or most recent role? Name something specific.

N

Next step

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

C

Connection

Why is this company or role the right next step? Be specific. This turns the answer into an arrival, not an escape.

Sample answer:

I am genuinely grateful for what I built there: I joined a team of four and we grew to eighteen. What I am looking for now is a company

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Grammar Practice · Present Perfect & Past Simple in career narratives

Fill in the gaps

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

I _____ (work) at my current company for three years. In that time, I _____ (develop) strong project management skills. I _____ (lead) two major launches and _____ (work) with teams across four countries. Now I _____ (feel) ready to move into a more senior role.

Fill in the gaps

Complete the answer with the correct verb forms.

"Since _____ (join) the company three years ago, I _____ (complete) two major product launches. Last year I _____ (receive) a strong performance review, which _____ (confirm) that I _____ (be ready) for more responsibility. That is why I _____ (start) looking for a senior role six months ago."

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How do you feel about this question now, after the lesson?

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Plan Your Next Episode

Plan Your Next Episode

When do you plan to do the next episode?

Date: _____

Words & phrases I want to remember · слова та фрази, які хочу запам'ятати

Answer Key

Model Answer - fill in the gaps:

1. enjoyed 2. learned 3. delivered 4. reached 5. ready
6. broader 7. drew

Check Your Understanding:

1. Why is badmouthing a current employer a mistake even if you are completely right about them?

It raises an immediate concern: if this candidate speaks this way about their current employer, what will they say about us? It signals poor judgment, an inability to handle conflict professionally, and potential for workplace drama. Always describe situations, not people.

2. If salary is your real reason for leaving, how should you handle this?

Never lead with it. Lead with growth, challenge, or fit. If you want to mention compensation at all, do it briefly and as a secondary point: "I am also looking for a package that better reflects my current experience." One sentence, then move on.

3. What are the three steps of a strong answer to this question?

Gratitude (acknowledge what you learned or valued), Growth (say what you are ready for that the current role cannot provide), Pivot (explain why this specific company or role is the right next step). This structure keeps the answer positive, professional, and forward-looking.

Grammar Practice:

Exercise 1:

1. have been working 2. developed 3. led 4. worked 5. feel

Exercise 2:

1. joining 2. have completed 3. received 4. confirmed 5. was ready
6. started

What to review before the interview · що повторити перед співбесідою