

Questions to Ask Employers

At the end of or throughout most interviews, the job-seeker will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the position and the organization. Below please find samples to help you prepare your questions prior to your interview.

Sample Interview Questions to Ask about the Job

- Which specific skills are necessary to succeed in this job?
- Would you please describe the ideal candidate for this job?
- How do my skills, experience, and education differ from those of the ideal candidate?
- What are the day-to-day duties of this job?
- Do you have anything to add to the job description that XYZ advertised?
- Does this job have any special demands?
- How much travel does this job require?
- How many hours are in a typical workweek?
- What is a typical workday like in this position?
- How would you describe the working environment?
- Are there specific problems or challenges an employee would face in this position?
- If you hire me, which duties would you like for me to accomplish first?
- Which projects would you like for me to complete in the next six months?
- What are the long-term objectives of this job?
- Who would be my immediate supervisor and where does he or she fit into the organization?
- Would you please describe your management style?
- How much autonomy would I have in making decisions?
- What would be my budget and spending authority and responsibilities?
- What level of input would I have in determining my objectives and deadlines?
- How many projects must an employee in this position multitask at once?
- Is this a new position or am I replacing someone?
- Why was this new position created?
- May I ask why the employee in this position is leaving?
- May I seek success tips from the employee who was promoted out of this position?
- Has anyone ever performed poorly in this position? What did he or she do wrong?
- How do you measure an employee's performance and provide feedback?
- How does an employee know he or she is performing this job to expectations before annual merit reviews?

Sample Interview Questions to Ask about the Company

- How does XYZ Company acknowledge outstanding employee performance?
- What are this department's goals and how do they fit with XYZ Company's?
- How does this department fit in with XYZ Company's five-year plan?
- Is this department responsible for its own profit and loss?
- Does the department or XYZ Company face any major challenges?
- Do you foresee any significant changes in XYZ Company?
- What's XYZ's policy about employees advancing their education?
- Does XYZ offer employee training?
- How does XYZ promote and support professional growth?
- Does XYZ have a policy for work-life balance? If so, please tell me about it.
- Does XYZ have a policy for employee retention? If so, please tell me about it.
- What is XYZ's customer service policy?

- Has XYZ recently laid off employees and why was it necessary?
- How did XYZ handle notification, severance and outplacement services during the last layoff?
- Is XYZ planning or considering a layoff in the near future?
- Does XYZ regularly report its market results and profitability to its employees?
- How does XYZ compare with its competitors?
- How well has XYZ historically weathered poor economic conditions?
- May I ask what you like and don't like about XYZ Company?
- Is there anything you'd change about XYZ if you could?
- How would you characterize XYZ Company?
- Would you please describe XYZ's strengths and weaknesses?
- Are there any misconceptions about XYZ Company of which I should be aware?
- Does upper management have an open-door policy?
- What can you tell me about the employees who work here?
- May I see an organizational chart?

Sample Interview Questions to Ask in Summary

- Is there anything else I should know?
- Is there anything else you'd like to know?
- Is there anything that would prevent you from offering this job to me?
- How do I compare with the other candidates you've interviewed so far?
- Do you have any feedback?
- Do you have any concerns? What can I do to alleviate them?
- When can I expect to hear from you again?
- May I follow up with you by phone or email in about a week?
- May I schedule another interview with you?
- What might we discuss in a follow-up interview?
- If you decide to extend an offer, when would you like for me start?
- What's the next step?

Questions NOT to Ask

- Questions that will put the interviewer on the spot. Example: How are women treated here?
- Questions that make it obvious that you did not do your homework. Example: What exactly does your department do?
- Questions that tip the interviewer off to a personal problem that you have not yet resolved. Example: Are people in this department easy to get along with?
- Questions that imply that you already have the job. Example: Will you show me my office?
- Questions that cause the interviewer to wonder about your priorities. Examples: How much will I make? How much vacation will I get? (Do not ask about salary or benefits until the position has been offered to you).