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Navigating the Tell me about yourself question in job interviews can be a pivotal moment for college students. Weve gathered insights from twenty professionals, including HR managers and CEOs, to offer their best tips. From avoiding generic descriptors to preparing with mock interviews, these experts provide a roadmap for crafting a compelling
personal narrative. Avoid Generic Descriptors Be a Storyteller with Relevance Show Professional Presence Transition from Basics to Aspirations Structure Your Response Strategically Formulate a TMAY Elevator PitchFocus on Industry Engagement Convey Fluency Over Content Tell a Resonant Why Story Showcase Proactivity and Eagerness Tailor Your
About Me ResponseCraft a Concise Elevator PitchEmphasize Skills and AspirationsDeliver a Low-Risk PitchHighlight Soft Skills with ExamplesFocus on Three Key AspectsShare Your Major ChoiceBlend Personal and ProfessionalCommunicate Passion for the RolePrepare with Mock InterviewsAvoid Generic DescriptorsAs a regular interviewer (and Im
guessing others feel the same), generic words such as passionate, reliable, motivated, conscientious, and so on, just wash over you like white noise during an interview. You might as well save your breath. We know when candidates are telling us what we want to hear, and it can come across at best as a lack of imagination and is predictable at the
very least. I want to figure out for myself whether a candidate is passionate, reliable, or conscientious, so by giving me some specific background details or relaying a situation where theyve demonstrated the kind of person they are, this really fleshes out that individual. For example, I want to hear: what their passions are what makes them tick what
gets them up in the morning what stimulates and fascinates themAnd the whys? This tells me whether or not theyre the sort of person we need for the role. So, if theyre the kind of person who needs to be on the moveoff scuba-diving, climbing mountains, or engaging in other physical adventures then perhaps meticulous, focused editorial work wouldn't
be for them ultimately. However, if they tell me about their love and passion for words and their etymology, or their love of reading and how they get a real kick out of sublime sentence structure, then I need to be persuaded otherwise. Of course, Im interested in a candidates
family life and the name and breed of their dog, but that can come later. What I really want to know is what attracted them to the position applied for in the first place. I can very quickly tell if they dont really know about the job or the company, or have done no research whatsoever, and have simply uploaded their CV for a bit of job-fishing, so its
imperative that they make it clear to me what they have in their personal repertoire or about their character that would make them a great fit for the company. Anyone can pay lip service; believe me, its easy to do an unimpressive interview. Yet, it doesn't take a huge amount of effort to stand out from the crowd, so my advice to any college student is
to get yourself noticed and big up those unique traits that make you the perfect person for the job!Lisa Tucker, Head of HR and Communications, IntellekBe a Storyteller with RelevanceWe get a lot of fresh college graduates for interviews at our legal process outsourcing company. Every time we conduct interviews or participate in college placement
rounds, we allocate 1-2 minutes for the candidate to introduce themselves and the customary tell me about yourself session. We usually prefer a candidate to be more of a storyteller, as we know that a college student might lack practical knowledge of the actual process on which we work. We also prefer minimal usage of industry jargon and more
real-life incidents, where the job responsibilities laid out in the recruitment offer are fulfilled or accomplished by the candidate through a personal incident, or any academic qualification. This gives a better peek into the skills of the candidate through a personal incident, or any academic qualification. This gives a better peek into the skills of the candidate through a personal incident, or any academic qualification.
college students read and research the job responsibilities prior to showing up at the interview. When a candidate weaves some keywords from the job description while responsibilities prior to showing up at the interview. When a candidate weaves some keywords from the job description while responsibilities prior to showing up at the interview. When a candidate weaves some keywords from the job description while responsibilities prior to showing up at the interview.
company. College students appearing for interviews should also try to demonstrate the impact of their work at any previous internship in quantifiable terms. For example, the contract drafting associate at our company told us that in one of her previous internships, she could speed up the teardown sheet preparation by 60%, resulting in reduced cycle
time and improving the TAT for their final customers. The techniques described by her during the interview were relevant to the requirements we had, and she explained it in a quantifiable way while sticking to a storytelling tone. Her authenticity and lack of robotic recitations landed her a job at our company. Aseem Jha, Founder and Head of
Customer Delivery, Legal Consulting ProShow Professional PresenceStart your answer by saying, As you may have read in my LinkedIn profile to show professional presence, and be sure that your profile fits the jobs you are pursuing and answers how you excel at what you do. Then work into your reply to the interviewer(s), I reviewed your profile and
would like to ask you a few questions as they relate to my career path, from your experience. Watch them sit up straight because no one does this! And you will stand out for it. Marc W. Halpert, LinkedIn Coach, Trainer, Marketing Consultant, connect2collaborate.comTransition from Basics to AspirationsWhen asked, Tell me about yourself in a job
interview, start by quickly covering the basics like your hometown, university, and major, ideally within a minute. The key tip here is to then seamlessly transition into a deeper dive of your interest you, or the types of learning
experiences youre looking for. You can also tie in extracurriculars and share what relevant skills they have helped you build. For example, you could say, My name is Katie, and Im graduating from Boston College this spring. Im originally from Texas and came to Boston to study marketing. Ive interned at two software companies over the last three
years, helping each organization build out their social media and email marketing strategies. I love marketing because its the perfect blend of writing, psychology, and design, and Im looking for a role that allows me to explore all three of these areas. This social media strategist role especially caught my eye because Ive built a significant Instagram
following for my food blog, and Im interested in using the skills Ive learned there in a more professional setting. In my free time, I love exploring Bostons food scene, performing in my colleges improv group, and reading romance novels! The goal here is to make your introduction memorable enough to stand out and open up various avenues for further
discussion during the interview. This approach not only personal interests, and the job youre interviewing for, making you a much more relatable and compelling candidate. Katie White, Content Marketing Manager, CentimeStructure Your Response
StrategicallyOne key strategy for delivering this response is to structure it strategically and concisely. You can start by summarizing your academic background and initiatives that match the requirements of the position. Emphasize your internships, part-time jobs, if there are any, or other activities that honed your skills. If you want to be more
creative, you can inject an object that symbolizes your characteristics. This will leave a powerful impression on the interviewer. Remember how critical it is to tailor your response to the particular job and company youre applying for. This approach shows not only your suitability for the job but also your thorough understanding of the company. Make
