**Worksheet**

**Potential Interview Questions & Answers**

Preparation is key for an interview, especially when it comes to trying to land your first job as a personal trainer.

Taking the time to actually think about the questions that an interviewer might ask you and formulating answers for them is certainly the right way to go about things. And in our guide, we’ve proved you with a list of 27 questions, some of which will certainly come up during your interview.

So the aim of this worksheet is to take the time to formulate the answers to those 27 questions as a way to prepare for your first interview. It’s something that you can come back to time and time again to adjust your answers till you think they are the best they can possibly be.

And this doesn’t have to be a solo effort either. Hook up with a couple of trainers who have also recently received their certifications and formulate the best possible answers together.

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| **Questions** |

**Question 1**

Why do you want to work as a personal trainer in the field of fitness?

**Answer background:** Each of us have our reasons why we want to work as a personal trainer or why we have chosen to make our career in the world of fitness. For that reason, it’s pretty difficult to come up with a definitive answer here.

For example, you may have always been a natural athlete, loved the feeling of reaching peak fitness and staying there and therefore you want to make your career carry on in a similar vein.

Or perhaps you were overweight and transformed your life by working with a personal trainer to lose plenty of pounds. That’s inspired you to help others.

You see what I mean about the reasons why you might have decided to become a personal trainer. So, my advice is to be honest, tell the truth and show your passion that’s driven you towards this career. Here’s a sample answer as a guideline.

**Sample answer:** I’ve always had a passion for fitness and from a young age, I’ve spent plenty of time in the gym working out and honing my fitness, so much so that I saw myself making a career out of helping others. And as a personal trainer, I can do that. I want to help people of all ages get fit and healthy

**Question 2**

Why did you choose your specific certification?

**Answer background:** Many interviewers might be interested in the reasons why you chose the specific certification you did. And you should know the reasons for that choice.

For example, you might have chosen the certification option from NASM because it’s become so popular over the last couple of years and trainers that hold it are held in high regard. It’s also based on the OPT model which covers the important core concepts that you need to understand as a personal trainer including strength, power, balance, flexibility and core stabilization.

**Sample answer:** After looking at a few personal trainer certifications, I narrow my options down to either the offering from NASM or ACE. I decided on NASM’s personal trainer certification because it offered a study option that suited my budget as well as for the fact that it’s so popular in the fitness industry. Lastly, the OPT model that the certification is based on provided me with the theoretical knowledge I need as a personal trainer.

**Question 3**

What period of time did it take for you to complete your certification?

**Answer background:** This one is fairly simple to answer. In reality, it should really make a difference as to how long it took you to complete your certification because we all study at our own pace.

But if you took some time and really nailed the exam, you can certainly play it up a bit, explaining that you wanted to ensure that you understood all the coursework fully and that really helped you come exam time.

**Sample answer:** I started my NASM personal trainer certification in March 2019 and completed it in December. I took the time to familiarize myself with all the key concepts as outlined in the coursework and also prepared for the final exam by completing a number of practice tests. I wrote my exam and passed with a score of 90%, well about the pass mark of 75% on all the modules.

**Question 4**

What areas did your certification cover?

**Answer background:** Well, this question shouldn’t be too much of a curveball, that’s for sure. You will easily be able to remember the important concepts covered by your personal trainer certification, no matter what certification agency you are accredited through.

**Sample answer:** My personal trainer certification through ACE covered a number of key areas. These allow me to effectively assess clients of all types, help them define their goals and then build an exercise program that will be adjusted over time to help them reach them. Perhaps the most important concept in the ACE certification Integrated Fitness Training (IFT) model. This covers moving a client progressively through a safe exercise program.

**Question 5**

Did you pass the exam on the first attempt?

**Answer background:** This is a simple yes or no. If you didn’t pass your exam on your first attempt, be honest and give reasons why you might have failed.

**Sample answer:** No, I didn’t. To be honest, I probably tried to get my certification a little too quickly and without adequate preparation. Before I undertook my second attempt, I worked through a number of practice exams to make sure that I was indeed ready and that helped me pass easily.

