

Network to Work Meeting

Resource Materials – February 2016

Nine Great Questions to Ask in a Job Interview

As a job seeker, the key to a good interview is to find out as much about your potential employer as possible. Asking these six questions will not only make you appear more committed as a candidate, but will also give you better insight into both the challenges and opportunities that may lie ahead for you. Furthermore, by asking good questions, you give yourself an opportunity to impress the interviewer.

Here are some great questions to ask in a job interview:

1. “What happened to the person who previously did this job?” (If a new position: How has this job been performed in the past?)

- **Why You Need to Ask:** You need to know any problems or past history associated with this position. For instance, was your predecessor fired or promoted? Is this a temporary position or brand new? The answer will tell you about management's expectations and how the company is gearing to grow.

2. “What is the most important thing I can accomplish in the first 60 days?” OR
“How will you judge my success? What will have happened in the next 60 days (or 3 months, or 6 months) to show I have met your expectations?”

- **Why You Need to Ask:** You need to be on the same page as your new manager, as well as be clear on what the initial expectations are and that you can deliver. What you don't want is to allow yourself to be misled about the job's requirements and end up overwhelmed and over your head after the first week on the job.

3. “What can you tell me about the individual I would report to?”

- **Why You Need to Ask:** It doesn't matter how wonderful the company might be; your time will be spent working for a specific manager. You need to find out who this person is and what kind of manager he or she is -- earlier rather than later, before personality clashes develop. If you're an independent type used to working on your own, for instance, you'll be unhappy when you find you're being supervised by a micromanager.

4. “Why did you choose to work here? What keeps you here?”

- **Why You Need to Ask:** Although you may like this company, you're an outsider. You need to find out what an insider has to say about working there. Who better to ask than your interviewer? This also forces the interviewer to step out of their official business role and answer personally as an employee and potential coworker.

5. “How would you describe the company’s culture? Can you give me some examples?”

- **Why You Need to Ask:** Maybe the organization is “all business” and employees don’t do anything social. Or perhaps it has a strong social mission and expects employees to participate in community volunteer activities. You need to decide if the culture is one you will enjoy and one where you will fit in.

6. “Where do you see this department / company in five years? What are its plans or goals?”

- **Why You Need to Ask:** The answer to this question will help you gain an understanding of the company’s financial strength as well as changes that may have an impact on the position you are seeking.

7. “Now that we’ve talked about my qualifications and the job, do you have any concerns about my ability to be successful in this position? Is there any additional information I can provide?”

- **Why You Need to Ask:** You want to be sure that you have had every opportunity to showcase your strengths. You don’t want to leave the interview without having had the chance to address any concerns the interviewer may have.

8. “Can you clarify what you said about . . .?” Can you give me some examples of . . .?”

- **Why You Need to Ask:** Not only is it important that you fully understand what is being said in the interview, these kinds of questions also show that you are truly engaged in the interview and that you are willing to ask for the clarity needed to do a good job.

9. “What are the next steps in the selection process? And what's our next step?”

- **Why You Need to Ask:** This is your closing and the most important question to ask at the end of the interview. You need to know what happens after this point. You might even take the lead and set a plan for follow-up. You'll also be able to gauge the company's enthusiasm with the answer. Don't forget to ask for your interviewer’s direct phone number and the best time to call.

Adapted from:

Own the Interview: 10 Questions to Ask By Larry Buhl, found at:

<http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/interview-questions/own-the-interview-10-questions-to-ask-hot-jobs/article.aspx>

“Nine Memorable Questions to Ask at Your Interview By John Kador, Monster Contributing Writer, found at:

<http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/interview-questions/nine-questions-to-ask-interview/article.aspx>