Firefighter Interview Questions

Is there a lot of personal drama or bad blood between firefighters, or are you all good friends? And if there's drama, does it all disappear the instant you get called to a fire?

Lol, yes it can be a lot of drama. Our headquarters station is crowded with 10 guys and they gossip, prank, get ticked off over small things. But yes as soon as the tones drop everything else stops. We watch each other’s backs.

When you show up to a burning house, how do you decide whether priority #1 will be putting out the fire, or going into the house to rescue people?

Risk vs Outcome. As you arrive you are looking at several things especially at night. Cars in the driveway? Toys in the Yard? these thing will increase the potential of having to put life risk first. But if it is a vacant home and it is significantly involved is the risk of injury equal or greater that the outcome of saving a fire damaged building. We are trained to look at many things from reading the smoke? You can read several things from the smoke. This video link will show you the signs that we look for specifically smoke puffing out of the building

Examples of possible questions:

1. Give me an example of when you have worked as part of a team.
2. Give me an example of when you have helped someone who needed assistance.
3. Describe a time when you have helped support diversity.
4. When have you been aware of a person who was behaving in a way, which was contrary to the values of the team or organization.
5. When have you tried to learn something new.
6. When have you changed your behaviour following comments from another person.
7. When have you had to follow strict guidelines to complete a task.
8. When have you tried to improve the way you do something.
9. When have you made a mistake that affected others.
10. Have you helped someone in distress as part of a team.
11. Give an example of a time when you have been required to achieve a higher standard in your work than that which is normally expected of you.
12. When you have been in a stressful situation what do you do to relieve the pressure or do you allow it to build up inside of you.
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13. Give an example of a time when you have encountered different groups of people and tell us how you approached treating everyone as equals.

14. You have identified a development need of your own, what actions would you take.

15. You are applying for a job in which your lifestyle will change. Will this be a problem for you.

16. Is it important for all members of a team to work effectively with each other.

17. If you were a manager and one of your team was not performing, what would you do.

18. Have you ever had to mediate between two people who have had a disagreement.

19. Describe a time when you have had to work outside of accepted guidelines in order to solve a problem.

20. Can you tell me about a time when you have acted on feedback.

15 TOUGHEST FIREFIGHTER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why do you want to work in this industry?
Bad answer: "I like firefighting. I think it's really cool."
Don't just say you like it, anyone can make that claim. Focus instead on your history with the industry, and if you can, tell a story about it.
Good answer: "I have always appreciated and admired those who put their lives on the line to protect our communities. My interest piqued in firefighting after I witnessed a post-crash rescue. I heard the calling as I watched the first response team pull civilians to safety. It was then I knew that this is what I was meant to do."

2. Tell us about yourself.
Bad answer: "I graduated four years ago from the University of Michigan, with a Bachelor's degree in Biology – but I decided that wasn't the right path for me. I switched gears and got my first job working in a fire department. Then I went on to work in another department and started participating in training courses. After that, I took a few months off to travel. Finally, I came back to start working again. And now, here I am, looking for a more challenging fire and rescue role."
Instead of giving a chronological work history, focus on your strengths and how they pertain to the role. If possible, illustrate with examples.
Good answer: "I'm a very energetic and well-rounded person who can follow instructions. I am a good communicator and quite a team player. At the last department I was with I initiated medic classes for the firefighters who were interested in learning first-aid..."
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techniques. Because it was such a success, the entire department is in the process of getting certifications for all members in different areas of response medical aid.

3. What do you think of your previous boss?
Bad answer: "He was completely incompetent, and a nightmare to work with, which is why I've moved on."

Remember: if you get the job, the person interviewing you will some day be your previous boss. The last thing they want is to hire someone who they know is going to badmouth them some day. Instead of trashing your former employer, stay positive, and focus on what you learned from them (no matter how awful they might have been).

Good answer: "My last boss taught me the importance of time management – he didn't pull any punches, and was extremely driven. His no-nonsense attitude pushed me to work harder, and to meet goals I never even thought were possible."

4. Why are you leaving your current role?
Bad answer: "I can't stand my boss, or the work I'm doing."

Again, stay away from badmouthing your job or employer. Focus on the positive.

Good answer: "I've learned a lot from my current role, but now I'm looking for a new challenge to broaden my horizons and to gain new skill-sets – all of which, I see the potential for in this job."

5. Where do you see yourself in five years?
Bad answer: "Relaxing on a beach in Maui," or "Doing your job."

There's really no right answer to this question, but the interviewer wants to know that you're ambitious, career-oriented, and committed to a future with the company. So instead of sharing your dream for early retirement, or trying to be funny, give them an answer that illustrates your drive and commitment.

Good answer: "In five years I'd like to have an even better understanding of fire and rescue. Also, I really enjoy being the first to a scene. I work very well under pressure. Ultimately, I'd like to be in a commander-type position, where I can use my organizational skills and industry knowledge to benefit the people working with me, and those we are there to help."

6. What's your greatest weakness?
Bad answer: "I work too hard," or for the comedian, "Blondes."

This question is a great opportunity to put a positive spin on something negative, but you don't want your answer to be cliché – joking or not. Instead, try to use a real example of a weakness you have learned to overcome.

Good answer: "I've never been very comfortable with public speaking, which as you know, can be a hindrance. Realizing this was a problem, I asked my previous department if I could enroll in a speech workshop. I took the class, and was able to overcome my lifelong fear. Since then, I've given a lot of safety presentations to school children across the county. I still don't love it, but no one else can tell!"

