



Questions to ask and Questions asked by the Interviewer



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Questions to ask

- What will my responsibilities be?
- Why is this position available?
- How will you assess my performance?
- How does this position fit into the rest of the company?
- Who will I report to and who will report into me?
- Does your company encourage further study?
- What is your company's further growth plans?
- Where will I be based?
- Will the position entail travel?
- How soon will you decide on the appointment?
- What is the next step? Where do we go from here?

Ask questions. A recruiter for a major company says: "I only hire staff who ask questions. I can tell more about the person by the questions they ask than the answers they give." It is also said that by not asking questions a candidate "shows a peculiar lack of curiosity and comprehension" If you do not ask questions, an interviewer cannot tell if you are interested in the job and that may cost you a job offer. Asking the right questions not only ensures a lively discussion, it makes the interviewer's job easier. The best reason for asking questions is to get information as you need to make an informed decision should the company make you an offer. Not all questions are created equal and there are some you are better off not asking.

Questions the Interviewer will ask

Q) Tell me about yourself (what the interviewer is really saying: "I want to hear you talk")

A) This is the most commonly asked question, so rehearse so that it sounds important. Describe your qualifications, work history and your acquired skills, emphasising the skills required for the position on offer.

Q) What are your strengths? (Straightforward answering is required here, what are you good at and how can you add value to the company?)



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A) You will get this question - so be prepared. Strengths to consider - ability to learn quickly, determined to succeed. Positive attitude, ability to relate to other people in achieving a common goal. Be prepared to give examples.

Q) What are your weaknesses? (Your self -awareness and self-perception is being questioned here)

A) This is a standard question. Be prepared. Don't say: "none." You can use a professional weakness such as lack of experience (not ability) or turn a weakness into a positive and how you are trying to work at it. Example: "I am reluctant to let go and tend to do everything myself, feeling like nobody can do it as well as me, but I am learning to delegate more readily with excellent results." Do not use a personal weakness like "I'm basically untidy and need somebody to keep me in check, but I am getting better at it."

Q) What have been your achievements? (What is being asked here is "Are you an achiever?")

A) Choose a recent achievement and relevant to the job. What skills were used and how it benefited the company. An example, "I wrote and implemented a marketing strategy which increased our market share by 20%. I was awarded a substantial monetary award in recognition of this."

Q) What do you like about your present job? (The interviewer is really trying to discover that the job on offer will have aspects of what you enjoy.)

A) This is straightforward question. Describe your likes, linking it to the skills required. Don't go into too much detail. After all - you are leaving.

Q) What do you dislike about your present job? (Does the job on offer have responsibilities that you will dislike and which will make you unsuitable?)

A) Be careful, very careful. Be somewhat vague, as you do not want to expose your weaknesses, thus causing problems. Choose an aspect of your present company such as its size, slow decision-making etc. Your answer must reflect that you are someone who takes problems and frustrations in your stride as part of the job.

Q) What is the most difficult situation you have had to face and how have you tackled it? (What is "difficult" for you and are you logical in problem solving?)



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A) This could be a trap. To avoid it, choose a difficult work situation that was not caused by you, how you define the problem, the option, why you selected that particular option and the outcome. End on a positive note.

Q) What kind of decision do you find the most difficult to make? (What is being said here is: " I need someone who is strong and decisive and yet has empathy")

A) This should be answered in 2 different ways: "I like to make decisions based on sufficient information and have alternatives" OR "when I have to make decisions quickly, I rely on gut feel and experience." Your answer must not reflect weakness.

Q) Why do you want to leave? (Your motives are being evaluated and the interviewer is trying to understand your reason for wanting to leave)

A) This requires a straightforward answer. You are looking for a challenge, more responsibility, you need to enhance your experience and you need a change of environment. NEVER give negative reasons for leaving and NEVER state salary as the main motivator.

Other Questions

The above questions are pretty standard so the answers have been expanded upon, but consider these other questions:

- What do you enjoy about the industry?
- What kind of people do you enjoy working with?
- How do you cope when your work has been criticised? Give an example
- What is the worst situation you have coped with outside of work? Give an example as well as the outcome
- How do you respond to working under pressure? Can you? Give an example
- How have you coped when you have felt anger at work? Give an example, but still showing that this did not affect your ability to get on with the job
- How have you coped when you have to face a conflict of interest at work? This is testing your interpersonal skills, team and leadership skills
- What kind of people do you find difficult to work with? As you do not know anything about the staff of the company at which you are being interviewed, be careful how you answer this question
- What are your preferred working conditions, working alone or in group and why?
- What are you looking for in a company?
- How do you measure your own performance?



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- What is your favourite advertisement and why? (For ad agency candidates only)
- What is your least favourite and why? (For ad agency candidates only)
- These WILL be asked, so be prepared
- Why should we hire you? Explain how you can add value to the company



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