

# Academic Writers Job Interview Questions And Answers



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## Academic Writers Interview Questions And Answers Guide.

### Question - 1:

Explain what makes you different from the other candidates?

#### Ans:

Although I am an all-rounder and could contribute to departmental life in many ways, I know that I have the international research profile that you are looking for.

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### Question - 2:

Explain how do you optimize your content for search?

#### Ans:

A good content creator will be familiar with the basics of search engine optimization (SEO). Your ideal candidate will answer this question by describing how he or she (a) determines which keywords to focus on and (b) works those keywords into the content.

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### Question - 3:

Tell me what is your proofreading process?

#### Ans:

There's more to good proofreading than reading your content over and over again on the screen. A good writer will have a process (or several to choose from) for proofing each piece of content. Some of my tactics are reading the content out loud and reviewing a printed copy. Give bonus points if they mention my super-ninja trick for when it's gotta be perfect: reading it backwards.

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### Question - 4:

Explain where do you see yourself 5 years from now?

#### Ans:

As a successful writer possessing wide experience and ability to consistently write high quality write-ups that are relevant yet simple to grasp. Anything you might want to add here.

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### Question - 5:

Explain a situation in which you were given feedback on a content piece?

#### Ans:

Why it's important to ask this: I certainly want a content marketer to have an opinion about what works and what doesn't work. However, it's also important that they can accept critiques about their work and make changes as necessary.

What to look out for: Understand what type of feedback they received, how it made them feel-and most importantly-what they did with that feedback.

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### Question - 6:

Tell me what operating systems and programs do you use?

#### Ans:

True story: On two occasions at my last corporate job, we hired writers who showed up on their first day, took one look at their computers, and said, "Oh, you use PCs." Yep, they'd only ever used Macs. Each assured us it wouldn't be a problem, but ... yeah, it was. So if you're hiring a content creator to work on-site with your team, make sure he or she is hip to the program-literally.

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### Question - 7:

Can you write a short article on the given topic (test)?



**Ans:**

As a candidate for content writing job this small test is to be expected. But don't get nervous, remembering that you have written enough content previously (even if you have no formal work exp.) to write the small piece. Be cool and calm and take your time to write a good, simple, relevant article without any grammatical errors. Any error will definitely give a negative impression, so avoid it like plague.

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**Question - 8:**

Tell me have you been given feedback on your writing assignment and how have you reciprocated in your work?

**Ans:**

While making selection for skilled writer, you would be willing to have someone in your team who takes feedback in a positive way. As most of the content work is a collaborative work, making the right changes to the content is based on way the writers incorporate the feedback into the articles. A writer who defends their work or not open to suggestions would be difficult to handle as it would cause lot of headaches. Especially when you are looking for content writers for marketing purpose you would need to be careful in hiring the right candidates. They need to be open to suggestions and positive in their approach, willing to make changes as per needs.

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**Question - 9:**

Tell me what do you think about key word research?

**Ans:**

This question is a bit tricky to get to know about the way the writer writes their content. Also you would come to know whether the writer is aware of the importance of using keywords. It would also help to know about the knowledge level of the writer especially the usage of appropriate words that is mostly in use. You would need to get them to speak about their examples and how they utilize their language skills. From such aspects it will help to know whether they are updating themselves.

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**Question - 10:**

Tell us what type of audiences have you been involved with or associated with?

**Ans:**

Many writers keep in mind their certain set of target audience to get to write their content. Having being exposed to variety of audiences will help one to know how to manage writing articles. Certain set of audience require little more explanation while certain set of audience who are professional will be conversing in professional level. Some may be targeting younger age groups, while some middle age groups. Some target college graduates, while some working professionals or those seeking career changes. Be it for marketing or for blog, each writers has their own style of writing which is unique to them. Hence, take care to select writers on the type of contents.

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**Question - 11:**

Tell me what do you know about Social Media Optimization (SMO)?

