

7 QUESTIONS TO ASK IN A JOB INTERVIEW

Don't miss the opportunity to impress potential employers

By Lisa Evans

In any job interview, there's that awkward moment when your prospective employer stops hammering you with questions about your experience and credentials and turns the tables on you.

"Do you have any questions for us?" While many interviewees see this as the sign that the interview is now over, the questions you ask may determine whether you will get hired or your resumé lands in the recycling bin.

Daisy Wright, owner of the Wright Career Solution and author of *No Canadian Experience, Eh?* and the upcoming *Tell Stories, Get Hired: An Innovative Approach to Finding and Keeping a Job*, says job interviews are a two-way street. "Candidates need to realize that they're also interviewing the employer to find out if the place is a good fit for them," says Wright.

Asking thoughtful questions shows the interviewer that you have done your research on the company and have considered how you can contribute to the company's success. "So many employers remark that candidates come [to the interview] and they don't have a clue about what the company does and where it ranks with their competitors," says Wright.

Arriving at your interview with questions shows that you are someone who takes initiative and is making an effort to find out if the job is right for you. Here are the top seven questions that are sure to not only impress your interviewer, but can help you determine if you even want the job.

[1] How would you describe a typical day in this position?

The answer to this question will provide a clear indication of what

will be expected of you and can help you to determine if this is really the position you want. It can also provide insight into the company's corporate culture. The answer will reveal whether employees are expected to work after hours, whether they have a philosophy of teamwork or if employees work on projects independently.

[2] What do you like about working here?

A job is more than just a paycheck. The answer to this question will reveal a great deal about the company's corporate culture. Do co-workers get along with each other? Does the company offer any non-monetary benefits to employees such as flex-time? Working for a company that cares about its employees can be just as important, if not more, than the salary.

[3] What growth potential do you see for this position?

If you're looking for a job that will allow you to take on more responsibility and grow within the company, this question will tell you whether the position you're applying for will ever evolve into anything more than what it already is or whether you will find yourself making out resumé's once you get bored with it.

[4] How would you describe the ideal candidate for this job?

"Many newcomers don't know they need to market themselves. They figure their education and qualifications are enough," says Wright. The answer to this question will not be a list of degrees and technical abilities, but rather soft skills that the employer is looking for in the right candidate. Do you work well with others? Are you patient enough to deal

with irate customers in a polite way? Do you have a take-charge personality?

"A lot of people fail in their job interview not because of their technical abilities, but because of their soft skills," says Wright. She suggests candidates analyze their resumé's not as a list of degrees and work experience, but as a set of stories. What is something that you did at your last job that was really remarkable? Depending on the employer's answer to this question, share your stories that highlight the skills they're looking for.

[5] Why did the position become available?

You may not care how the position opened up, but you should. "If the person was promoted, then you know that this company promotes from within," says Wright. Alternatively, if the individual resigned, you might get a clue from the interviewer why they moved on. "This will tell you whether it has something to do with the position or the boss," says Wright. If the company has a high turnover rate, that might mean that you will be conducting your job search again in six months — not the ideal way to start your Canadian career.

[6] Now that you've met me, are there any challenges you think I would face in this position?

An interview is an opportunity for an employer to get to know you. After listening to your answers to their questions, the employer forms an idea of how you will perform in the available position. Gaining some insight into the perspective employer's perception of you before you leave the room is your opportunity to refute any false pretenses they

may have assumed and clarify concerns or questions they have about your abilities to help them make a more educated decision on whether you're the right candidate for the position.

[7] When will a decision be made?

Knowing when the employer will make a decision means you won't have to live in a state of anxiety for weeks wondering when the phone will ring. If you don't hear back from the employer in the time they specified, don't panic. Call them or send them a follow up email and ask if they have made a decision.

If they have chosen someone else, don't be afraid to ask them for feedback on why you weren't the successful candidate. This information can only help you to improve your interview skills or refine your job search strategy. If a decision hasn't been made yet, take the opportunity to ask if there is any further information you can provide them about yourself to help them in making their decision.

Regardless of whether a decision will be made in two days or two weeks, Wright suggests sending a thank you email or card the day after the interview. "Often times that little act helps people stand out in the employer's mind," she says. 🌟