**Question 6**

Are you aiming to study further?

**Answer background:** You certainly are more valuable to an employer if you are looking to study further and to improve yourself. And yes, studying further is something you must contemplate at some point, that’s for sure.

**Sample answer:** While I am still not sure as to what area I would like to study, I do intend on improving myself as a personal trainer in the future. And by looking to improve myself, I know that not only I benefit, but perhaps more importantly, my clients.

**Question 7**

Where do you see yourself in five years? Will you look to specialize?

**Answer background:** The good old “five years time” question. This is a standard approach in just about every interviewer in the world, no matter what position you are applying for. Of course, most employers are interested in seeing if you would like to specialize one day and whether you will fit into their plans in that regard.

Now as a new personal trainer, you might not know where you want to specialize but as I have mentioned many times before, you certainly do want to specialize at some point in the future. And if you do know where you intend to end up as a personal trainer one day, well, that’s even better.

**Sample answer:** While it’s still early days in my personal training career, over the course of the next few years, I intend to learn as much as possible, work with a full range of different client types and from there, make a decision as to which specialization I will study towards.

**Question 8**

What are your three best strengths?

**Answer background:** Strengths are different for all of us. But of course, you will be better in certain areas in life and as a personal trainer than others. Just be honest here, pick out three areas that you think you are particularly strong in and tell the interviewer.

**Sample answer:** The three areas that I consider to be my strengths are that I am patient, I have a very good work ethic and I value professionalism highly.

**Question 9**

What do you see as your weaknesses?

**Answer background:** It’s difficult talking about your weaknesses but in truth, you can’t excel at everything. Again, it pays to be honest here. Don’t try and sugarcoat your answer by saying something along the lines of that you don’t really have any weaknesses but frankly, that’s just a lie. Think of the areas that hold you back and include ways that you are trying to improve yourself in those areas.

**Sample answer:** If I am honest, my time management is not the best. It’s something I am working on by using a strict schedule when it comes to time spent training as well as that allocated to admin duties and other areas of personal training. I also can be a little impatient and I need to work on my written communication skills.

**Question 10**

Keeping clients motivated can be a challenge. How do you handle that?

**Answer background:** Another great question that you are sure to be asked when you apply for a position as a personal trainer. As a new personal trainer, client motivation is probably far from your mind. In fact, you are going to be more worried about handling a fitness assessment and devising a decent exercise program for each of your clients. But it’s important to think about ways to motivate your clients, as this often becomes a problem at some point down the line. There are many ways to do that, in fact, in our guide we give you plenty of ideas.

**Sample answer:** I understand that at points in their training, clients will struggle for motivation. There are many techniques a personal trainer can use to keep them motivated and passionate in striving to reach their goals. It’s about finding the correct one that connects with each client that will push them onwards toward those goals.

Some ways that I would consider include setting realistic goals so motivation levels don’t dip easily, switching training sessions up (even when it comes to location) when clients become bored, staying positive and providing encouragement at all times, using fitness challenges as a way to motivate more experienced clients and making use of training apps as a motivation tool.

**Question 11**

Conflict in the workplace can happen. How do you deal with conflict?

**Answer background:** While this has nothing to do with personal training per se, conflict in the workplace can be a real problem for employers. And that’s why they want to know how you would handle it.

**Sample answer:** I can understand how conflict arising between staff or perhaps between two personal trainers could cause a problem in a gym setting. I believe the best way to handle conflict is for the two parties to try and sort it out as soon as possible before it escalates. If they cannot manage to do so, the problem should be taken up the chain of command and settled in that manner.

**Question 12**

How do you deal with rude or challenging clients?

**Answer background:** Not all clients are going to treat you in the manner in which you think you should be treated. Some are going to be rude and others are going to challenge you in different ways, for example, continually second guess the exercises you prescribe for them. In this guide, we have covered a range of challenging clients that will help as a new personal trainer. Of course, the more experience you get in dealing with challenging clients, the easier it becomes.