**Ans:**

SMO is an upcoming and very exciting avenue for enhancing website popularity and traffic by harnessing the power of various social media like Twitter, Facebook, Digg, YouTube etc. Be prepared to suggest some ways to promote a product, service or website on Facebook and Twitter. So go sign into your Twitter and Facebook accounts and try out a few things to develop enough confidence in the field. Nowadays SMO is an expected skill for most content writers and SMO has blurred the distinction between SEO and content writing as both, Search Engine Optimizers and Content Writers dabble in the field. Check out my post on SMO tricks to get a better grasp of the subject.

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**Question - 12:**

Explain your Strong and Weak points?

**Ans:**

Although this question is normally asked in a written submission but it's quite relevant as it can be used to convey a good impression when handled with tact. Obviously you will easily jot down your strong points like organic SEO writing, discipline, creativity, originality, consistency, team work and so on but what about the weak points. Aha..here lies the sticky point. Write the weak points in such a manner that they seem like your strong ones. For instance you may say/write that you are a stickler for deadlines, grammar, creativity and originality and so on. Just remember you should only convey such points which will either give a good or neutral impression and not any negative one.

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**Question - 13:**

Explain what sort of social media tools do you utilize to get help for content writing?

**Ans:**

Most of the writers do use the common social media tools to get help with writing. Each writer would have specific flair for topics of their interest. Those writers would have books or magazines related to the topic. There could be some who are tech savvy and depending on the type of articles they would know where to get access to reference subjects. This question will allow you to know whether he/she will be referring to the right site or will be able to bring out genuine or relevant contents. You could also make sure of their capability to handle topics assigned.

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**Question - 14:**

Tell me what are your plans for research?

**Ans:**



This question is obviously asking you to look forward to the future, so drawing up one year, five year and ten year research plans is helpful before going into an interview. (If you are completing a PhD and looking for your first job this might sound a little excessive, but believe me, it will make you stand out and be taken seriously). They will not just want to hear about the topics you wish to cover but will crucially be interested in two other areas: research funding and your output (i.e. publications). As well as telling them about your exciting projects, tell them how you're going to pay for them (which grants you will apply for) and what published benefits there will be in concrete terms. Aim high at this point; you don't want to sell yourself short. You can write that monograph or get an article into a world-renowned journal. The scope of your ambition will help to sell you as the ideal candidate here, so don't worry about sounding arrogant.

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### Question - 15:

Explain how you determined the style, tone, and voice for a specific piece of content you recently completed?

#### Ans:

Why it's important to ask this: Your content marketer will need to express a unique voice and opinion in their work. However, they also need to adapt their own style as a function of your company's needs, the audience, format of the content, person they're writing for, and so on.

What to look out for: Look and ask for specific examples of how they modified their style, as well as asking them to identify why this is important.

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### Question - 16:

Tell me how do you manage deadlines or priorities?

#### Ans:

If we are looking to get contents that are really eye catching and attractive then you would need to know the mind-set of the writer. Writers do like to allow their thoughts flow like river. But if there is a boulder on the way the water gets stagnated and moves slowly. So does the creative thoughts. Hence, by getting to know on how much time the writer needs to get contents that are relevant and catchy, you would be able to know whether he/she would be suited to your business. As the type of contents varies so do the type of writers. So you would need to decide on which topic for which type of writer and allocate accordingly. Some writers do need to spend some time while some are able to write depending on their skill. If the writer requires time to write quality contents its best to provide ample time. Writers do indicate their priorities and also how they meet the deadlines. Being a little flexible is best solution to get articles that will be of good quality.

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### Question - 17:

Explain a specific example of content you created that entertained and/or educated your readers?

#### Ans:

Why it's important to ask this: Content marketing is about adding value to your readers, such as providing an infographic that educates about their industry, or creating an entertaining video that helps them with their job or career. Your team needs to create content that provides entertainment such as through story-telling or comedy in order to stand out from the crowd, and to capture and sustain their attention.

What to look out for: Look for examples of their content that told a story, used humor, and/or educated their audience about something other than a company's products. Bonus points if the candidate has delivered more unique formats of content, such as infographics, podcasts or interactive content. Ask for examples of where they've used visual content, including why they were or weren't successful.

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### Question - 18:

Tell me how do you decide which content topics to focus on and what format that content should take?

