

What Should You Ask the Interviewer?

By Bill Radin

A job interview will quickly disintegrate into an interrogation or monologue unless you ask some high quality questions of your own. Candidate questions are the lifeblood of any successful interview, because they create dialogue and help clarify your understanding of the company and the position responsibilities.

In addition the questions you ask serve to indicate your grasp of fundamental issues, reveal your ability to probe beyond the superficial and challenge the employer to reveal his or her own depth of knowledge and commitment to the job.

Your questions should always be slanted in such a way as to show empathy, interest, or understanding of the employer's needs. After all, the reason you're interviewing is because the employer's company has a piece of work that needs to be completed, or has a problem that needs correcting. Here are some questions that have proven to be very effective:

What's the most important issue facing the company (or department)

How can I help you accomplish this objective?

How long has it been since you first identified this need?

How long have you been trying to correct it?

Have you tried using your present staff to get the job done? If so, what was the result?

Is there any particular skill or attitude you feel is critical to getting the job done?

Is there a certain aspect of my background you'd like to exploit to help accomplish your objectives?

Questions like these will not only give you a sense of the company's goals and priorities, they'll indicate to the interviewer your concern for satisfying the company's objectives.

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