

GUIDE TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Employers expect candidates to ask questions during an interview. Most often when they are done asking their questions, they'll ask what questions you have for them. That's your cue. If you don't have any, you appear uninterested, unprepared and unqualified. Additionally, this is your opportunity to learn if the position is a good fit for you.

However, asking the wrong questions could also jeopardize a job offer. Seeking inappropriate information or asking some questions too early in the interview process might indicate you are not interested in this position or are solely focused on how the job benefits you.

Place the following list of questions in your two-pocket portfolio you'll carry to the interview. It's ideal to not look at them while you are asking the questions. But if nervousness might cause you to forget them, when the interviewer asks if you have any questions, confidently open your portfolio while stating "Yes, I do, thank you."

You won't ask all of the questions listed below. Use your best judgement to select the questions from each section that are most applicable to your interview. It's likely some of the questions have already been answered in the dialogue you've had to this point with the interviewer.

The Job:

DO Ask-

- Can you provide a percentage breakdown of daily/weekly/monthly duties?
- Can you provide examples of projects I would be working on?
- What are the most immediate projects that must be addressed?
- What do you see are the top three skills required for someone to succeed in this role?
- What are the biggest challenges the person in this role might face?
- Is this a new role that is being created? OR Why is this position vacant?

DON'T Ask-

- What are the responsibilities of this job?
- What type of background are you looking for?
- Can I work from home?
- Can I arrive or leave at whatever time I want, as long as I get the work done?
- What happened to the person who used to have this job?
- Does the supervisor of this role micromanage or let employees work independently?

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Company History and Culture:

DO Ask-

- How would you describe the company and team culture?
- Is the work environment typically more collaborative or independent?
- Do teams or departments work together?
- How is cohesiveness achieved (team outings, meetings, projects, etc.)?
- How does this company differ from other companies you've worked for?
- Is it possible to tour the department/area where the person in this position works?

DON'T Ask-

- What products does this company produce?
- Is the company public or private?
- Who are your competitors?
- Do coworkers like each other?
- What are employees' opinions of (supervisor, CTO, CEO, etc.)?
- Do coworkers go to happy hour together?
- Am I allowed to wear jeans to work?

Training/Onboarding, Professional Development and Performance Review:

DO Ask-

- Can you talk about the initial onboarding and training for this position?
- How does the company promote professional development?
- Can you describe the performance review process?
- What are the most important criteria someone in this role should accomplish in the first 30, 60 or 90 days?

DON'T Ask-

- Does the company pay for employees to attend conferences?
- If you attend professional development events, are you promoted quicker?
- What type of raises do you offer employees?
- How soon can I receive my first raise?
- Is there a way for employees to review their supervisors?

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The Interviewer:

DO Ask-

- What do you like about working here?
- What challenges do you feel the (company, team, department) has?
- How long have you been with the company?
- How has the company changed since you joined?

Note: You may have different interviews with different people (your supervisor, coworkers, human resources manager, etc.). Tailor and target questions to your particular audience.

DON'T Ask-

- What don't you like about working here?
- Do you think I should accept a job offer if I get one?
- When do we discuss salary and benefits?
- Should I tell you now about a vacation I already have planned?
- How soon after my start date would medical benefits kick in?

Next Steps:

DO Ask-

- What are the next steps in the interview process?
- When do you anticipate making a decision?
- Do you have any concerns about my background being a good fit for this role?
- Can I answer any additional questions for you?

DON'T Ask-

- Should I let you know if I accept another job I interviewed for?
- Are you going to be performing a background check?
- Do you think you could let me know within a week about my application status?
- Is there going to be a second interview or should we discuss salary now?

Remember that interviewing is a two-way conversation. You are there to learn just as much about the company and the job as the interviewers want to learn about you. The questions you ask make just as much of an impact as the answers you provide.