#### Ans:

Why it's important to ask this: What drives a person to invest their time and effort into creating content? Is it anecdotal insight such as a hallway conversation with a sales person-which may be a good place to begin investigating an idea, but not the final driver for its execution? Or is creation more data-driven, such as through Google Analytics or insight from a content marketing platform?

What to look out for: Be wary if your candidate indicates their past content development was primarily driven by what their boss told them to write about; or they have no understanding of what goes into content strategy. A follow-up question could be: "Describe your company's content strategy, including key steps in its development."

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### Question - 19:

So tell me something about yourself?

#### Ans:

This is the most common interview question which will almost certainly be asked to any candidate. While it seems a pretty straightforward question many find it the toughest as it's quite open ended and people fumble when required to speak about themselves rather than about their work and/or skills. But fear not friends. The question is asked merely to know more about your personality than actually seeking your personal details. The best way to approach this question is to start with your high school, go up to graduation/post graduation and move towards your work experience. If the interviewer seeks family details only then you should provide it, otherwise it's not necessary.

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### Question - 20:

Can We Conduct A Short Grammar Test?

#### Ans:

A Content Writer is expected to be grammatically correct and international clients will expect nothing but the best written material which they won't require to proofread after having paid anything between \$ 8-15 per article. So any reputed company is likely to test your grammar skills before going to the second round. Most of the grammar tests focus on punctuation, verb and conjunction usage and few other topics. So brush up, or more correctly, dust off the cobwebs by going through that family heirloom called Wren & Martin.

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### Question - 21:

Explain what are your different writing styles and what tones of writing do you have experience with?

#### Ans:

This question would help to get in contact with writers who are well versed in writing different styles. When we say style, it means the way the writer writes and the technique the writer uses mainly the word choice, the syntax, the tone. Sometimes, it is also considered as voice that readers listen when they read the content work. Get to know whether the writer uses descriptive style, narrative style, argumentative style or persuasive style. From that you would get to know how they put use of their words, structure their sentence, whether logics are used. Each writer creates their own niche.

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### Question - 22:

Explain how do to decide what to content create?

#### Ans:

\* Mediocre Responses:

\* My manager tells me what I should write about and gives me an outline.

\* I look at what's trending and pick an interesting topic.

\* Great Responses:

\* I keep a backlog of keywords that people are searching for in Google related to my target topic, and create posts based on the backlog.

\* I set up Google News alerts and a feed reader to look at which topics are trending in the news that relate to my topic area. I come up with spins on those topics to newsjack those stories.

\* I regularly ask the sales team what questions their prospects are asking, and use the responses as fodder for my next post.

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### Question - 23:

Explain what process do you use when proofreading?

#### Ans:

Why it's important to ask this: I certainly want a content marketer to have an opinion about what works and what doesn't work. however, it's also important that they are able to accept critique about their work and make changes as necessary.

What to look out for: Attention to detail and an understanding of proper usage of the english language is key elements of quality content. (Did you catch the three mistakes?) Follow-up questions could include:

What are some of your greatest "pet peeves" when editing someone else's writing?

Which style guide(s) do you depend upon?

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### Question - 24:

Tell me the difference between "there," "their," and "they're"?"

#### Ans:

Yes, it sounds asinine. But I see this mistake All. The. Time. And I know at least some of those errors are the work of allegedly professional content creators. A good writer knows that a spellcheck program can only get you so far.

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### Question - 25:

Tell me what steps do you take when you actually create your content?

#### Ans:

\* Mediocre Responses:

\* I write my blog post in Word and then post it when it's ready.

\* Great Responses:

\* I write my blog post in Word, add hyperlinks to at least three other pieces of content on our site that we've published, and add at least one hyperlink to a third party resource.

\* I ensure there's an associated featured image for the post by going to a stock image site.

\* I always make sure there's a clear call to action at the end of each post.

\* For quality control, I make sure at least one other person has proofread it before publishing.

\* I optimize the title for a target keyword by looking at what terms people are searching for in Google.

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### Question - 26:

Tell us can you describe the difference between content and copy?

