HELFUL HINTS FOR ANSWERING TOUGH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

An interviewer may say, "Tell me something about yourself." Make sure you have prepared a response ahead of time. Don’t launch into a twenty minute monologue on your life history from birth to the present; instead, describe a situation in which you displayed your dedication, hard work, or motivation. A potential employer wants to know that you can recognize and briefly communicate your accomplishments.

An interviewer may ask you one of the following questions: "What’s your passion?" "How do you like my tie?" "What’s your favorite book and why?" The interviewer is most likely interested in discovering your personality and the kinds of things that interest you. He or she is also looking to see how creative you are and how well you can think on your feet. The key to handling such questions is simple: maintain your composure and answer truthfully.

Another typical interview question is: "What are your weaknesses?" When you encounter this question, make sure that you answer honestly with a short and direct response. Focus on an area that you are planning to improve and try to turn the negative into a positive. For instance, you might say, "I don’t have any corporate experience in this field, but I am very excited about the training that you offer your new employees."

A similar question to the one above is: "Is there anything in your background or work history that would give us reservations about hiring you?" Recruiters want to know that you can learn from a negative experience. Remember to make sure that everything you say is positive!

It is quite common for an interviewer to ask you "Why do you want to leave your present job?" or "Why did you leave your most recent job?" Focus on the positive aspects of change. Respond with something similar to: "I’ve learned a great deal in my job, but it’s time to move on to a larger organization where I can use my experience in new and different areas. I’m ready for more responsibility, and this change will be a positive one in my profession." This question also offers the opportunity to tell the interviewer what attracts you to his or her particular company.

When thinking ahead to possible interview questions, use common sense. What type of position are you applying for? What skills were listed in the job description and how do your experiences match those? Pretend that you are an interviewer. Make up questions that you would ask yourself or that you feel are relevant to the job. You may also talk to your family members or friends. Ask them what questions they anticipate that you may be asked.