

Questions to Ask at an Interview



We have already mentioned that you should take the interview as a discussion rather than an examination. Accordingly, you should prepare some questions that you can ask.

Rather than waiting to the end, look for opportunities to politely ask the questions throughout the interview.

At the end of the interview, you will usually be asked if you have any other questions. By this stage of the interview, you may feel that during the interview most points have been covered and lose the opportunity to show interest and commitment through asking well-prepared questions. The end of the interview is important in leaving a positive “last impression”.

Questions to ask often centre around “fit” with the culture, role responsibility and performance. Review your career values and drivers to put your question list together and remember to ask open ended questions. There may also be something else you need to know regarding the job responsibility or scope in order to make your decision as to whether the job is right for you.

It’s also okay to ask how the process will move forward, when you will be contacted about further interviews or their decision.

Ensure you are prepared with a list of 10 – 12 questions to take into an interview with you. Most of these are likely to be answered during the interview discussion but if you have 3 - 4 well thought out questions to ask at the end of the interview, the interviewer will know that you are interested.

Sample Questions:

Role Responsibilities and Scope:

1. What is most pressing? What would you like to have accomplished within the next two or three months?
2. What kind of support does this position receive in terms of people and budget?
3. What are some of the more difficult problems facing someone in this position?
4. Where could a person go who is successful in this position
5. Where do you see the company (or function) going in the next few years?
6. What are the major responsibilities of this position?

Performance:

1. What are the short-term and long-term goals of the department, and how are they established?
2. How is performance measured against the goals of the department?
3. What is the most important contribution that you expect the successful candidate will make during the first 6 months in this position?
4. How would successful performance be rewarded in this position?
5. What are the most critical factors for success in your business?

Culture:

1. How would you describe the culture of your organisation?
2. What do you like about working for this organisation?
3. What is your/the organisation's management style?
4. Is your environment formal or informal, structured or flexible?
5. Describe the interdepartmental relationships?
6. If I were to ask the team what they liked about working here, what would they say?
7. Why is this position open?