

Asking Questions in an Interview

Keeping in mind that the interview is a two-way street in which you are sounding out whether you want to work for this employer and vice-versa, you should identify what you want to know from each employer and take a list of questions to ensure you obtain the information you require.

You will need to listen to the information given to you at the beginning of the interview to ascertain whether you can ask questions at any time, or whether you are required to wait until the end of the employers questions. If that information isn't given to you, then look for opportunities to ask questions during the interview to avoid your best questions getting answered by the interviewer and so that you gain more information and can keep the discussion as interactive as possible.

However questions around salary and terms and conditions should be reserved until the job offer has been made.

Ask meaningful questions which will allow you to determine whether this job is right for you. Your People Central consultant will be able to assist you in developing questions for specific interviews, but generic questions that almost anyone considering working for an employer would want to ask include:

- What is your organisation aiming to achieve at the moment?
- What would my part be in helping you achieve this?
- What would you expect of me my first month in the job? Then six months, then the first year
- Why do people like working for you/this organisation?
- What are the opportunities for training and development within your organisation?
- What do you consider to be the main priorities for the person in this role? (Warning! If you receive a detailed job/position description, or if the interviewer sets out this information at the beginning of the interview, don't ask this question!)
- How is performance in this role measured?
- Can you describe for me the management style of the person I would be reporting to?
- How would you describe the culture of the organisation? (Warning: pick the organisation you ask the 'culture question' of. Some businesses will have no idea what you are talking about, whilst public sector bodies and corporate employers with HR functions are more likely to. Check the 'About Us' page on their website to see whether organisational culture is something they recognise and promote before asking about it)