sure that your response lasts only two to three minutes. This encourages follow-up questions, leading to a lively and insightful discussion about your potential. Bianca Nagac, Marketing Manager, MVP Asia PacificFormulate a TMAY Elevator PitchTell Me About Yourself, or TMAY as I like to call it, is a frequent opener from interviewers to get
candidates talking about themselves. A common way to formulate your TMAY is as follows: My name is ______, and I am a (Profession/Level) With expertise in (function or capabilities) My strengths include (unique professional qualities) Particular accomplishments or distinctions relevant to the position are: I have worked for/with (type of
organizations/industries)I am now seeking a permanent, interim, or consultant role and would like to apply my skills in delivering for your organization. Of course, you can adapt this for your own individual situation. Practice saying this out loud so that you can deliver it at the drop of a hat. Perfect for the beginning of an interviewin person, via Zoom,
or on the telephone. Can also introduce yourself in a new situation. Keep it under 2 minutes. Jane Ferr, Talent Management It seems obvious, but this is something I didnt know when I was in college. Tell them what they want to hear has become my new mantra. If youre a college student
and youre asked, Tell me about yourself, in a job interview, say this: Honestly, I pretty much spend all my time learning about [the industry youre applying to], but I need first-hand experience, which is why Im looking at this job. This profession is something Im very interested in, but the best way to learn is by doing. Heres why this answer works: It
shows youre engaged with the profession and will probably do above-average work. It shows youre interested, so you will work hard. Finally, it shows youre a self-starter. You may be asked, What interviewers most want to hear is that
youre passionate, eager to learn, and eager to work. Tell them what they want to hear. Edward Sturm, SEO and Marketing Expert, Edwardsturm.comConvey Fluency Over ContentWhen answering this question, the most important thing you need to convey is fluency. Employers want to know whether candidates have communication skills and whether
a candidate can speak about themselves in a smooth, natural way. The content of your response isnt the priority; its the delivery that your interviewer will be assessing. No one is expecting a college student to have decades of experience or highly developed workplace-relevant skills. Consequently, you dont need to immediately start listing buzzwords
or highlighting personal competencies; this isnt the goal of the question. Instead, simply tell the interviewer about yourself, but with a particular focus on presenting that information fluently. Chloe Yarwood, HR Manager, Test PartnershipTell a Resonant Why StoryA great way to answer the question, Tell me about yourself, is by telling a story that
explains your why and how it aligns with the companys mission and values. Try to make the story interesting and avoid rambling. Above all, stay authentic. Dont make stuff up to try and win over your interviewer. Do highlight the aspects of your backstory that you feel would resonate most, and show a little emotion without losing control. Dennis
Consorte, Digital Marketing and Leadership Consultant for Startups, Snackable SolutionsShowcase Proactivity and EagernessFor obvious reasons, college students should do their best to
showcase their proactive attitude, motivation, and eagerness to learn. Elaborate on the academic accomplishments you take pride in. Its good to mention membership in student organizations, internships, and volunteer work. Also, dont be shy to talk about your interpersonal skills and character traits that could make you a valuable employee. After all
its often easier to train someone to do the job than to interact with people. Last but not least, to make your answer both compelling and convincing for a recruiter, provide relevant examples illustrating what has shaped you the way you are and how you can use this experience in the position youre applying for. Agata Szczepanek, Community Manager,
LiveCareerTailor Your About Me ResponseWhen asked, Tell me about yourself in a job interview, shine by focusing on your strengths. Talk about my internship where I made social media more popular by 30%. Numbers matter, and they remember that. Keep it short, connect your
experiences to the job, and speak with excitement. Its not just about saying what you did, but showing why you love it. Remember, its not reading point about yourself question can seem like a loaded question
because it is vague. You cant give your entire life story to answer this question because that would take too long, but you also want to highlight your accomplishments, and you might have years of those. This question because that would only take about 20-30 seconds to
answer, or about the time it would take to introduce yourself to someone if you are riding in an elevator with them. For this guestion, follow this skeleton: Introduce yourself: This could include your name, your current professional role, and academic background. Objective or Goal: What are you seeking or looking to achieve? Are you going for a
professional role, or admission into a school or internship?Relevant experience and value: Highlight your strengths here. What sets you apart from others? This would be a great place for you to back that up with an example that is relevant to the context of your strengths. Skills: Showcase your specific skills or qualifications that make you a good fit
for the role. Focus on what you bring to the table for them.Remember: Dont include unnecessary detail. If this is an interview, you can talk about the details as you answer other questions. Exude passion in your communication. Show a genuine interview, you can talk about the details as you answer other questions. Exude passion in your communication.
almost always going to be part of an interview, a networking event, a college fair, etc.Mary Krull, SHRM-SCP, PRC, Lead Talent Attraction Partner, Southern New Hampshire UniversityEmphasize Skills and AspirationsAs an HR leader, with a sibling whos currently a college freshman, I have discussed this topic quite a bit. The major piece of advice I
stick to is to emphasize your skill set, aspirations, and goals. For instance, if applying for positions like a barista, cashier, or customer service agent, its essential to showcase how the skills acquired in these roles align with broader career objectives. For example, you can highlight organizational and multitasking skills as they relate to schoolwork and
their relevance to the fast-paced nature of the job. This approach not only demonstrates suitability for the specific role but also conveys a strategic and forward-thinking mindset. Brittney Simpson, HR Director, CallRevuDeliver a Low-Risk PitchKeep in mind that when youre asked a question, the person asking might actually mean something different
from the words theyve chosen to use. Tell me about yourself is often said by interviewers who arent well-prepared and might not even remember what job theyre interviewing you will be better for them than hiring any other
candidate. Youre unlikely to know much about the others, but if you can convince the interviewer that youre a very low-risk hire, youre far more likely to get the job. Steven Rothberg, Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, College Recruiter Highlight Soft Skills with Examples While you may lack considerable work experience, I recommend focusing on
the skills you have gained through academic and extracurricular activities. A few examples of this kind of work include taking the helm at a club, volunteering, or working occasionally. Provide concrete examples to illustrate the importance of soft skills, such as collaboration, communication, and problem-solving. Consider sharing an example of a
relates to this job: First, blah. Second, blah. Third, blah. Third, blah. From there, you can end it with Im happy to dive into any of those, or I can expand on anything you had in mind? Then you can be valuable to their organization, and it focuses the conversation on something you know your value, youve thought about how your value, youve thought about how you can be valuable to their organization, and it focuses the conversation on something you know your value, youve thought about how you can be valuable to their organization, and it focuses the conversation on something you know your value, you can be valuable to their organization.
