

## STAND OUT AT INTERVIEWS & NETWORKING EVENTS

# Sample Questions to Ask an Interviewer

## General Principles about Asking Questions

1. **Know what is important to you:** Think about what factors will bring you fulfillment in your work then ask the questions that will help you to determine if this job and this organization will be a good fit for you. Seek to better understand the dynamics of the organization to help you make an informed decision if the job is offered to you. Avoid asking questions about salary, vacation or benefits until you are offered the job -- the interviewer may be inclined to think that you are more interested in the money than in the position.
2. **Keep things positive:** Avoid questions that leave the impression that you are second-guessing the interviewer, putting him/her on the spot, delving into sensitive or confidential issues, or being judgmental about the organization or the work that the organization does.
3. **Pay attention:** Ask questions that show you have been listening attentively in the interview. Read the interviewer's non-verbal cues and follow the lead of the interviewer (e.g. the interviewer's body language may let you know that the interview is over or that she/he does not have time for further questions.)
4. **Be curious and authentic:** Ask questions that you are genuinely interested in knowing the answer to. Avoid asking questions merely for the sake of trying to impress the interviewer.
5. **Do your research:** If there is something through your research that you have a question about, the interview is the time and place to ask. Don't ask questions that are easily answered on the organization's website or in the job description.
6. **Find out what happens next:** Ask questions that will help you to understand the recruitment process, plan your follow up for this position and strategize the next steps in your job search.
7. **Mind your manners:** Think of the interviewer as the host who has invited you into his/her own home. Show respect and appreciation for the interviewer and his/her time and space. Remember to send a thank you note after the interview.

## Sample Questions to Ask an Interviewer

### About the position

- Can you describe a typical day in this job?
- Would you describe the actions of a person who previously achieved success in this position?
- What are the most immediate challenges of this position that need to be addressed in the first three months?
- What is the overall structure of the department where this position is located?
- What created this vacancy? How many people have held this position in the last year?

## About the organization

- I have read that (name of organization/unit) is working on an initiative (or project) to \_\_\_\_\_. What has the progress been on that initiative? Would the individual who is hired for this position be contributing to that initiative? If so, how?
- What specifically do you like about working here?
- What do you consider to be (name of organization/unit)'s most important assets or strengths? What do you consider to be key areas that need attention or improvement?
- Where do you see (name of organization/unit) in the next three years?
- What three things are you most proud of with regard to (name of organization/unit)?
- What is (name of organization/unit)'s proudest achievement to date?
- Earlier in the interview, you mentioned that the values of \_\_\_\_\_ are very important to (name of the organization/unit). I'm curious to know how these values are reflected in the (name of the organization/unit)'s everyday activities?

## About the team

- Can you describe the team I would be working with?
- What do you like most about your team?
- What types of people seem to excel within your team?

## Follow up questions

- Can you tell me what the next stage in the hiring process is?
- When do you expect to have the position filled by?