

INTERVIEWING – QUESTIONS TO ASK

When interviewing for a job, it's important to remember that interviewing is a two-way street. While the emphasis is on selling yourself to the employer, you should be simultaneously evaluating the job, the company, and the team, as well. Part of this will happen naturally as you interact with and observe those you meet. However, you will also want to strategically ask questions that will enable you to assess the role and the organization more directly.

Asking good questions will not only allow you to gather information but will also allow you to demonstrate your sincere interest in the job and company. At the same time, it will afford you the opportunity to share additional insights about yourself. This happens two ways. The first is that the kind of questions you ask will reflect on your own interests, priorities, and approach. For example, if you ask questions about professional development, you are indicating that you value the opportunity for professional growth. Or, if you raise questions about their use of technology, you will be demonstrating an interest or expertise in technology.

The second way that your questions facilitate the sharing of additional information is that the interviewer's answers may open up new avenues of discussion that can highlight your related interests or skills. You might even ask directly about their priorities and respond with ways you would be able to contribute to those efforts. Sales people often utilize this technique to uncover the customer's needs and allow them to better direct their own comments. For example, if they mention an upcoming initiative to revamp their digital marketing strategy, you can mention your own strong interest in digital marketing and offer your past experience with it as an example to illustrate the point.

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Review the job posting and research the company carefully to uncover items of interest or concern. Become aware of the organization's latest developments by researching news articles about their recent activities. Of course, depending upon your role and level, you may want to learn about their financials, as well. Network with others who may have insights into the company's culture, performance, business model, etc. All of the above may provide good ideas for additional information you will want to explore at the interview.

Use open-ended questions that invite more meaningful answers. Be careful not to lead the interviewer to the answer you hope to hear. Remember that employers may be on their best behavior in the interview just as you are. Keep the tone pleasant and curious to encourage them to be candid and open with their answers.

Feel free to weave your questions into the interview as they arise. However, often employers will offer time to ask questions at the end of the interview. If not, you can always ask if there is time available for additional questions.

Possible Questions to Ask

- Can you describe the typical day for the person in this role?
- What percentage of time is devoted to each of the main responsibilities?
- What are the top 3 priorities for this role for the first 6 months?
- What are the top 3 priorities for the department in the coming year?
- Six months from now, what will have happened that will convince you that you hired the right person?
- What would the person in this role need to accomplish to cause you to be delighted with your decision to hire them?
- What do you see as the top 3 challenges that this person will face in the first year?
- Tell me about the culture here; how would most people describe it?
- How would you describe the person who will find long-term success here?
- What kind of person is most likely to leave the company?
- What are the top 3 things that make people want to stay with the company?
- What have you found makes people want to leave the company?
- How does the company support staff's professional development?
- What are the next steps in the process?
- When might I expect to hear from you?
- Are there any remaining questions you have about my suitability for this role, as I would welcome the opportunity to address them for you.