youre good at. Spencer Shulem, CEO, BuildBetter. aiShare Your Major ChoiceAs a college student interviewing, potential employers are curious to understand motivation. Students should be able to thoughtfully answer the question, Tell me about yourself, by incorporating an answer affiliated with Why did you choose your major? By sharing the reason
demonstrates motivation for that particular arena. By providing a personal story, you are more likely to stand out as a candidate, be memorable, and therefore have a higher likelihood of receiving an offer. Furthermore, this demonstrates independent critical thinking, the ability to transfer academic knowledge into the work environment, and overall,
communicate a sense of self-awareness. Megan Dias, Career Services Coach, ParsityBlend Personal and Professional When college students are asked, Tell me about yourself, in a job interview, my key tip is to craft a response thats a blend of personal insights and professional aspirations, tailored to the job theyre applying for. This question is often the
they can highlight a relevant project or internship experience, explaining how it solidified their interest in the field and developed specific skills related to the job. Finally, they should express enthusiasm about how this role aligns with their career aspirations. This structured approachpersonal introduction, relevant experience, and connection to the
roleprovides a concise yet comprehensive snapshot of the candidate, making their response memorable and engaging. Its about painting a picture of who they see themselves contributing to the potential employers success. Niclas Schlopsna, Managing Consultant and CEO, spectupCommunicate Passion for the
RoleAim to convey the level of passion that you have for your hobbies and the role itself. Really strive to show that you can communicate that level of passion effectively, and how it will relate to the role itself. Wendy Makinson, HR Manager, Joloda HydrarollPrepare with Mock InterviewsWhen you are in an interview, and you get this question, you may
suddenly draw a blank in responding to it. This is why conducting mock interviews is a crucial preparation step. It helps you become aware of potential questions. Ahead of the interview, do a bit of self-reflection and assess your hobbies and
factors that make you the person you are. Then, you should try to find a way to highlight these aspects of yourself and how they relate to your work and career passions. You would be surprised at how your hobbies and daily tasks influence your goals and aspirations, and vice versa. When you are doing the mock interview, make bullet points so that it
will be easier to digest and remember for the interview. Ashwin Ramesh, CEO, Synup Whats Covered: Are you worried about your admissions interview? If so, youre not alone. Many students are like you and want to be as well-prepared as possible, which means anticipating and practicing responding to the questions you will be asked ahead of time.
While theres no way of knowing exactly what youll be asked, theres one question you can always prepare for the classic, Tell me about yourself. Although this question may seem open-ended (and daunting), there are some tips and tricks you can rely on to ensure your response is informative, personal, and natural. In this post, well outline why this
question is important, the topics you should cover in your answer, and a few example responses to inspire your most important qualities and give them an initial sense of how you might contribute to the schools community. In
any interview you have over the course of your college years and beyond, this prompt is meant to give the interviewer an idea of what you would bring to the position at hand in this case, as a member of the colleges matriculating class. Unsurprisingly, you want to talk about yourself and your background, but in a focused way that paints an accurate
portrait of yourself as a productive, insightful member of the incoming freshman class. Stand-alone details and dead-end stories are rarely relevant in answers to this kind of question. Additionally, this is not an invitation to share your life story or overly personal information with your interviewer doing so will make you appear unprofessional and the additionally, this is not an invitation to share your life story or overly personal information with your interviewer doing so will make you appear unprofessional and dead-end stories are rarely relevant in answers to this kind of question.
unprepared. That being said, you wont want to sound like just another drone looking to fulfill pre-med requirements at any old college with a good biology program. So, you also want to be careful to not just rattle off a bullet-point list of repetitive or generic information. Rather, you should work to connect your unique past experiences with your
future goals, and to explain why this institution is the perfect place for you to achieve those goals. You should also be aware that this will often be the interviewers first question, which means it will set the tone for the rest of the interviewers first question, which means it will set the tone for the rest of the interviewers first question, which means it will set the tone for the rest of the interviewers first question.
wont, see your grades, essays, or anything else in your application. Since they wont have any prior familiarity with your profile, part of your responsibility when responding to this question is to lay a solid foundation for the rest of the interview, by having a thoughtful, cohesive, but not overly rehearsed answer at the ready. Topics to Cover Theres no
one right way to respond to this question, because for different students, certain aspects of their lives will be more or less relevant to understanding who they are. That being said, here is an initial list of topics that many students end up discussing in their answers: Where you grew upWhat you want to study (and why)Unique personality
traitsAcademic interestsExtracurricular activitiesWhy you want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to talk about every single one of these things, as you dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to talk about every single one of these things, as you dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to talk about every single one of these things, as you dont want to talk about every single one of these things, as you dont want to talk about every single one of these things, as you dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to talk about every single one of these things, as you dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to attend the college Keep in mind the colle
single thing you want to say into your first answer. Youll have plenty of other opportunities to discuss things you dont get to in this first response. Plus, your interviewer may feel awkward if you start off by monologuing at them for 10 minutes, or confused if you mention dozens of unrelated things. In general, though, it is a good idea to begin by
mentioning the area in which you grew up, or some other foundational aspect of your upbringing, like your parents professions or your cultural heritage. Dont spend too much time discussing the intricacies of your hometown or home life, but try to connect where youre coming from to your interest in the colleges location, size, or campus culture
Youll also want to tell the interviewer about your prospective major, if you have one, or, if youre undecided, what some of your main areas of interest are. While laying out your interviewer a clearer sense of why these subjects are important
to you. You may also touch on a key extracurricular that further illuminates who you are. End your answer with a quick explanation of why you want to attend this particular college. Since you should have researched the school thoroughly before the interview, you will hopefully already have a good idea of how your personality, as well as academic
and extracurricular interests, will fit in there. Your response should concretely connect your personal strengths and experiences to the schools offerings and overall culture on their own. While they are obviously familiar with the
school, colleges and universities have hundreds if not thousands of different opportunities available, so they may not have heard of the offerings in your particular area(s) of interest. Be clear about why and how your past experiences have set you up to succeed at this institution. Finally, admissions officers want to be confident that youll accept your past experiences have set you up to succeed at this institution. Finally, admissions officers want to be confident that youll accept your past experiences have set you up to succeed at this institution.
