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Asking the Interviewer Questions

In addition to an interviewer asking you questions, it’s important that you ask the interviewer questions as well. Asking questions helps you learn more about the role and it shows your interest in the role.

In this reading, we list several questions you should consider asking your interviewer, and explain both the intention of the question and the benefits of asking it..

Why ask your interviewer questions?

One reason to ask your interviewer questions is that it helps you determine if you are interested in the role. One mistake people make in interviews is believing they are the only one being interviewed. Remember, you are also interviewing the organization to determine if *you* would like to work there! Ask questions to help determine if the organization is a good fit for you.

Another reason to ask questions is that it shows your interest in the role. When possible, make your question specific to the company you are interviewing for. For example, imagine during your pre-interview research, you come across an article discussing the company’s entrepreneurial culture. You can mention that you read about the organization’s entrepreneurial culture. Then, ask how that culture gets represented in the company.

When to ask your interviewer questions?

Often, at the end of the interview, the interviewer will ask you if you have questions. This is the perfect time to ask any questions that were not addressed in the body of the interview. Or, the interview may end without time reserved for questions, and that’s OK, too. It’s typically best to respect the interview time frame rather than ask questions past the time.

If the interviewer doesn’t confirm they will allow time at the end for questions, one way to fit them in before time runs out is to ask during the interview. When asking during an interview, ensure the questions don’t disrupt the flow. For example, if the interviewer mentions available training for the role, you can comment that you are interested in the company’s training. You can then ask them what type of training is available for the position.

Additionally, if you are unable to ask any questions during the interview, you can follow-up with an email. Make sure your questions are directly related to the role and related to something you are genuinely interested in.

Example questions to ask your interviewer

How do you evaluate success in this role?

This question helps you better understand what skills or qualities make someone successful in the role. If the interviewer mentions skills or qualities you have, you can then discuss how you applied them in your previous experience.

Can you describe the typical day of someone in this role?

It’s important to know the day-to-day activities of the position. Does this match with the type of role you’re interested in? If it doesn’t, the role may not be a fit for you. This question also confirms that the tasks for the role match the job description.

How would you describe the company’s culture?

A company culture is the attitudes and behaviors of the company and its employees. Asking this question helps you better understand if the company’s culture is a fit for you. For example, if you’d like to work for a company that supports creativity and encourages new ideas, look for that type of information when someone describes the culture.

What do you like about working here?

Similar to the question about culture, this question provides the positive qualities of a workplace. Ensure these qualities match with what you’re interested in for a work environment.

Is there any training for the role and how is the training delivered?

If you’re interested in receiving training for a role, consider asking this question. Additionally, you may want to ask how the training will be delivered, such as digitally, in-person, shadowing a current employee, or another method. Shadowing is when you closely observe another employee perform the role.

Do you have any questions or hesitations about my qualifications or experience?

If you ask this question at the end of an interview, it gives you a chance to address any concerns the interviewer may have about your work background. Sometimes the interviewer is interested in a particular experience that you may in fact have, but didn't include on your resume. This is the perfect question to address that discrepancy.

Key takeaways

When interviewing, you should ask questions to learn more about the organization and show your interest in the role. When doing pre-interview research, write down any questions you may have for the organization or the role. It’s a best practice to have at least four questions prepared before the interview. If there is time available and the question seems appropriate, ask it!

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