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Whiteboard

Hi, Chris here. I'm practicing for an interview for a nursing job, and I'm stuck on this question: "Why do you want this job?" Can you help?

Welcome to Smarthinking, Chris! My name is Pat, and I'm happy to help you with your interview question. That's a common question employers ask during interviews, so it's good to prepare for it. Have you drafted a response yet?

Hi Pat. Yes, this is what I have so far:

I heard your hospital has an excellent benefits and compensation package. Also, your mission to "Make the world a better place by healing one patient at a time" appeals to my desire to make a real contribution to the community.

Your second sentence is especially strong since it shows your support for the hospital's mission. The first sentence deals more with compensation, which is a good thing to consider when deciding to take a job offer but may not be a reason you should present when applying for a job. Let's try to expand on the idea in the second sentence.

Why do you want to work for this specific hospital?

I see what you mean. I don't want them to think I want the job just for the money. Actually, the hospital has a world class burn unit I want to work in.

Great! I can tell you've given this some thought and really researched the hospital. Why do you want to work in a burn unit?

When I was in the army, I worked as a medic with a lot of burn victims and learned a lot about dealing with those patients and really care about making their healing process easier.

Wow, I bet that was really difficult. However, your response shows that you have specific skills and experiences that will help you to "make a real contribution" to the hospital's mission. Citing those types of real life experiences and skills will show how you will benefit the organization and will help you stand out from the other applicants.

Okay, I see what you mean. Let me try again...

Your mission to "Make the world a better place by healing one person at a time" appeals to me, especially if I can work in your hospital's burn unit. While serving in the U.S. Army for the past four years, I worked as a medic with numerous burn victims. I learned how to interact with the patients, how to treat their wounds, and how to make their healing process even easier for them. I can bring my unique experiences and skills to contribute to "healing one person at a time."

Excellent! You acknowledge the burn unit, which shows you did your research. You also make 3 great points, which I've underlined in your response. If your interviewer asks you to expand, then you can give specifics about those 3 things. Here are some questions that might help you expand:

- How do you approach these patients differently from others?
- What's your strategy for easing their pain and making them less afraid while they heal?

Perfect! I can totally do that. I learned a lot of good strategies in the field. Okay, I got this now. You've been a great help. Thank you soooooo much!

You're welcome, Chris! You'll receive a copy of this session so that you can refer back to it at any time. Thanks for visiting Smarthinking, and please come back again soon. We are happy to help!

--Pat