offer of admission, if you receive one. So, you should make sure to express how interested you are in attending this particular school, rather than speaking about broad goals for college that you could achieve anywhere. 4 Examples of How to Response #1 I grew up in a small town in Connecticut and have lived there my whole life, so Id really
love to experience city life in college. Since I live relatively close to New York, Ive had the opportunity to visit a few times, and it has so much to offer, especially in terms of the literary scene. I love reading and writing, so Im thinking of majoring in English or journalism. Journalism seems like a good fit because Im good at noticing details and know
how to dig to the core of an issue. My attention to detail is something Ive been able to rely on to help me overcome challenges. Junior year, I was having a hard time in trig. When I met with my teacher outside of class, though, we were able to determine that I had a solid grasp of simple concepts like sine and cosine, but was struggling with bigger
picture concepts. Moving forward, breaking down tricky problems into their core ideas and solving them one step at a time proved to be an effective strategy for me, and I ended up earning and foreign languages, which is why Im a columnist for
my school newspaper and the president of the Spanish club. I also tutor English and Spanish at an after-school programs in my town. NYU seems like the perfect school for me because it has such strong English and journalism programs in my town. NYU seems like the perfect school for me because it has such strong English and journalism programs, including honors programs in both fields, and amazing study abroad programs through its campuses all over the
worldId love to learn Italian, Chinese, or Arabic to become tri- or even polylingual! Analysis This interviewee touches on her interests in a way that shows her qualifications to attend NYU. She references her passion for English, journalism, and foreign languages several times throughout her response, and explains what she has done to explore them
both inside and outside school. At the end of her response, she also identifies specific attributes of NYU that appeal to her (honors programs in English and journalism; campuses around the world), which clearly fit with the details shes provided about her own background. Additionally, she reveals some of her key personality traits, such as here
attention to detail and her resilience, and provides examples that illustrate these attributes. These examples make her response memorable, whereas if she were to just say Im a resilient person with good attention to detail, it would come across as clich or generic. Response #2 As a kid, I frequently visited family in Los Angeles. During those trips, my
aunt would take me to see musicals at the Orpheum Theatre, which sparked my love for drama. Since then, Ive been in over 30 musicals at my school and through my loval theater because being in so many productions has made
me a talented singer and dancer, and Im confident in my own skin, both on-stage and off-stage. I wasn talways confident, though. Despite my passion for theater, I was incredibly shy as a kid. It took me several years to work up the courage to even audition for a show. I am grateful for how my involvement in theater has helped me become more
secure in expressing myself. I also work as an instructor for elementary-aged students at a local dance studio, and I try to bring out that same confidence in them. Aside from theater, Im really passionate about reading. I started a book club at my high school that meets weekly, and I also run a book blog, where I analyze and review novels I read. I find
that this side project helps me connect more deeply with the characters I play on stage. Id love to attend UCLA because the Ray Bolger Musical Theater Program will give me the opportunity to grow and develop my skills as an actress. As an avid reader, Im also extremely interested in UCLAs Comparative Literature minor. Plus, Los Angeles is the
ideal location for an aspiring actor to launch his career. Analysis This response is centered on one of the interviewees particular interests, his associated professional goals, and how the school could help him achieve them. He highlights his major of interest (musical theater), and explains how his involvement in theater has helped him become more
confident and better and expressing himself some of his key personality traits. This interviewees discussion of his academic and extracurricular interests frames him as someone who is prepared to thrive at UCLA. Most importantly, though, he doesn't leave that to be inferred by his interviewer. Rather, he gives relevant, personal reasons for why hes
interested in attending UCLA related to the universitys programs and location. Response #3 I come from three generations of farmers. My family took a vacation to Hawaii after my freshman year of high school. We went snorkeling
almost every day, and I became fascinated with marine biology at the University of Maine. As part of my pursuit of this goal, last year I became scuba certified, and I started bi-weekly diving lessons at the nearest scuba diving
school. Its a 75-minute drive from where I live, so Im proud of my determination to continue attending the classes, even when they conflict with my busy schedule. I also play on the football and basketball teams, am the student council secretary, and help my dad on the farm on the weekends. Id love to attend the University of Maine because it has
such a large concentration of professors who specialize in marine sciences, and access to two research center and Aquaculture Research Re
unexpectedly became interested in his intended major, marine biology, and how that in turn led him to apply to the University of Maine. He also shares a story that showcases one of his best character qualities, determination, and how it has helped him advance towards his goal of becoming a marine biologist. The student also shares some of his on-
campus and off-campus extracurriculars to showcase that he is well-rounded. He ends by describing why the University of Maine is a great fit for him, and the unusual perspective he could bring to campus. Response #4 I grew up in Atlanta, but my family spends every summer at Tybee Island. I love that Savannah offers a similar small-town feel with
plenty of history, art, and culture. Itll be a refreshing reprieve from the big city, while still providing ample opportunity for an aspiring artist. Ive been artistic for as long as I can remember. Growing up, I was always painting, sketching, or drawing. When I was young, my dream was to move to Paris after high school to be an artist. So I started taking
 French in eighth grade, and now, Im nearly fluent. However, as college neared, my pragmatic side convinced me to get a degree that led to a more secure career path. Graphic design seemed like a great option because it would give me an avenue to still pursue art, while leaving plenty of professional doors open. SCADs graphic design program is
particularly appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students will also ensure Im ready to use all the tools Ill need as a professional. Maybe most importantly, Im also interested
in studying abroad at SCAD Lacoste to practice my French and finally fulfill my dream of creating art in France! Analysis In this response, the interviewee explains how her packground led her to discover both her major, graphic design, and SCAD. The student highlights her qualifications as an artist, while also giving her interviewer a more nuanced
understanding of who she is by describing her practical side. One unique, especially satisfying part of this response is that the student connects a life-long dream of hers (creating art in France) to a specialized study-abroad program offered by SCAD. Thanks to this connection, her answer comes full circle, which makes it feel like a single, cohesive
unit. Topics to Avoid Although the tell me about yourself prompt may seem entirely open-ended, there are specific things the interviewer does want to learn about you as a candidate, while other aspects of your life may be irrelevant or even inappropriate to mention. Your interviewer does not need to learn everything there is to know about you. For
