

CAN YOU REPEAT THE QUESTION?



Here's one piece of interview advice -- *repeat the question*. For instance: **Interviewer:** "What do you think is your greatest flaw as an employee?" **Interviewee:** "What do I think is my greatest flaw as an employee? I'm a perfectionist -- I always want to do my job right." (By the way, don't give that answer -- everyone says that.) Of course, you're going to sound like an idiot if you immediately repeat every question. So mix it up: **Interviewer:** "What is your favorite part of being a writer?" **Interviewee:** "Working at home. That's my favorite part." Why should you repeat the questions an interviewer asks? I can think of four reasons. 1.) It shows the interviewer you are really paying attention. 2.) Some people go off topic, without even realizing it. Repeating the question reinforces to your own brain what it is you're supposed to be talking about. 3.) It buys you a few extra seconds to think of an answer. 4.) I'm reminded of a famous story that chef Anthony Bourdain tells in his excellent memoir - slash - guide for foodies, *Kitchen Confidential*. Bourdain was interviewing for a job as chef for a famous New York City steakhouse. It was going very well until the owner asked Bourdain, "what do you know about me?" Bourdain knew nothing about the owner, and said so. The interview became awkward, and Bourdain left knowing he wouldn't get the job. Walking down the street after leaving the restaurant, Bourdain suddenly realized --- he had been asked "what do you know about *mea*?" Now, if Bourdain had been following my advice, he would have answered "what do I know about you? Nothing, I'm afraid." The owner would have laughed and repeated the question more clearly. Bourdain might have gotten the job. So ask yourself, "should I repeat the questions that interviewers ask?" Then answer, "Yes, I should repeat the questions that interviewers ask!"