

Step 10: Top 10 Questions to Ask the Interviewer

An interview is a series of questions and answers, but contrary to popular beliefs, the questions go back and forth. At the end of your interview, you are usually given the opportunity to ask some questions of your interviewer and your potential employers. You must have a few questions prepared to ask your interviewers, to show you have a real interest in securing the job.

As a general rule, have more questions prepared than needed as it's likely some will be answered during the interview. Preferably you will have 2-3 questions to ask the interviewer before the end of the meeting. Focus on open-ended questions to build rapport while also steering clear of overly personal queries.

Here are a few questions to ask your interviewers, to leave a good impression:

1. What Are Your Expectations for the First Six Months?

Ask the interviewer what they expect over a specific period of time. This gives you a clue as to what potential employers are interested in, allowing you to adapt the conversation to prove why you are a good match for the position.

2. What Does It Take to Be Successful In this Role?

This is a great way to show a potential employer that you don't just want the job; you want to excel in the position. Successful professionals will want to know what they can do to truly make a difference in the company.

3. What are The Company's Biggest Challenges?

Gain some perspective on what challenges the company faces, and how your specific skills can offer some value. A forthcoming, direct response should be taken as a positive sign, while hesitation indicates it may be a delicate subject.

Remember that the interview is as much about deciding if the company is right for you as it's also about if you are right for them. Understanding what the initial challenges you may face will help you determine if you can go above and beyond in the role.

4. What are the expectations of managing workflow?

Learn what the typical day is like for the position—responsibilities, obligations, and unique scenarios you may face. What are the expectations regarding answering emails outside work hours? Will you be expected to work on weekends?

5. Where Does the Company See Itself/ What Is Expected of the Role in the Future?

The interviewer can give you a peek at the long-term plans the company has, whether that be the next month, a year or even 5 years. This is your chance to see if any potential projects that you will be expected to work on maybe approaching and if the direction the company is headed aligns with your own goals.

6. What Is the Company's Culture Like?

Understand the value system the company has in place—is it a casual work environment, or more rigid and regimented? Will you fit in with them? Building productive long-lasting working relationships is an important part of the social aspect within a company. Asking about it shows your thinking long-term. Learn what is expected of employees, both in and out of the workplace.

7. What Opportunities Will I Have to Grow?

Discover what possibilities you have for career progression and growth. Ask what the previous employee went on to do, were they promoted or transferred internally? Does the company offer coaching/mentoring or professional development courses? This shows the hiring manager that continued learning is important to you.

8. What are The Biggest Rewards/Incentives Working with This Company?

Here you are asking for the interviewer's own personal experience working at the company. Discover unique opportunities and benefits working at this company brings, compared to competitors.

9. Do you have any reservations about my fit for the position that I could try to address?

While it may seem scary to ask at the end of an interview, it allows you to address any reservations that the interviewer may hold about you while you still have their attention. Having the courage to ask this question also allows you to have a better understanding of the next steps involved in the hiring process.

10. What is Next After This Interview?

What comes next after the interview process? Show some enthusiasm and a desire to get to work soon.

Avoid These Questions:

- **Asking about Salary:** Wait until you are on firmer ground, usually during the end stage of the hiring process where you can negotiate salary with HR or the hiring manager.
- **Basic information about the company:** What do you do? Who is your main competitor? Or other questions that can be found through a basic Google search. This indicates you haven't done any research on the company.
- **Personal or invasive questions:** You don't want to make your interviewer feel uncomfortable.
- **Social media monitoring/ background checks/ network usage:** Assume that the company will be monitoring your social media to some extent and that they have done some rudimentary background checks on you. Asking gives the impression you have something to hide. Also, don't ask about using the company network for personal use as that can make you appear unprofessional.
- **Company gossip:** Don't ask about or mention financial challenges that you may have heard through someone else within the company or developing news stories etc. such as "why are you about to lay off 500 employees next month?" instead of a confrontational approach, instead ask the hiring manager for their opinion on how well-positioned the company is going into the future.