example, dont tell your interviewer about personal hobbies that arent relevant to the school or interview, or talk too much about friends, family, and other aspects of your life that dont show your potential as a college student. You should also avoid saying anything negative about the school, or indicate that you are not particularly invested or
interested in attending it. Weak Response #1 I grew up in a small town in Connecticut, but I dont want to stay here. Its just a little too small. Im not entirely sure what environment I want to live in as an adult, though. Mainly, I want to enjoy myself while I figure it out, and some neighborhood friends of mine have told me the weather and school spirit
at USC are unparalleled! I definitely want to study Hotel Management, though. My moms whole family works in hospitality, so Ive seen firsthand how many great perks there are if youre in the industry. For example, my parents dont make a lot of money, but weve been able to travel a lot thanks to discounted stays. Im looking forward to further
broadening my horizons in college, maybe through a study abroad program or just meeting peers from other places in the world. Analysis While this interviewee comes across as well-intentioned, there are several red flags. First, he doesnt seem to have any personal connection to USC, and only chose to apply based on others recommendations.
Feeling uncertain about your future is completely normal, and even something you can discuss in your college interview. However, you want to provide personal, specific reasons why this school will give you more direction, not give only vague or shallow reasons for applying. Another, related issue is that USC doesnt have a hotel management major
 While the interviewer may not know every program offered off the top of their head, they are going to write a report for the admissions committee after your conversation. Admissions officers are incredibly well-versed in WSC. Finally, even if USC did
offer hotel management, this students reasons for wanting to study the field come across as superficial, and not rooted in genuine intellectual curiosity. Wanting to travel isnt inherently a bad goal, but the student should have connected it to his interest in the history of other parts of the world, a desire to learn another language, or something else
with more of an academic focus. He also should have been more specific about how USC will help him broaden his horizons, as studying abroad or meeting peers from different backgrounds are things you could do at any school. Weak Response #2 Because I grew up in Seattle, my summers were always full of camping or backpacking trips, and I
became a total nut about the outdoors as a result. So, when it came time to apply to college, I knew Dartmouth was the place for me. Dartmouth is also a good fit for me academically, because of the unique possibility of modifying your major. I love economics, but I also have a humanities lean and enjoy learning about American history, so its great I
wont have to pick one or the other. And, even though its far from home, both my parents went to Dartmouth and I have an aunt in Vermont, so I dont think Ill have any trouble making Hanover my home away from home. Analysis The biggest issue with this response is that the student is making her interviewer do her work for her. While Dartmouth is lart from home away from home.
indeed known to be an outdoorsy school, she doesnt mention anything specific that tangibly captures that general reputation. Her response would be much stronger if she mentioned something like the First Year Trips program as a means of building community, or her desire to get involved in a Dartmouth Outing Club sub-club to learn a new skill like
canoeing. Similarly, the modified major is unique to Dartmouth, but the student doesn't explain how she would take advantage of it. Just stating that she has multiple interests isn't sufficient, because that will be true of just about every applicant to Dartmouth she needs to describe the intersection(s) she sees between economics and American history
and how the modified major will help her explore them more productively than, say, just double majoring, which you can do at nearly any school. Finally, while its okay to mention connections you have to the school or surrounding area, you need to illustrate how theyve shaped your own perspective on the institution. For example, this student could
talk about how she was originally apprehensive about attending school in such a small town, but attending reunions with her parents showed her that the strength of the Dartmouth alums just comes across as
name-droppy and braggy. 5 Tips to Prepare for This Prompt Its almost guaranteed that this Tell me about yourself question will come up during your interview, often as the very first question. To ensure you arent caught off-quard, here are some tips for how you can prepare: 1. Reflect on the Past Brainstorm at least five important events in your life
that have helped shape you into who you are today. Ideally, these events will align with your major and broader goals for the future. Sift through them to decide which story is most relevant to understanding what you have to contribute to a college campus. Its especially wise to choose an event that connects to some of your most important character
traits. That way, your interviewer will start to get a sense of who you are not only as a student, but as a whole person. 2. Evaluate Your Interests What are your favorite classes? What clubs or teams are you a part of? Did you start an organization yourself, or do you have a leadership position? What hobbies do you have when youre not at school? Do
you have a part-time job you love? Your academic and extracurricular interests are given a great deal of weight by college admissions officers. In your interview, you want to be able to easily reference specific examples of how youve pursued your passions, as well as how you developed them, so that your interviewer gets to see your eyes light up, so
to speak, and gets a clearer sense of what sets you apart from other applicants. 3. Pinpoint Your Major If youve decided on a major, highlight why youre interested in this major and why the university is ideal for this area of focus. If youre still undecided, thats perfectly fine, but you should be able to discuss your broader academic interests and why
this college is a good place for you to hone in on one particular area. For example, maybe youre interested in medicine, but also love animals, and dont know if you want to be a doctor or a veterinarian. You might talk about how Washington State University has excellent graduate schools in both fields, with plenty of courses and extracurriculars
available to undergrads as well, and thus is the perfect place for you to figure out which path is right for you. 4. Research the University One of the best ways you can stand out from other unique offerings at the college, and explain how
these resources will launch you into your future. These school-specific details will not only make your answer more thorough, but will also demonstrate that you are well-prepared and genuinely interested in attending the college. Make sure, though, that you arent just saying something generic that could apply to any institution. Perhaps youve heard
that a school has great professors, but thats true of most colleges. So, youll want to instead zoom in on one or two particular professors whose work aligns well with your own interests, so that your interviewer can clearly see what sets this school apart in your mind. 5. Practice, Practice, Practice, Practice After thinking about how youll answer the question, itself
Matter? College interviews matter, but they wont make or break your application. In fact, they account for only around 5% of an admissions decision. That said, they are a great way to showcase your personality and professionalism. Your college
interview is unique in that it allows you to put a face, personality, and voice to your name, so you still want to take it seriously and prepare thoroughly. You can also use your interview as a way to determine if the university is the right fit for you. After all, youll likely be matched with an alum who will be able to answer questions about their experience
