

GUIDE 1

HOW TO INTERVIEW THE INTERVIEWER

Prepared questions you can consider using throughout your next interview, or use to formulate your own interview questions

INTRODUCTION

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A good job interview is not just a chance for a potential employer to find out more about you. It should be a two-way process, where you get to discover more about the company. After all, you must be as enthused about working there as they are about taking you on.

Your opportunity to do this is at the interview!

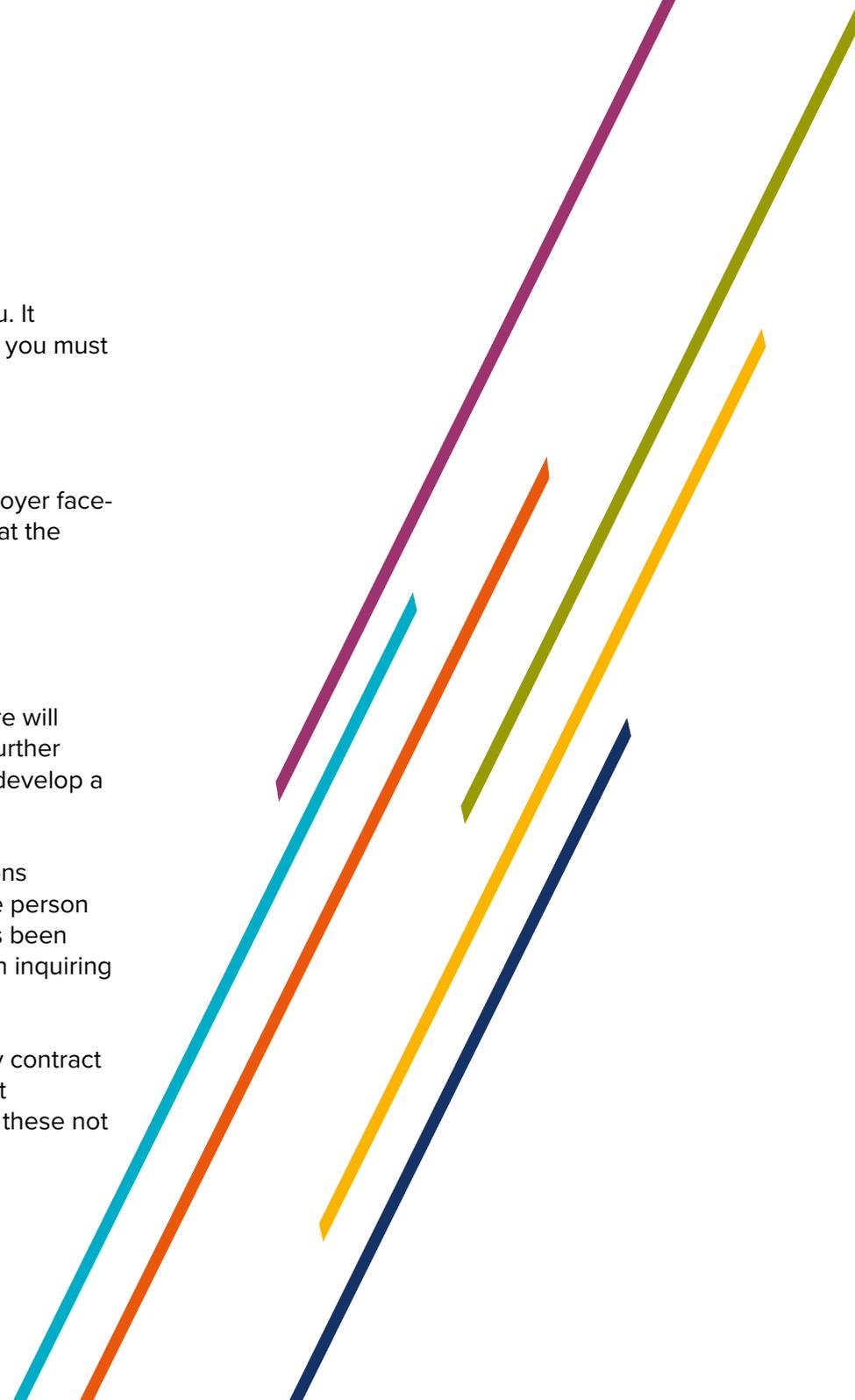
While you should already have done as much research as you can before meeting the employer face-to-face, there are always things you want to hear from the horse's mouth. Asking questions at the interview has two real benefits:

- It gives you the information you need
- It shows you have an interest in the role and company

We're not saying you should ask questions constantly during the interview process. But there will be times when getting in a question is entirely appropriate, often as a follow-up to explore further something the interviewer has said. It's good to have a two-way conversation as it helps to develop a rapport.