#### Ans:

Copy is sales-oriented, while content is value-oriented. Copy is the stuff you'd find in a brochure, while content is what you'd find in a bona fide newsletter. A good writer should know the difference between the two.

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### Question - 27:

Provide your resume and qualifications details for Academic Writers:

#### Ans:

It is imperative to know about the basic qualification of the person you intend to hire. If he/she is a graduate in English literature don't be too happy about it because they might not be able to write creative contents. Read through their resume and find out if they have been involved in writing or editing their work related documents. Sometimes this skill will help to know that they would be accurate in pinpointing grammatical errors. Besides, they would have an eye for reading each



sentence word by word. Anyway, it is best if the writer is a graduate and has worked for few years.

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### Question - 28:

Tell us how would you contribute to the administration of the department?

#### Ans:

Here they want you to talk about your past admin experience if you have any, and to show your enthusiasm for this side of things! Fake it if you have to. Pretending that you are desperate to become the new admissions officer will help you to get the job if that's what they are looking for. If you have experience of running your own courses, managing an entire programme, or doing a specific administrative task then mention that. If you can, give an example of a contribution or innovation that you instituted in that role. If you are at the very start of your career then simply show even more enthusiasm and emphasise the transferable skills that are vital in these roles, i.e. being efficient, well-organised and a good communicator.

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### Question - 29:

Operational Academic Writers Interview Questions:

#### Ans:

- \* There can be a considerable amount of repetitive work - how would you stay motivated?
- \* How do you maintain attention to detail?
- \* How do you approach proof-reading material?
- \* What would you expect from us as your employer to keep you motivated?
- \* Tell us how your background and experience makes you a fit for this role?
- \* What do you know about this company?
- \* Who are our customers are and where are they located?
- \* Where would you ideally see yourself a year from now and in three years from now?

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### Question - 30:

Role-specific Academic Writers Interview Questions:

#### Ans:

- \* Why do we invest in producing content that we give away for free?
- \* How do you think people discover our content?
- \* What's the importance of voice for a brand?
- \* How would you go about giving voice to a brand?
- \* If I told you you need to make 50 pieces of content per week what would you say?
- \* How many pieces of content do you think you could deliver in a week?
- \* How would you go about prioritizing one piece of content over another?
- \* What new content would you recommend for our marketing operation?
- \* How do you go about improving SEO for content?
- \* What's the value of an infographic?

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### Question - 31:

Basic Content Writer Interview Questions?

#### Ans:

- \* What are your current writing projects?
- \* How do you manage deadlines and priorities?
- \* How much do you write about our industry?
- \* How do you handle writing about "boring" topics?
- \* How do you capture a brand's voice?
- \* What is your experience with community management and social media?
- \* What are some of your favorite social media tools?
- \* What is your experience with analytics, metrics and tracking content success?
- \* How do you make content SEO-friendly?
- \* What is your approach to keyword research?
- \* What is your experience in technical writing?
- \* How do you research a target audience?
- \* What is your experience with non-text content (images, infographics, etc.)?
- \* Are you familiar with the Penguin and Hummingbird algorithm updates? How did they affect your content strategy?
- \* What do you know about our company?

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### Question - 32:

Tell me what courses could you offer to teach?

#### Ans:

You want to seem keen and flexible and show that you are happy to fit in with the department's teaching requirements but they also want to hear about new courses that you would like to offer. In order to answer this question you need to look at the department's current undergraduate curriculum. That way you can be sure the courses you have invented will fit in with what they offer now. So if the department already has a course on Nazi Germany, do not propose to offer a new one. You have to be careful here: do not let your creativity run away with you. If you do get the job, your new colleagues might say 'I loved that course you proposed in your interview, can you run it next year?'

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### Question - 33:

Explain some reference of your previous work?

#### Ans:

Keep in handy a pen drive containing your best write ups. Yes, you need to be selective; we all know the nonsense we write in the early days of our content writing career and even when we just don't feel like proof reading some write up, so skip such stuff. It's always advisable to show a wide variety of write-ups like blogs, articles, home page and on different topics. Also if the write-up is under your name it's even better for sake of authenticity. But as we know copywriting signifies that the identity of the actual writer is not disclosed so I'll suggest another way to prove your credentials. Post some articles on varied topics like technology, travel, tourism etc on article submission sites like Hubpages, Ezine, Buksia and so on. I did that and it paid off in a big way. Writers looking for a career in web journalism should have posted related articles on some online magazines or current affairs sites.