**Sample answer:** When dealing with challenging clients, it’s important to always remain respectful and never lose your cool. Even if you feel they are in the wrong and you are in the right, as a personal trainer, you need to remain professional. If I had trouble with a challenging client, I would ask the advice of a more senior personal trainer, especially if my attempts at overcoming the challenge are not working.

**Question 13**

How do people generally describe your character?

**Answer background:** This is another question that’s asked in most job interviews. It’s easy to answer by being honest and highlighting those character traits that are your strong points.

**Sample answer:** I believe that my personality, patience, honesty, strong work ethic and my willingness to learn are the strongest parts of my character. If I would have to sum that up in a word, I would say I am dependable.

**Question 14**

Are you able to work flexible hours?

**Answer background:** Well, this is a simple one. In the gym world and as a new personal trainer, you don’t want to be picky, right? So, yes, you can work flexible hours.

**Sample answer:** I have no problem working flexible hours. I realize that clients all have different times when they prefer to work out and that gyms need to be open from early in the morning to late at night to cover that.

**Question 15**

What can you offer us should we employ you?

**Answer background:** This is another question in which you can get across your character traits that will be a benefit to the gym should they employ you. Of course, don’t lay it on too thick here, just be honest in your answer.

**Sample answer:** Should you employ me you will have someone who is dependable, loyal, a team player, passionate and who wants to help others to achieve their fitness goals.

**Question 16**

Why are you the best person for this job?

**Answer background:** This is very similar to Question 15, in truth. It’s important to get across your commitment and passion for fitness because ultimately, an employer wants an employee that’s going to give 100% at all times. Of course, this is even more important to get across if you are starting out and have little to no experience.

**Sample answer:** While I am a new personal trainer with little experience, I believe that my passion for fitness and overall commitment to helping others stands me in good stead. I am the best person for the job because I will give 100% at all times, not only to you but to my clients as well.

**Question 17**

What are two exercises that you invariably include in every workout program you devise?

**Answer background:**

**Sample answer:**

**Question 18**

What experience do you have as a personal trainer?

**Answer background:** For a new personal trainer, this is often the hardest question to answer when you have no prior experience in a gym situation. The thing is, you can mention anywhere else that you may have made use of your skills, for example, running assessments and drawing up exercise programs for friends and family. Or perhaps you worked helping in a gym at a holiday resort, a retirement home or leading youth fitness classes. Believe me, that all counts so don’t just dismiss experiences like that.

**Sample answer:** While I haven’t been employed in a gym setting as of yet, I have some experience in areas of personal training. As part of my practical learning for my certification, I have run fitness assessments on a number of people and developed an exercise program for them as well as monitor their progress. And the knowledge I gained doing this means that I have some experience when applying that to working with clients at a gym.

**Question 19**

Growing a client base is crucial to a new personal trainer. How will you go about that?

**Answer background:** For many small gyms, it’s up to the personal trainer to bring in new clients. In commercial gyms, you can bring in clients but you will also be handed clients that are looking for trainers to guide them. This can be a pretty scary question for a new personal trainer starting out.

**Sample answer:** For the most part, I believe that as a personal trainer, the more time I spend out on the floor, the better my chances of bringing in new clients. That’s not only time working with my existing clients but even in those periods where I am not training someone. It’s about talking to gym members who are training by themselves, giving them pointers and helping them understand the areas where the help of a personal trainer can make all the difference.

**Question 20**

With new trends always coming to the fore in the fitness industry, how do you plan on keeping up to date with them?

**Answer background:** This is another question where an employer wants to see where you stand on improving yourself. Keeping up with the latest fitness trends doesn’t necessarily mean spending money on further education but taking the time to keep informed. And the easiest way to do that is by constantly reading and researching. That helps you become a better trainer as well.

**Sample answer:** While fitness trends come and go, I believe the easiest way to keep up with what’s new in the world of fitness is through constantly developing my knowledge. And the easiest way to improve as a personal trainer is through researching and reading fitness literature. There are many resources online as well as fitness journals that are packed with information about not only these trends but other areas of interest.