7. What salary are you looking for?
Bad answer: "In my last job I earned $35,000 – so, now I'm looking for $40,000."
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If you can avoid it, don't give an exact number. The first person to name a price in a salary negotiation loses. Instead, reiterate your commitment to the job itself. If you have to, give a broad range based on research you've conducted on that particular role, in your particular city.

**Good answer:** "I'm more interested in the role itself than the pay. That said, I'd expect to be paid the appropriate range for this role, based on my five years of experience. I also think a fair salary would bear in mind the high cost of living here in New York City."

8. Why should I hire you?
**Bad answer:** "I'm the best candidate for the role."
A good answer will reiterate your qualifications, and will highlight what makes you unique.

**Good answer:** "I've been a firefighter for the past five years – my boss has said time and time again that without me, the department wouldn't function as well. I've also taken the time to educate myself on some of the non-standard techniques used in first response. I can react quickly in hectic situations, and handle the responsibilities of a leadership role. What's good enough for most people is never really good enough for me."

9. What is your greatest failure, and what did you learn from it?
**Bad answer:** I never finished law school – and everything that has happened since then has taught me that giving up, just because the going gets tough, is a huge mistake.

You don't want to actually highlight a major regret – especially one that exposes an overall dissatisfaction with your life. Instead, focus on a smaller, but significant, mishap, and how it has made you a better professional.

**Good answer:** "When I was in college, I took an art class to supplement my curriculum. I didn't take it very seriously, and assumed that, compared to my Engineering classes, it would be a walk in the park. My failing grades at midterm showed me otherwise. I'd even jeopardized my scholarship status. I knew I had to get my act together. I spent the rest of the semester making up for it, ended up getting a decent grade in the class. I learned that no matter what I'm doing, I should strive to do it to the best of my ability. Otherwise, it's not worth doing at all."

10. How do you explain your gap in employment?
**Bad answer:** "I was so tired of working, and I needed a break," or "I just can't find a job."

Employment gaps are always tough to explain. You don't want to come across as lazy or unhireable. Find a way to make your extended unemployment seem like a choice you made, based on the right reasons.

**Good answer:** "My work is important to me, so I won't be satisfied with any old job. Instead of rushing to accept the first thing that comes my way, I'm taking my time and being selective to make sure my next role is the right one."

11. When were you most satisfied in your job?
**Bad answer:** "I was most satisfied when I did well and got praised for my work."
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Don't give vague answers. Instead, think about something you did well and enjoy that will be relevant at this new job. This is an opportunity for you to share your interests, prove that you're a great fit for the job, and showcase your enthusiasm.

**Good answer:** "I'm a people person. I was always happiest and most satisfied when I was interacting with community residents, making sure I was able to meet their needs and giving them the best possible comfort in a tough situation. It was my favorite part of the job, and it showed. Part of the reason I'm interested in this job is that I know I'd have even more interaction with the public, on an even more critical level."

12. **What did you like least about your last job?**

**Bad answer:** "A lack of stability. I felt like the place could collapse around me at any time."

Try and stay away from anything that draws on the politics, culture or financial health of your previous employer. No matter how true it might be, comments like these will be construed as too negative. Also, you don't want to focus on a function that might be your responsibility in the next role. So think of something you disliked in your last job, but that you know for sure won't be part of this new role.

**Good answer:** "There was nothing about my last job that I hated, but I guess there were some things I liked less than others. My previous role involved traveling at least twice a month. While I do love to travel, twice a month was a little exhausting – I didn't like spending quite so much time out of the department. I'm happy to see that this role involves a lot less travel."

13. **Describe a time when you did not get along with your coworker.**

**Bad answer:** "I'm easy to get along with, so I've never had any kind of discord with another coworker."

Interviewers don't like these types of "easy out" answers. And besides, they know you are probably not telling the truth. Think of a relatively benign (but significant) instance, and spin it to be a positive learning experience.

**Good answer:** "I used to lock heads with a fellow EMT. We disagreed over a lot of things – from the care of civilians to who got what shifts to how to speak with a victim's family. Our personalities just didn't mesh. After three months of arguing, I pulled her aside and asked her to lunch. At lunch, we talked about our differences and why we weren't getting along. It turns out, it was all about communication. We communicated differently and once we knew that, we began to work well together. I really believe that talking a problem through with someone can help solve any issue."

14. **What motivates you?**

**Bad answer:** "Doing a good job and being rewarded for it."

It's not that this answer is wrong — it's just that it wastes an opportunity. This question is practically begging you to highlight your positive attributes. So don't give a vague, generic response — it tells them very little about you. Instead, try and use this question as an opportunity to give the interviewer some insight into your character, and use examples where possible.
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**Good answer:** "I've always been motivated by the challenge – in my last role, I was responsible for training our new recruits and having a 100% success rate in passing scores. I know that this job is very fast-paced and I'm more than up for the challenge. In fact, I thrive on it."

15. **How would your friends describe you?**

**Bad answer:** "I'm a really good listener."

While being a good listener is a great personality trait, your employer probably doesn't care all that much. It's unlikely that they're hiring you to be a shoulder to cry on. You'll want to keep your answer relevant to the job you're interviewing for, and as specific as possible. If you can, insert an example.

**Good answer:** "My friends would probably say that I'm extremely persistent – I've never been afraid to keep going back until I get what I want. When I worked as a program developer, recruiting keynote speakers for a major tech conference, I got one rejection after another – this was just the nature of the job. But I really wanted the big players – so I wouldn't take no for an answer. I kept going back to them every time there was a new company on board, or some new value proposition. Eventually, many of them actually said "yes" – the program turned out to be so great that we doubled our attendees from the year before. A lot of people might have given up after the first rejection, but it's just not in my nature. If I know something is possible, I have to keep trying until I get it."

WEB SOURCE


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