

## [BUSINESS★★] THE RIGHT ANSWER TO 'WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST WEAKNESS?' AND WHY IT MATTERS

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(P1) It's the most **REVELED** interview question of all time: What is your greatest weakness?

(P2) But whether you're a job seeker sitting in an interview for your dream job, or an entrepreneur running your own business, there's a lot you can learn from this question. Let's take the interview scenario. How would you answer the question above?

- a. **DENIAL**: I can't really think of any weaknesses.
- b. **DISGUISE** your strength as a weakness: I'm a perfectionist.
- c. Name a **TRAIT** that will have no real impact on your work: I get really nervous speaking in front of large groups.
- d. **CONFESS** a real weakness that you feel might lose you the job.

The correct answer is d. Let me explain why.

(P3) Answers a--c are **GARBAGE**. Think about it: Interviewers are asking the same question to dozens, sometimes hundreds of candidates. They've heard everything imaginable, and answers a--c make up about 95% of what gets thrown at them.

(P4) But what's the goal of this question? The interviewer wants to see what **UNIQUE** qualities you bring to the company. How do you face challenges? Can you correctly identify problems? Can you be **SELF-CRITICAL**? To honestly **CONFESS** a real weakness takes self-reflection, **INSIGHT**, and courage. And those are qualities that everyone needs, not just job seekers.

(P5) The key is to actually **PONDER** this question. There are no **MICROWAVE ANSWERS**. You might think about what troubles you've had in the past, and how you've learned from them. How have you made yourself better? It can help to ask others to give you honest feedback. All of this takes time and **CONSIDERATION**.

(P6) Most importantly, make sure to identify how you're fighting your weakness(es). If it's a personality **FLAW**, what **MEASURES** are you taking to **COMBAT** it? How do you plan on overcoming it?

(P7) Take a look at this type of answer **IN ACTION**--let's say you're the interviewer. You ask the question, and you're met with the following response:

(P8) I've discovered a major weakness of mine is my desire to be a **PEACEMAKER**--to a fault. I have the **TENDENCY** to be 'too nice'...which can be a major problem for a leader of a team. Often I have to tell people what they need to hear, not just what they want to hear. **THIS DOESN'T COME NATURALLY TO ME.**

(P9) I've known for years that this is a special challenge of mine, so I give a lot of attention to my feedback style. I prepare **THOROUGHLY** before **DELIVERING CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM**; I make sure it's backed up with examples or research if needed. Sometimes I even practice out loud how I want to say it, so I can speak with more confidence.

(P8) To be clear, the answer above is not 'what you're supposed to say' to answer this question. There is no 'what you're supposed to say'. This is an example of what one person might come up with, based on self-reflection and feedback from others. **TRUTH BE TOLD**, it's an honest assessment of one of my greatest weaknesses. Your answer will (and should) look totally different; it should fit your personality and experiences. Most of all, it should be honest.

(P9) Most people hate this question because they're not in the **HABIT** of trying to make themselves better--which is exactly why this question can be helpful. If you're afraid of **PUTTING YOURSELF OUT THERE** in front of a total stranger, just remember: The person who will benefit most from this answer is you. And that's why, whether you're looking for a new job or you're already **YOUR OWN BOSS**, the answer to this question is **INVALUABLE**. So even if you never answer it for anyone else, make sure you can answer it for yourself.

**Words:** 620

**Source:** <http://www.inc.com/justin-bariso/the-right-answer-to-what-is-your-greatest-weakness-and-why-it-matters.html>

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you found the passage difficult to read or had problems understanding specific words or idiomatic expressions, please discuss them with your tutor. The following discussion questions should be answered in your own words and with your own arguments.

1. Briefly summarize the content of the article in your own words.
2. What are the four possible answers to the question ‘what is your greatest weakness?’ How would you answer it?
3. Why does the author say that you should “confess a real weakness that you feel might lose you the job”? (P5)
4. “If you're afraid of putting yourself out in front of a total stranger, just remember: The person who will benefit most from this answer is you (P9)” Do you agree with the author? Why or why not? Explain your thought process and support it with examples.
5. So what is your greatest weakness? Share your thoughts with your Cambly tutor as if this is your interview question!

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## EXPRESSIONS TO PRACTICE

“**TRUTH BE TOLD**, it's an honest assessment of one of my greatest weaknesses. Your answer will (and should) look totally different; it should fit your personality and experiences. (P8)”

What does “truth to be told” mean? Practice using the expression in a sentence; extra points if you can apply it during the conversation.

GRAMMAR: how and when do you use semicolon?

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## WHAT/WHO/WHERE ARE THEY?

## VOCABULARY

Reville	(v) 매도하다, 입에 담지 못할 욕을 하다; to assail with contemptuous or opprobrious language; address or speak of abusively.
Denial	(n) (무엇의 사실성·존재에 대한) 부인
Disguise	(v) 위장하다, 숨기다
Trait	(n) (성격상의) 특성
Confess	(v) (죄·잘못을) 자백하다
Garbage	(n) (음식물·휴지 등의) 쓰레기; 말도 안 되는 것
Unique	(adj) (아주) 특별한; 고유의, 특유의
Self-critical	(adj) 자기 비판적인
Insight	(n) 통찰력
Ponder	(v) 숙고하다, 곰곰이 생각하다
Microwave answers	(expression) 바로 나오는 대답
Consideration	(n) 사려, 숙고
Flaw	(n) (사람의 성격적인) 결점
Measures	(n) 방안, 방법, 조치
Combat	(v) (줄지 않은 일의 발생이나 악화를) 방지하다
In action	(expression) (제 고유의) 활동[작동]을 하는
Peacemaker	(n) (분쟁·전쟁을 종식시키려 애쓰는) 중재자
Tendency	(n) 성향, 기질; 경향
A comes naturally to B (person)	(expression) B에게 A가 자연스럽게 느껴진다
Thoroughly	(adv) 철저히, 철두철미하게
Deliver	(v) (약속을) 지키다; (사람들의 기대대로 결과를) 내놓다[산출하다]
Constructive criticism	(n) 건설적[적극적] 비판
Truth be told	(expression) Used when admitting something one might otherwise lie about, e.g. to keep up appearances or be polite
Habit	(n) 버릇; 습관
Put yourself out there	(expression) 특별히 더 애를 쓰다
Be your own boss	(expression) 스스로의 주체가 되다
Invaluable	(adj) 매우 유용한, 귀중한