**Question 21**

To you, what is great customer service?

**Answer background:** A question like this, or similar, is something that you should expect during your interview. Customer service is many things but as a personal trainer, it's always given your best effort and attention to each and every one of your clients at all times.

**Sample answer:** For me, customer service is about being present and there for every one of my clients. It’s about praising and motivating them towards their goals and guiding them through the tough times. It’s about listening to them, being flexible when they cannot make training sessions and over-delivering on their expectations. It’s always about putting them first.

**Question 22**

How do you go about building up a relationship with a possible client who is currently training on their own in the gym?

**Answer background:** For small gyms that rely on personal trainers to land their own clients, this is a crucial question. For the most part, the way to approach this is something I mentioned earlier. And that’s through simple interaction. By being present on the floor, you can talk to gym members as they train, point out form problems or help them with equipment, for example when they bench press. By building up a relationship, you certainly can turn them into clients over time.

**Sample answer:** By spending time on the floor when I am not training clients, I can build-up relationships with regular gym members. It’s about getting to know them, helping them train, giving them pointers and explaining how a personal trainer can take their gym experience to the next level. Relationships are key to landing new clients as a personal trainer.

**Question 23**

Do you see yourself as a team player?

**Answer background:** Gym bosses rely on great teamwork to ensure the best possible experience for their clients. Working with others is not always that easy but unless you are working as a freelance personal trainer visiting people in their homes, teamwork is crucial. In other words, yes, you are a team player.

**Sample answer:** Yes, I do see myself as a team player. The staff in a gym should be a close-knit family and I certainly see myself contributing towards that and helping others wherever I am needed.

**Question 24**

Is time management a strength of yours?

**Answer background:** We’ve covered strengths and weaknesses earlier, but time-management is often something that an employer wants to know specifically where you stand. That’s because it’s an important skill for a personal trainer, especially busy ones with hectic schedules. Not only can poor time management affect your day but that of your clients as well. If you do struggle with time management, say it’s something that you are working on through effective planning and scheduling.

**Sample answer:** I have always placed time management as a top priority in my life and apply that to personal training as well. It is simple to stay on top of effective time management through effective planning and scheduling, both when it comes to clients as well as the parts of the day when I am not training them.

**Question 25**

Would you turn a client’s business away? If so, for what reason?

**Answer background:** As a new personal trainer, it would be very difficult to turn a client away, right? Especially if you were trying to build up your client base. But there are times when you have to say no. For example, you come across a client with a medical problem but who won’t get the all-clear from their doctor as to whether they should train or not. There are other reasons to turn clients away, however. For example, they may have unrealistic goals and expectations.

**Sample answer:** In certain situations, it’s imperative that a personal trainer should not train a client that hasn’t met certain prescribed conditions. For example, a client with a medical condition that hasn’t received the go-ahead to train from a medical practitioner and refuses to do so.

**Question 26**

As a new personal trainer, why should we hire you over someone who has far more experience?

**Answer background:** Again, this is a tough question to answer. As someone with little experience, you have to get a prospective employer to look past that and see other qualities that make you an ideal candidate. Drive home the fact that you are passionate, hard-working, ready to give 110% at all times and a team-player to drive your point home.

**Sample answer:** While I may have limited experience, even the top personal trainers in the world sat in this position when they started out. I believe that my loyalty, my passion, my hard work and dedication and my ability to work as part of a team means that I am the ideal candidate for the job.

**Question 27**

What are your salary expectations?

**Answer background:** You may or may not get asked about what your salary expectations are when it comes to a personal trainer position at a gym. If you aren’t asked, it should be a question that you then put to the interviewer.

Let’s be honest, if you are a personal trainer looking to land your first job, salary, while important, is probably the last thing on your mind. You want to get a job to get into the swing of things, get experience and then you can look to move on from there. You don’t want to sell yourself short, however, so take the time before your interview to do a little research and try to find out what gyms pay entry-level personal trainers in your city or region.

**Sample answer:** As an entry-level personal trainer, I would like to earn around $\_\_\_ per week.