at the school their insights could be invaluable if your eventually accepted and need to decide between this institution and your other options! That being said, other factors such as academics and extracurriculars will have a much larger impact on your chances of acceptance. If youd like to know how your profile stacks up, we recommend using our
free chancing engine. This tool will give you personalized odds of acceptance at over 1500 schools in the US, based on how well your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! Whats Covered: Are you worried about your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student with the covered work and the profile aligns with the covered work and the covere
 which means anticipating and practicing responding to the questions you will be asked anead of time. While theres no way of knowing exactly what yourself. Although this question may seem open-ended (and daunting), there are some tips and tricks you can rely
on to ensure your response is informative, personal, and natural. In this post, well outline why this question is important, the topics you should see the tell me about yourself prompt as an opportunity to show the interviewer your most
important qualities and give them an initial sense of how you might contribute to the schools community. In any interviewer an idea of what you would bring to the position at hand in this case, as a member of the colleges matriculating class.
Unsurprisingly, you want to talk about yourself and your background, but in a focused way that paints an accurate portrait of yourself as a productive, insightful member of the incoming freshman class. Stand-alone details and dead-end stories are rarely relevant in answers to this kind of question. Additionally, this is not an invitation to share your life
story or overly personal information with your interviewer doing so will make you appear unprofessional and unprepared. That being said, you wont to be careful to not just rattle off a bullet-point list of
repetitive or generic information. Rather, you should work to connect your unique past experiences with your future goals, and to explain why this institution is the perfect place for you to achieve those goals. You should also be aware that this will often be the interviewers first guestion, which means it will set the tone for the rest of the interview.
Starting strong is especially important since most college interviewers are alumni volunteers who havent, and wont, see your grades, essays, or anything else in your application. Since they wont have any prior familiarity with your profile, part of your responsibility when responding to this question is to lay a solid foundation for the rest of the
interview, by having a thoughtful, cohesive, but not overly rehearsed answer at the ready. Topics to Cover Theres no one right way to respond to this question, because for different students, certain aspects of their lives will be more or less relevant to understanding who they are. That being said, here is an initial list of topics that many students end
up discussing in their answers: Where you grew upWhat you want to study (and why)Unique personality traitsAcademic interestsExtracurricular activitiesWhy you want to attend the college Keep in mind that you probably dont want to talk about every single one of these things, as you dont want your answer to be too long about 2-3 minutes
maximum. While this question is important, you have a whole interview to go, so you dont need to jam every single thing you want to say into your first answer. Youll have plenty of other opportunities to discuss things you dont get to in this first response. Plus, your interviewer may feel awkward if you start off by monologuing at them for 10 minutes
or confused if you mention dozens of unrelated things. In general, though, it is a good idea to begin by mentioning the area in which you grew up, or some other foundational aspect of your upbringing, like your parents professions or your cultural heritage. Dont spend too much time discussing the intricacies of your hometown or home life, but try to
connect where youre coming from to your interest in the colleges location, size, or campus culture. Youll also want to tell the interviewer about your main areas of interest are. While laying out your main areas of interest are. While laying out your main areas of interest are.
broader personality traits will give your interviewer a clearer sense of why these subjects are important to you. You may also touch on a key extracurricular that further illuminates who you are. End your answer with a quick explanation of why you want to attend this particular college. Since you should have researched the school thoroughly before
the interview, you will hopefully already have a good idea of how your personality, as well as academic and extracurricular interests, will fit in there. Your response should concretely connect your personal strengths and experiences to the schools offerings and overall culture. Crucially, you shouldnt assume that your interviewer can figure out how
your background aligns with the schools culture on their own. While they are obviously familiar with the school, colleges and universities have hundreds if not thousands of different opportunities available, so they may not have heard of the offerings in your particular area(s) of interest. Be clear about why and how your past experiences have set you
up to succeed at this institution. Finally, admissions officers want to be confident that youl accept your offer of admission, if you receive one. So, you should make sure to express how interested you are in attending this particular school, rather than speaking about broad goals for college that you could achieve anywhere. 4 Examples of How to
Respond Response #1 I grew up in a small town in Connecticut and have lived there my whole life, so Id really love to experience city life in college. Since I live relatively close to New York, Ive had the opportunity to visit a few times, and it has so much to offer, especially in terms of the literary scene. I love reading and writing, so Im thinking of
majoring in English or journalism. Journalism seems like a good fit because Im good at noticing details and know how to dig to the core of an issue. My attention to detail is something Ive been able to rely on to help me overcome challenges. Junior year, I was having a hard time in trig. When I met with my teacher outside of class, though, we were
able to determine that I had a solid grasp of simple concepts like sine and cosine, but was struggling with bigger picture concepts. Moving forward, breaking down tricky problems into their core ideas and solving them one step at a time proved to be an effective strategy for me, and I ended up earning an A in the class. In general, though, my
interests are more humanities leaning. I especially enjoy writing and foreign languages, which is why Im a columnist for my school newspaper and the president of the Spanish club. I also tutor English and Spanish at an after-school program in my town. NYU seems like the perfect school for me because it has such strong English and journalism
programs, including honors programs in both fields, and amazing study abroad programs through its campuses all over the worldId love to learn Italian, Chinese, or Arabic to become tri- or even polylingual! Analysis This interviewee touches on her interests in a way that shows her gualifications to attend NYU. She references her passion for English,
journalism, and foreign languages several times throughout her response, and explains what she has done to explore them both inside and outside school. At the end of her response, she also identifies specific attributes of NYU that appeal to her (honors programs in English and journalism; campuses around the world), which clearly fit with the
details shes provided about her own background. Additionally, she reveals some of her key personality traits, such as her attention to detail and her response memorable, whereas if she were to just say Im a resilient person with good attention to detail, it
would come across as clich or generic. Response #2 As a kid, I frequently visited family in Los Angeles. During those trips, my aunt would take me to see musicals at the Orpheum Theatre, which sparked my love for drama. Since then, Ive been in over 30 musicals at the Orpheum Theatre, which sparked my love for drama. Since then, Ive been in over 30 musicals at the Orpheum Theatre, which sparked my love for drama.
