



How to Talk About a Layoff in an Interview

Among all the challenges we faced in 2020, one of the biggest was the large scale unemployment and layoffs the workforce experienced due to the global pandemic. As the economy continues to recover, and more and more companies are hiring again, it's likely you may encounter interview questions related to your layoff. Instead of dreading it or thinking your layoff will be an automatic "no" from the hiring team, here's how to talk about being laid off during an interview.



Be Prepared to Explain the Situation

You can expect the hiring manager to ask you about your past employment duration and your reason(s) for leaving. If you were laid off during the coronavirus pandemic, you'll want to mention that during the interview. You'll need to be prepared to explain the circumstances that led to your layoff.

In most cases, layoffs often result from company-wide decisions or budget changes, not from specific performance issues. You may have been laid off as part of a group, department, or position no longer feasible for the organization

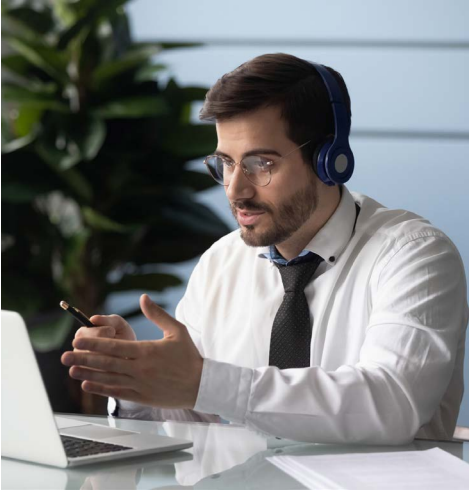


Keep it Short

While you'll need to be prepared to give an explanation for your layoff, it is a best practice to keep your answer short. A sentence or two should be sufficient in explaining why you were laid off in a previous position.

In your explanation, be honest about the situation; the hiring manager may contact your previous employer to verify the circumstances around the layoff. You should also avoid making any negative remarks or comments about your last company, manager, or co-workers as it may leave a wrong impression on the hiring manager.





Fill in the Gaps

If you have a long gap in your employment history, you should fully expect the hiring manager to seek clarification on this. Maybe you suffered an illness or accident, were caring for a sick family member, were serving time in prison, or were laid off months ago due to the pandemic; whatever the reason, it's important to fill in the gaps.

Be sure to emphasize anything positive you have done to improve your skills or abilities during that period. For example, watching digital tutorials, completing a course or certification, doing freelance, consulting, or volunteer work. Hiring managers will be more impressed with candidates who take steps to further their career development over candidates who haven't.



Showcase Your Accomplishments

Consider creating a portfolio of work samples showcasing your accomplishments from past positions. Include examples of writing, design, spreadsheets, reports, case studies, presentation slides, lesson plans, and any other projects you worked on.

Having these pieces of work will not only help show the hiring manager what you could bring to the table, but these will serve as a great way to back up the information on your resume.



Show How You'd Add Value

Make a list of what you added value to at your previous position, especially anything that positively impacted your department's bottom line. Use your portfolio of work samples to back up your value claims.

Explain what you did to improve processes, speed up production, resolve operation issues, increase sales, or save money, etc. You should also focus on the skills, abilities, and experience you can bring to the table for the company you're interviewing for.

Experiencing a layoff is nothing to be ashamed of; the best thing you can do is pick yourself back up and be prepared to talk about it at your next interview. Hiring managers will understand when you're able to clearly and accurately explain the situation, showcase your accomplishments, and share how you'd add value to their company.

About EG Workforce Solutions

We've been in this business for decades and have developed a deep network of professional connections. Whether they're companies looking for talent, job seekers looking for work, or an up-and-coming store in need of some temporary help, we know the right people to bridge the gap between the hiring and the hired.

But what's more, we get to know people. From employers hiring to candidates looking, we take the time to listen and learn. We hear your likes, talents, and needs. We gain an understanding, and with it, we're able to facilitate lasting relationships between businesses and people.

