

Don't Be Afraid To Ask These Tough Questions in a Job Interview

Job interviews can be intimidating, but what many people don't realize is that an interview is a two-way street.

Employers aren't the only ones with the privilege of asking question after question. As a candidate, it's important that you know how and when to voice your most important questions about the company, the position and the industry.

Although it can be scary to speak up and ask your most intriguing (and sometimes painfully terrifying) questions, you shouldn't be scared to ask these thought-provoking and insightful questions that can help you gain critical information about the position and make you stand out from the pack!

1. "What are the most important characteristics that someone needs to succeed in this position?"

This question will help your interviewer get past what you look like on paper and focus on you as a person. If your resume isn't perfect, directing the conversation toward your amazing personality traits can make up for what might be lacking on your resume. If your resume is perfect, recruiters still like to form a connection with a candidate and see what characteristics they would bring to a position.

More importantly, the answer to this question can help you decide whether or not the position is the best fit for you. If the recruiter's answer is "self-starter" or "entrepreneurial," this could mean that you would be working on your own a lot. On the other hand, if "personable" and "collaborative" are the words that come to mind for the interviewer, this could tell you the opposite. Learning what personal characteristics are vital for a position can help you get an idea for the work environment you could be entering and help you decide if a company is a good fit.

2. "Do you enjoy working here?"

This question may catch a recruiter off-guard, but their answer will be very telling. If they confidently answer "yes," paired with a smile and an enthusiastic, drawn-out response telling you every single reason why they love the company, it's a good sign. If they hesitate, drop eye contact or force an awkward answer, it's probably a red flag to take a step back and take another look at your possible future employer.

This question also helps the interview turn into more of a conversation rather than just question and answer. Asking this question may be daunting, but it gives recruiters a chance to reflect on their own experiences and talk about themselves, which frankly, sometimes we all like to do.



3. **“Is there anything about myself, my skills or my background that have made me stand out as someone who might not be the right fit for this position?”**

This is a question to ask if you *didn't* get the job. Getting feedback on why the company decided not to move forward is essential but may be the scariest question of them all. Facing potential negative feedback head-on can be scary, but it can also be very beneficial. Asking this question shows that you can take constructive criticism and are dedicated to continuously improving, even if it may not be with that company. Who knows, you might even get the job after all.

4. **“What is the reason for the open position? Is it a new position, or did someone leave?”**

This question may seem a bit forward or as having a negative connotation toward a company, but it's critical to do some digging to truly find out why there is an open position at a company. If the answer is because the company is growing or because of a promotion, great! If the answer seems indirect or the recruiter dismisses the question, not so great. Although an open position doesn't necessarily mean there is something undesirable about a company, it's important to be straightforward in order to get a straightforward answer. An indirect answer can tell you a lot about any patterns in people quitting, getting fired, etc.

5. **“What are some challenges that will face the person filling this position?”**

This question can be uncomfortable because it forces the interviewer to talk about potential negative aspects of the position. It can be scary to put someone else in an awkward position, but you owe it to yourself to know what you could be up against if you are the one who ultimately ends up with the job. There will be drawbacks to any position, but challenges can also be good, so don't be afraid to push for the true answer.