Georg von Trapp in The Sound of Music. Im planning to major in musical theater because being in so many productions has made me a talented singer and dancer, and Im confident in my own skin, both on-stage and off-stage. I wasnt always confident, though. Despite my passion for theater, I was incredibly shy as a kid. It took me several years to
work up the courage to even audition for a show. I am grateful for how my involvement in theater has helped me become more secure in expressing myself. I also work as an instructor for elementary-aged students at a local dance studio, and I try to bring out that same confidence in them. Aside from theater, Im really passionate about reading. I
started a book club at my high school that meets weekly, and I also run a book blog, where I analyze and review novels I read. I find that this side project helps me connect more deeply with the characters I play on stage. Id love to attend UCLA because the Ray Bolger Musical Theater Program will give me the opportunity to grow and develop my
skills as an actress. As an avid reader, Im also extremely interested in UCLAs Comparative Literature minor. Plus, Los Angeles is the ideal location for an aspiring actor to launch his career. Analysis This response is centered on one of the interviewees particular interests, his associated professional goals, and how the school could help him achieve
them. He highlights his major of interest (musical theater), and explains how his involvement in theater has helped him become more confident and better and expressing himself some of his key personality traits. This interviewees discussion of his academic and extracurricular interests frames him as someone who is prepared to thrive at UCLA. Most
importantly, though, he doesn't leave that to be inferred by his interviewer. Rather, he gives relevant, personal reasons for why hes interested in attending UCLA related to the universitys programs and location. Response #3 I come from three generations of farmers. My family lives on a corn farm in a small town in Nebraska. I always thought I would
be a farmer, just like my dad, until my family took a vacation to Hawaii after my freshman year of high school. We went snorkeling almost every day, and I became fascinated with marine biology at the University of Maine. As
part of my pursuit of this goal, last year I became scuba certified, and I started bi-weekly diving lessons at the nearest scuba diving school. Its a 75-minute drive from where I live, so Im proud of my determination to continue attending the classes, even when they conflict with my busy schedule. I also play on the football and basketball teams, am the
student council secretary, and help my dad on the farm on the weekends. Id love to attend the University of Maine because it has such a large concentration of professors who specialize in marine sciences, and access to two research centers, the Darling Marine Center and Aquaculture Research Center. And after spending 18 years of my life
landlocked in Nebraska, I am excited for the chance to live near the coast! Analysis This interviewee tells a compelling story about how he unexpectedly became interested in his intended major, marine biology, and how that in turn led him to apply to the University of Maine. He also shares a story that showcases one of his best character qualities,
determination, and how it has helped him advance towards his goal of becoming a marine biologist. The student also shares some of his on-campus and off-campus extracurriculars to showcase that he is well-rounded. He ends by describing why the University of Maine is a great fit for him, and the unusual perspective he could bring to campus.
Response #4 I grew up in Atlanta, but my family spends every summer at Tybee Island. I love that Savannah offers a similar small-town feel with plenty of history, art, and culture. Itll be a refreshing reprieve from the big city, while still providing ample opportunity for an aspiring artist. Ive been artistic for as long as I can remember. Growing up, I
was always painting, sketching, or drawing. When I was young, my dream was to move to Paris after high school to be an artist. So I started taking French in eighth grade, and now, Im nearly fluent. However, as college neared, my pragmatic side convinced me to get a degree that led to a more secure career path. Graphic design seemed like a great
option because it would give me an avenue to still pursue art, while leaving plenty of professional doors open. SCADs graphic design program is particularly appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students to learn from graphic design program is particularly appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students to learn from graphic design program is particularly appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students to learn from graphic design program is particularly appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students to learn from graphic design program is particularly appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students are not appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students are not appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students are not appealing to me because of how many events the program hosts for students are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to me because of how many events are not appealing to the how many events are not appealing to the not appealing to the how many events are not appealing to the how many events are not appealing to the how many events are not a
facilities available to students will also ensure Im ready to use all the tools Ill need as a professional. Maybe most importantly, Im also interested in studying abroad at SCAD Lacoste to practice my French and finally fulfill my dream of creating art in France! Analysis In this response, the interviewee explains how her background led her to discover
both her major, graphic design, and SCAD. The student highlights her qualifications as an artist, while also giving her interviewer a more nuanced understanding of who she is by describing her practical side. One unique, especially satisfying part of this response is that the student connects a life-long dream of hers (creating art in France) to a
specialized study-abroad program offered by SCAD. Thanks to this connection, her answer comes full circle, which makes it feel like a single, cohesive unit. Topics to Avoid Although the tell me about you as a candidate, while other
aspects of your life may be irrelevant or even inappropriate to mention. Your interviewer does not need to learn everything there is to know about you. For example, dont tell your interviewer about personal hobbies that arent relevant to the school or interviewer, or talk too much about friends, family, and other aspects of your life that dont show your
potential as a college student. You should also avoid saying anything negative about the school, or indicate that you are not particularly invested or interested in attending it. Weak Response #1 I grew up in a small town in Connecticut, but I dont want to stay here. Its just a little too small. Im not entirely sure what environment I want to live in as an
adult, though. Mainly, I want to enjoy myself while I figure it out, and some neighborhood friends of mine have told me the weather and school spirit at USC are unparalleled! I definitely want to study Hotel Management, though. My moms whole family works in hospitality, so Ive seen firsthand how many great perks there are if youre in the industry.