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### Question - 34:

Tell me which professional organizations do you belong to?

#### Ans:

A good writer views his or her work as a business, one that is worth investing in-and part of that investment involves joining professional organizations. They offer the opportunity to keep up with trends, sharpen skills, and benefit from interaction with other professionals. And a good writer will find a way to come up with the annual dues.

[View All Answers](#)

### Question - 35:

Explain after you have published your content, how do you promote it?

#### Ans:

- \* Mediocre Responses:
- \* I publish my content on WordPress, and then tweet it out as well.
- \* Great Responses:
- \* I publish the post on our blog using WordPress.
- \* I then schedule a minimum of four tweets at different times of the day in HootSuite.
- \* I email coworkers to retweet and share my post as well.
- \* I ask the demand generation team to include it in the next email newsletter to our database.

[View All Answers](#)

### Question - 36:

Tell us what content marketing blogs do you read?

#### Ans:

Why it's important to ask this: Is the candidate really interested in content marketing? Do they take personal initiative to educate themselves and grow as a content marketer? Or will they only grow solely through your mentorship on the job?  
What to look out for: See if they mention specific blogs. If they just say, "you know, all of them," or "the usual ones," they are likely not reading any.

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### Question - 37:

Tell me do you know something about Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

#### Ans:

Although content writers aren't supposed to know much about SEO but if they do it's a added bonus because writing and SEO go hand-in-hand and website popularity depends on the right balance between the two and not just one of them. Obviously if you have mentioned SEO as one of your skills then be prepared for some searching SEO questions from the interviewer. Even if you mention SEO as a separate skill as distinct from SEO content writing, mention it after your writing skill and not before that. But handle all SEO related questions with tact. If the interviewer just has some basic SEO knowledge then you can convince him/her quite easily by talking about on-page and off-page optimization but if the interviewer has in depth knowledge then you will need more than just SEO basics. So it's advisable to state upfront your comfort level with all things SEO.

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### Question - 38:

Tell me why do you want to work here?

#### Ans:

I wanted to move to an institution like this that prioritises good teaching practice and dedicated pastoral care of students. I believe I can offer this because of [x and y examples of experience from your previous career].

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### Question - 39:

Explain what was/is the profile in your previous/present company?

#### Ans:

This question is relevant only for candidates with previous content writing experience. If you have written on variety of topics then it will be definitely better than having written just one type of content as most companies want writers for all types of writing jobs and not just one or two. Still, hardcore technical writers will not be expected to have a wide writing range except for their own domain. For others it's advantageous to present yourself as generic content writer and not specialized unless the job demands so; for instance, travel writing job. Apart from the writing part also mention other associated responsibilities like, finding keywords, URL suggestion, title tags, page layout decisions, content selection, handling a team, editing etc.

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**Question - 40:**

Explain about the best book you've read recently?

**Ans:**

The best writers love to read, and not just blogs and e-zines. On my list of acceptable answers would be any marketing or general business book, as well as any book that shows your writer is a well-rounded individual.

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**Question - 41:**

Tell me how do you know if your content has performed well or not?

**Ans:**

- \* Mediocre Response:
- \* Usually I just know if it's done well or not.
- \* Great Response:
- \* I look at Google Analytics after a few days to see how many page views it has received.
- \* I search on Google for the target keyword I was optimizing for to see if it ranked in the first page.
- \* I look at the Twitter counter on the post to see how many tweets cite this post.

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**Question - 42:**

Tell us what do you enjoy about writing?

**Ans:**

Why it's important to ask this: Content marketing is a lot more than writing; however, I consider this talent to be a foundational element of a superstar content marketer. You have to love what you do.

What to look out for: Look for indicators that they have a passion for writing. Understand what drives their passion, what outlets they've used to express this passion, and what personal benefits they get out of creating content.

