

Why Did You Leave Your Last Position?

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Why did you leave your last position?

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Describing why you left (or seeking to leave) your last position causes anxiety when you're not prepared to handle this question. The following guidelines provide details on how to navigate this interview question.

Be Succinct

Describe the reason for your departure directly and succinctly. Do not go into great detail unless they ask. The longer you speak on the subject the more suspicious the interviewer becomes. For example: When you're asked why you left you could state: "My company merged with another firm and the new management wanted to bring in their own team. Prior to the merger I was recognized as a top performer at the company."

Provide Evidence

You could then say you're happy to provide references from the former company to verify your top performance. Demonstrating a confidence to provide references is a powerful way to ensure you are believed.

Tell the Truth

Stay with the facts of what happened, what you did, how you felt and what you learned. Interviewers want to believe you were not the problem and understand how you handled yourself.

What Did You Learn

This is an opportunity to describe what you learned and how you will handle things differently in the future. Describing what you learned positively demonstrates that you are a life-long learner and you look on the positive side of most scenarios.

Be Positive

State the facts in a positive manner. Any negativity you express will only reflect negatively on you. If you're angry about the situation, you'll need to process that anger in another manner before you interview. The interview is the last place to express anger about anything.

Make No Assumptions

Do not speculate on the motives or feeling of the other people involved in the events of your departure. Focus only on the facts of what happened and what you did.

Eye Contact

Look the interviewer in the eyes when responding. This will convey your confidence, communicate that this is the truth and that you have nothing to hide.

Conquer Your Fear

Write out your response and practice saying it. First, practice responding out loud to yourself,

and then practice saying it to another person. Ask a friend to practice interview you. Practice until you are comfortable with the words you say and how you deliver them.