



Questions to Ask During the Interview Cycle

During the interview process, candidates are often assessed on the basis of questions *they ask*.

That's right – you have to come to the interview with questions directed to your interviewer. It is not enough to come to an interview and expect to be the only one answering the questions. In fact, statistics show that candidates who get their interviewer talking – generally about themselves, their role in the company, their perceptions of the company - rank higher than candidates who don't ask thoughtful questions.

So, what type of questions should you ask? That depends on where you are in the interview cycle and who is interviewing you.

Questions to Ask: Company Executives

Clearly when interviewing with C level individuals (CEO, CSO, SVP of Sales), you want to focus on questions that demonstrate you have done your homework. Direct questions to this audience that are strategic in nature – ask about the company's vision, plan for growing revenues, financials, if they have an exit strategy, if they will grow organically or through acquisition.

Questions to Ask: Hiring Managers

When interviewing with the hiring manager, the person you will report to, focus on questions about their organization, their team's goals and objectives, what challenges they face, and what suggestions they have for a person joining the organization. Focus on expectations – what this person needs to accomplish, and take note as you will want to address these points later when expressing your value to the organization. *You are being assessed based on your ability to satisfy the manager's goals and objectives – you are there to make them look good.* Don't be shy about asking the hiring manager

“What is most important for you to achieve your goals in the next 12 months?”, “Looking back 12 months from now, what would you want to be able to say about the person you hire for this position?”, or “How can I help you achieve your goals and the highest rating on your next performance review?”.

Questions to Ask: Human Resource Representatives

When interviewing with representatives from Human Resources, you will want to ask questions about company positioning in the marketplace, company culture, company values, how the company position relates to their competition, and what they see as their strengths over their competition. Later on when an offer is being developed, you will want to get more tactical in your line of questioning around compensation, benefits, company policies around expense reimbursement, work from home set up, and policies and procedures.

It is key to have a set of questions written out in advance – do not wing it. Just 5- 6 questions. Any more and the interviewer will feel pressure. Take notes as they speak, and in your follow-up with the individual you interviewed with, reference a point that they made, the impact they had on you, summarize your value proposition, and express your desire to join their team.

Often candidates fail to ask the interviewer the all-important question of “Would you support my candidacy moving forward?”. How will you know if they support your objective of obtaining an offer if you don’t ask? Remember to close and ask for the job. Express your excitement about the company and joining them.

Good luck!

We look forward to hearing from you. Let’s start a conversation. 952-934-4100



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