And we all know that at the end of just about every interview, whether you've asked questions already or not, the interviewer will say: "Is there anything you'd like to ask me?" Don't be the person who says: "No, I think we've covered everything already, thanks." Even if the interviewer has been forthcoming, always have questions up your sleeve. It shows you are interested and have an inquiring mind; a willingness to learn and an openness for feedback.

If you're successful and get asked back a second time, that's when the nuts and bolts of any contract can be discussed. With all that in mind, don't mess up your opportunity to impress at the first interview. Have 11 questions in your head that you have rehearsed time and again, then use these not only at the end of the interview, but at opportune moments during it, too.



1. HOW HAS THIS ROLE EVOLVED?

A great question to discover how long the role has existed or if it's relatively new. What happened to the previous employees in the role? If they won a promotion, you might like to emulate them. If they somehow failed, ask why and what the company felt could have been done differently, if it's a new role, what was the strategic thinking behind it (all of which gives you valuable information).

2. WHAT IS THE COMPANY CULTURE?

Any good interviewer will be looking to see if you're a good fit for them. So, you're entitled to decide that for yourself. The answer you receive might give you the insight you missed during your research.

3. WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER “GOOD QUALITIES” FOR THIS ROLE?

In some departments, like sales, there are key qualities that every salesperson must have. But in other areas, like construction, it might be difficult to second guess. Getting the answers gives you a perfect chance to reinforce your qualities, presuming they match what the company is looking for, of course!

4. WHAT ARE THE CURRENT BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEPARTMENT/COMPANY?

This question not only shows you're interested in the bigger picture but also in grasping the nettle and working with others to help seize the opportunities. Be sure to ask about “opportunities” and should you identify any “issues” be sure to provide solutions. This will impress your interviewer as it shows you are not adverse to tackling issues and having the ability to provide solutions will be a key advantage to the organisation.

5. HOW DOES THIS ROLE HELP THE DEPARTMENT MEET ITS GOALS?

This is a great question to ask. It shows you recognise the importance of teamwork, of goal setting and of striving to meet (and hopefully beat) goals. It also shows the interviewer you understand that your role and skills will be pivotal to reaching or working towards meeting them.

6. ARE THERE ANY OTHER DAY-TO-DAY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THIS POSITION?

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7. WHAT IS THE CAREER PROGRESSION LIKE WITH THIS COMPANY?

Okay, this question is role dependent. But it's perfectly valid. It shows you have ambition, and discussing the point gives you the chance to talk about how you love to stretch yourself and strive for more. Just be sure not to come over as pushy or over-confident. Like everything else, strike a balance.

8. WHAT KEEPS YOU COMING HERE TO WORK EVERY DAY?

This might be a valid follow-up question to question number two. The interviewer's answer might unearth further insight into what it's like to work at the company. A savvy interviewer will know this is why you have asked and give you a honed answer.

9. WHERE DOES THE COMPANY SEE ITSELF IN 5 YEARS' TIME?

Normally, the interviewer will ask you where you see yourself in a few years; it's a common interview question. But there's no harm in you returning fire. We're not suggesting an interviewer will divulge secret long-term strategies but asking shows you're interested in the future success of the business and might throw up interesting detail you wouldn't otherwise know.

10. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I CAN DO?

Now this question is really going to set you apart. It will show you are keen, but also humble enough to take some potential criticism. Be warned though it might be a bit uncomfortable for those being asked the question, as it will expose the interviewer if they haven't fully thought through who they want to employ. On a positive note it will give you some valuable insights into the company and the type of person they are looking for. It will also give you the opportunity to clarify anything should they raise any concerns.

11. WHAT IS THE NEXT STAGE OF THIS PROCESS?

If the interviewer has already made clear what happens next, tweak this question, the last one you should ask. Perhaps seek assurance about how many people might be asked back for a second interview, and when that may be.

**WHAT QUESTION WILL YOU USE
IN YOUR NEXT INTERVIEW?**



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