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**Question - 43:**

Explain how you went about the process to get such articles done?

**Ans:**

It will help to know what techniques the writer has used and what were the various websites referred. Also it will tell whether the articles were thoroughly read through before writing. Getting to write the appropriate content for the subject requires a step by step process. Some articles are to be written in sequential way and from the writers perspective you would come to know about the way he/she underwent to get the desired content. This will help in making your selection of writers.

[View All Answers](#)

**Question - 44:**

Explain which style guide do you prefer to go by?

**Ans:**

What you're listening for here is either the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook or the Chicago Manual of Style. I'd even accept the Yahoo! Style Guide as a runner-up.

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**Question - 45:**

Do you know how does Google rank content?

**Ans:**

Why it's important to ask this: I am always surprised by how few marketers at any level understand how Google really ranks content. Though you're not interviewing for an SEO position, content marketing is intrinsically tied to search engine optimization; everyone should know the basics when creating content.

What to look for: You don't need a candidate to know the PageRank formula, but rather the basic premise behind Google's ranking algorithm, along with other auxiliary factors that help with SEO. For example, many naive marketers think Google ranks content largely on meta tags and keyword stuffing. In reality, Google primarily ranks content on inbound links, and the authority of the sites doing the linking. It's a bonus if a candidate can mention other contributing factors such as the text of the hyperlink, the title tag, keywords in the URL, and others.

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**Question - 46:**

Tell me how do you kick off a project with a new client?

**Ans:**

What you're looking for here is listening. A good content writer will spend time with the client to get a feel for the brand's personality as well as the needs of its target audience.

[View All Answers](#)

**Question - 47:**

Tell me what are some good ways to get other people to link to your content?

**Ans:**

\* Why it's important to ask this: The candidate may understand Google ranks content based on inbound links, but they also need to know how to accumulate inbound links.

\* What to look for: A good content marketer knows how to get links by producing great link worthy content, and promoting it in a clever manner. Here are some



good responses to the questions:

\* I interview influencers, not only because they have good things to say, but because they promote the resulting content to a large audience as well-and some of those people will end up linking back to my interview.

\* I include content others can reuse. For example, I may create a quick infographic that other bloggers may want to curate or include in their own posts, with a link back to mine.

\* I write long form content so I have the most comprehensive and authoritative post on a particular subject, which tempts others to link to me as the reference source.

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### Question - 48:

Tell me do you prefer to work with your own ideas based on the assignments or couple up with those situations?

#### Ans:

This will help to know whether the writer is having ideas to incorporate and bring out new thoughts. Based on the skill or talent you would need to know how you hire another writer who would be supportive. Or if the writer is happy to write contents on the subject being given, then you would need to make choice based on the type of work assignments or type of work to be executed example whether marketing or web site contents. Some writers do have lot of ideas and thoughts but they may not know what is the requirement in the market and will be willing to adapt themselves. Such writers are sometimes preferred as they will be willing to change according to the situation and write contents to suit the trend.

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### Question - 49:

What are the type of articles you have written? Please provide samples of at least 2 of your best?

#### Ans:

From this question you would be able to judge the type of articles that they are 'interested' to write. Then you would be able to allocate specific contents to such persons depending on their interests. But sometimes, there are writers who do manage to write a variety of topics. This would mean that they have habit of reading and gathering information. Based on the type of contents that you are interested to display, you need to be careful in selecting writers. By reading the articles you would be getting to know on how much depth they are involved in the related subject. Besides, getting writers for writing technical related subjects needs to be based on their technical writing skills and their education qualification.

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### Question - 50:

Tell me why did you choose content writing as a career?

#### Ans:

This one is pretty easy. Because I always felt writing is in my bones J I am an Engineering graduate and understandably this was a standard question in all interviews. I gave the same reply in all interviews and it worked just fine.

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### Question - 51:

Tell me which blogs do you read?

#### Ans:

You're looking for a writer who's committed to keeping his or her skills sharp, and that includes reading some of the better blogs on the subject of content creation. Two that come to mind are ProBlogger and CopyBlogger, but any marketing- or content-focused blog would be an acceptable answer.

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