For example, my parents dont make a lot of money, but weve been able to travel a lot thanks to discounted stays. Im looking forward to further broadening my horizons in college, maybe through a study abroad program or just meeting peers from other places in the world. Analysis While this interviewee comes across as well-intentioned, there are
several red flags. First, he doesn't seem to have any personal connection to USC, and only chose to apply based on others recommendations. Feeling uncertain about your future is completely normal, and even something you can discuss in your college interview. However, you want to provide personal, specific reasons why this school will give you
more direction, not give only vague or shallow reasons for applying. Another, related issue is that USC doesnt have a hotel management major. While the interviewer may not know every program offered off the top of their head, they are going to write a report for the admissions committee after your conversation. Admissions officers are incredibly
well-versed in what their institution offers, so theyll immediately see that this student isnt genuinely interested in USC. Finally, even if USC did offer hotel management, this student student isnt inherently a bad goal, but the
student should have connected it to his interest in the history of other parts of the world, a desire to learn another language, or something else with more of an academic focus. He also should have been more specific about how USC will help him broaden his horizons, as studying abroad or meeting peers from different backgrounds are things you
could do at any school. Weak Response #2 Because I grew up in Seattle, my summers were always full of camping or backpacking trips, and I became a total nut about the outdoors as a result. So, when it came time to apply to college, I knew Dartmouth was the place for me. Dartmouth is also a good fit for me academically, because of the unique
possibility of modifying your major. I love economics, but I also have a humanities lean and enjoy learning about American history, so its great I wont have to pick one or the other. And, even though its far from home, both my parents went to Dartmouth and I have an aunt in Vermont, so I dont think Ill have any trouble making Hanover my home away
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from home. Analysis The biggest issue with this response is that the student is making her interviewer do her work for her. While Dartmouth is indeed known to be an outdoorsy school, she doesnt mention anything specific that tangibly captures that general reputation. Her response would be much stronger if she mentioned something like the First

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If youre still undecided, thats perfectly fine, but you should be able to discuss your broader academic interests and why this college is a good place for you to hone in on one particular area. For example, maybe youre interested in medicine, but also love animals, and don't know if you want to be a doctor or a veterinarian. You might talk about how Washington State University has excellent graduate schools in both fields, with plenty of courses and extracurriculars available to undergrads as well, and thus is the perfect place for you to figure out which path is right for you. 4. Research the University One of the best ways you can stand out from other students while answering this question is to connect your background to programs, classes, professors, and other unique offerings at the college, and explain how these resources will launch you into your future. These school-specific details will not only make your answer more thorough, but will also demonstrate that you are well-prepared and genuinely interested in attending the college. Make sure, though, that you arent just saying something generic that could apply to any institution. Perhaps youve heard that a school has great professors whose work aligns well with your own interests, so that your interviewer can clearly see what sets this school apart in your mind. 5. Practice, those close to you may have suggestions for details you might include that you didnt think of yourself. How Much Do College Interviews matter, but they wont make or break your application. In fact, they account for only around 5% of an admissions decision. That said, they are a great way to showcase your personality and character, your ability to engage in conversations and answer questions, and your overall maturity and professionalism. Your college interview is unique in that it allows you to put a face, personality, and voice to your name, so you still want to take it seriously and prepare thoroughly. You can also use your interview as a way to determine if the university is the right fit for you. After all, youll likely be matched with an alum who will be able to answer questions about their experience at the school their institution and your other options! That being said, other factors such as academics and extracurriculars will have a much larger impact on your chances of acceptance. If youd like to know how your profile stacks up, we recommend using our free chancing engine. This tool will give you personalized odds of acceptance at over 1500 schools in the US, based on how well your profile aligns with that of an average accepted student! When answering the "tell me about yourself" prompt in a college interview, it's essential to strike a balance between sharing your academic interests, personal experiences, and future aspirations. Remember to keep it brief and relevant to the college context. Here's a suggested approach for a well-rounded answer:1. Start with a brief introduction: Begin by mentioning your name, the college you're attending, and your field of study. You might also want to include your year in college and where you're from. 2. Share your academic interests: Elaborate on your major or focus, and discuss what sparked your interest in that area. For example, you could mention a project, class, or event that inspired your passion for the subject.3. Talk about your extracurricular activities: Briefly discuss relevant clubs, organizations, or hobbies that reflect your interests and personal values. This demonstrates your involvement in the college community and enables the interviewer to learn more about your personality outside of academics.4. Highlight any major achievements: If you have any significant accomplishments related to your field of study or extracurricular activities, feel free to mention them. For example, you could talk about receiving an academic award or leading a successful club initiative.5. Connect to your future goals: Make sure to talk about how your academic interests and extracurriculars relate to your future aspirations. Explain how pursuing these passions at college will help you achieve your long-term goals.6. Personal touch: Adding a small personal detail can make you more relatable to the interviewer. This might be a fun fact about yourself, a hobby, or a talent unrelated to academics. Remember to practice your response to maintain the flow and avoid rambling. Keep it succinct and engaging by mentioning the most important aspects of your college experience. Finally, be genuine and true to yourself when crafting your answer to leave a lasting impression. 2 years ago

College introduce yourself. How to introduce yourself in interview for students. Self introduction for college admission interview. Introduce yourself in college interview sample. How to introduce yourself in college interview. Introduce yourself for college students.