

10 Things Not to Say in a Job Interview

By Scott Cullen

From harmless remarks to deal-breakers, here's how oversharing can derail your chances of getting a job in the office technology industry.

There's a fine line between being authentic in a job interview and saying something that quietly (or not so quietly) knocks you out of contention. Most hiring managers aren't expecting perfection. They are, however, paying close attention to judgment. Nothing signals questionable judgment more quickly than saying the wrong thing at the wrong time.

In the office technology industry, where roles often involve client relationships, technical problem-solving, and long-term trust, what you say carries even more weight. A careless comment doesn't just reflect on you; it raises concerns about how you'll represent the company to customers.

Here are ten of the most common and costly things candidates say in interviews that derail otherwise solid opportunities. If you recognize yourself in any of these, don't panic. But do adjust.

1. "I hated my last boss."

Ouch! This one shows up in countless interviews, and it almost never lands well.

Even if your previous manager truly was difficult, venting about it in an interview signals two things: a lack of professionalism and a tendency to bring baggage into new environments. Hiring managers aren't just hearing your complaint; they're imagining how you might talk about them someday.

A better approach: keep it neutral and focused on what you learned or what you're seeking next. For example, "I'm looking for a more collaborative environment" tells your story without burning bridges.

2. "I don't really know much about your company."

In 2026, with so much information easily accessible online, there's no excuse for walking into an interview unprepared. In the office technology space, where dealers and OEMs differentiate themselves through services, vertical focus, or technology partnerships, basic research is essential.

Saying this, even casually, signals a lack of interest. If you're not interested now, why would they believe you'll be engaged in the job? You don't need to write a dissertation, but you should understand what the company does, who it serves, and how your role fits into the picture.

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3. “What does this company actually do?”

This is worse than not knowing. It’s broadcasting that you didn’t bother to find out.

In an office technology dealership or managed services environment, where sales reps and technicians are expected to educate customers, curiosity and initiative are essential. If you’re asking foundational questions that you could easily have found online in five minutes or less, it raises questions about your work habits.

Save your questions for deeper insights, such as strategy, culture, and growth plans, not for basic facts.

4. “I just need a job.”

Honesty is admirable, but this phrasing works against you. Employers aren’t looking to fill a seat; they’re looking for someone who wants this job. When you position yourself as someone willing to take anything, you immediately lose leverage and credibility.

Instead, connect your need for a job to a reason this specific role makes sense. Even something simple, like “I’m looking for a role where I can grow my technical skills and work directly with customers,” is far more compelling.

5. “My biggest weakness? I’m a perfectionist.”

This answer has been overused to the point of losing credibility. Hiring managers have heard it countless times, and it often comes across as evasive rather than insightful. In technical and service roles, self-awareness is especially important. They want to know where you’re still developing and whether you’re honest about it.

A stronger answer acknowledges a real area for growth and explains what you’re doing about it. That’s far more believable and useful.

6. “How quickly can I get promoted?”

Ambition isn’t the problem. Timing is. When this question comes too early, it suggests you’re already looking beyond the job you’re interviewing for. In industries like office technology, where success often hinges on mastering fundamentals such as product knowledge, service protocols, or client relationships, mentally skipping ahead is a red flag.

It’s fair to ask about growth opportunities. Just make sure you’ve first demonstrated interest in earning your place.

7. “I don’t like dealing with customers.”

If the role involves any client interaction, and most do, this is a dealbreaker. Even back-office roles in this industry often require collaboration with internal teams or occasional customer contact. Stating this signals a mismatch with the job's realities.

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If customer interaction isn't your strength, frame it this way: "I'm more comfortable in technical problem-solving roles, but I understand the importance of clear communication and am working to improve my communication skills." That shows awareness without disqualifying yourself.

8. "What are your vacation policies?"

This is a classic example of a reasonable question asked at the wrong time. Early in the interview process, it can come across as prioritizing time off over contributing to the organization. That doesn't mean benefits aren't important; they absolutely are. But leading with them shifts the focus from your value. Save these questions for later stages, once mutual interest is established.

9. "I'm not good with technology."

In the office technology industry, this is a non-starter. Even non-technical roles require a baseline level of comfort with systems, software, and evolving tools. Stating this outright suggests you may struggle to keep up in a fast-paced environment.

If you're not a technical expert, that's fine. But you should position yourself as someone willing and able to learn. "I've worked with several systems and pick up new tools quickly" goes a long way.

10. "I don't have any questions."

This is one of the easiest ways to signal disengagement. When an interviewer asks if you have questions, they're assessing your curiosity and critical thinking. In a consultative industry, where asking the right questions is often key to success, silence is not a good look.

Come prepared with a few thoughtful questions about the role, the team, or the company's direction. It shows you're thinking beyond the surface.

The Bigger Issue: Judgment

Here's the uncomfortable truth: most of these missteps aren't about saying something "wrong." They're about revealing how you think.

Hiring managers are constantly asking themselves:

- How will this person represent us in front of a customer?
- How will they handle pressure or conflict?
- Do they understand professional boundaries?

Your answers, especially the off-the-cuff ones, help them decide.

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A Better Approach

You don't need to script every response, but you do need to be intentional. Before your next interview, take a few minutes to think through:

- How you'll talk about past employers (keep it constructive)
- What you actually know about the company (do your homework)
- Why you want *this* role (not just any role)
- What questions you'll ask (and what they say about you)

That preparation alone will put you ahead of a surprising number of candidates.