

Why Did You Leave Your Last Job

Cheat Sheet



NOTE : Below please find twenty reasons you might have for leaving your job that you can use on your applications. (Also remember that there are more reasons in the original article.) On the next page you'll find word-for-word-answers to the interview question: Why did you leave your last job. (You may have to tailor them to your situation a bit)

Good Reasons

1. I wanted a new challenge
2. My company went out of business
3. I was suffering from an illness
4. I didn't receive enough hours
5. I became pregnant
6. I was laid off
7. I decided to go back to school
8. I wanted to do some travelling
9. My company was restructuring
10. I was looking for a higher-paying opportunity
11. I was involved in a workplace accident
12. I wanted to reduce the length of my commute
13. My family relocated to a different city/state/country
14. I wanted to work in a different industry altogether
15. I wanted to reduce/increase my workload (I wanted to work part/full time)
16. My job was outsourced
17. I experienced limited growth opportunities
18. I got married
19. I had a family emergency
20. I needed to stay home to help raise my family

Scenario 1 - You Didn't Enjoy The Work

At the end of the day, I was proud to be an employee at _____ and I thoroughly enjoyed everybody on my team, including my boss. But at some point during my time working there I realized that I was not passionate about the type of work I was doing. Specifically, I want to be _____ which is why I am so excited about the opportunity to interview with this company. I believe my passion for _____ will complement this position well and allow me to grow within your company long term.

Scenario 2 - You Needed A Change

The main reason that I decided to leave my last position is that I had accomplished everything I needed to in that role and felt that I needed to be challenged. Before I made my decision, I had met with my boss and discussed how I could grow and take on more within the company, but we both agreed that the size and budget of the company would not allow me to grow further. After _____ years of hard work and dedication to my role, we both agreed that a new challenge would be the best thing for me. It's for this reason that I've applied to this position with your company, and I'm really excited to use my knowledge and expertise to tackle the challenges that lay ahead.

Scenario 3 - You Need More Money

I had been in my last position for over ___ years, and over that time, my personal situation changed quite dramatically, requiring me to earn a more substantial living. Unfortunately, the budget was limited for the position I was in and there were no direct advancement opportunities in terms of promotions that would allow me to increase my earnings. Ultimately, I loved the work I was doing but needed to explore opportunities that would help me to better support myself/my family. Having researched your company and this role thoroughly I was not only drawn to the similarity between the responsibilities of this position and my last job, but also compensation package and opportunity for advancement that you offer.

Scenario 4 - You Didn't Get Along With Your Boss

For me, the most important thing about being a member of a successful and cohesive team is to have good chemistry with the members of the team. Ultimately, while I established an elite level of chemistry with several members of my team, I didn't feel that the chemistry my boss and I achieved was at a high enough level for us to both succeed to our full potential (despite my belief that both of us were more than competent in our given roles). Knowing this, I look forward to the possibility of meeting my potential boss in the near future, and wholeheartedly embrace the opportunity to develop long-lasting chemistry with her/him moving forward.

Scenario 5 - You Were Fired

I went into my interview for my last position with a very clear sense of what the responsibilities for the role were and felt confident that my skill set was adequate enough to execute my duties at a high level. As time passed and the nature of the work for this position began to change, it was clear that it required skills that were beyond my capabilities - perhaps suited more to someone at a Director level as opposed to the entry level position I secured. For this reason, the company decided to terminate my contract in order to hire an individual more suited to the experience level required. This experience has taught me to be more vigilant in asking questions pertaining to the realistic requirements of the position in the long term (as opposed to just the short term). Having said that, I have a few questions for you... would this be an appropriate time?