

Questions to Ask Employers

POSITION

1. Please describe the duties of the position.
2. What kinds of assignments might I expect the first six months on the job?
3. How is feedback on my job performance given? How often?
4. Is this a new position or am I replacing someone?
5. Can you describe the typical work schedule for the position?
6. What qualities are looking for in the candidate who fills this position?
7. What skills are especially important for someone to be effective in this position?
8. How much of the position requires team/project work versus independent work production?
9. What opportunities might there be to work on special projects?
10. Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?
11. What is the growth potential for someone in this position?
12. How much travel, if any, is required in this position?

COMPANY

13. How would you describe the company's culture?
14. What products (or services) are currently in development?

15. Does the company have plans for expansion?
16. How has the company been impacted by the economy in recent years?
17. Does the company value creativity and individuality?
18. Is the company environmentally conscious? In what ways?
19. In what ways is a career with your company better than one with your competitors?
20. What is the biggest challenge facing the company? The greatest opportunities?
21. What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?
22. Are salary adjustments geared to the cost of living or job performance?
23. Does the company encourage further education?
24. In what ways does the company engage or give back to the local community?
25. Is flextime offered?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

26. What do you like best about your position, the company?
27. What would you describe as the company's values or top priorities?
28. What are the next steps in the interview process? When should I expect to hear from you or should I contact you?

Are You Ready for a Behavioral Interview?

Today more than ever, each hiring decision is critical. Behavioral interviewing is designed to minimize personal impressions that might cloud the hiring decision. By focusing on the applicant's actions and behaviors, rather than subjective impressions that can sometimes be misleading, interviewers can make more accurate hiring decisions.

How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

- Recall recent situations that show favorable behaviors or actions, especially those involving coursework, work experience, leadership, initiative, planning and customer service.
- Prepare short descriptions of each situation; be ready to give details if asked.
- Be sure each story has a beginning, a middle, and an end; i.e., be ready to describe the situation, your action and the outcome or result.
- Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you (even if the result itself was not favorable).
- Be honest. Don't embellish or omit any part of the story. The interviewer will find out if your story is built on a weak foundation.
- Be specific. Don't generalize about several events; give a detailed accounting of one event.

USING THE STAR TECHNIQUE TO ANSWER BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

Think of 4-6 situations you have been faced with in the past. Vary your examples so they are from all areas of your past (including internships, volunteering, class projects, part-time jobs, school activities, etc.). Describe your stories using the following STAR method. Practice telling the story using the STAR method, but do not memorize them word for word.

S – Situation or (T) Task

Describe a specific situation or task (i.e., "Assigned to a team and team member wasn't pulling their weight.")

A – Action

What action did you take? ("I met with the team member in private and explained the frustration of the rest of the team asked if there was anything I could do to help.")

R – Result

What happened as a result? What was the outcome? ("We finished our project on time and got a B on the assignment.")