

HOW **2** guide:

Interviewing: Questions to Ask Employers

There are basically two strategic reasons you should be asking questions during the interview process:

1 – *To make sure this position, department, and company are a good fit for you.*

2 – *To gather information to help you better understand the needs of the company, so you can interview more effectively and “sell yourself.”*

Asking questions is also important in order to demonstrate your engagement in the interview process. Candidates that don't ask thoughtful questions come across as uninterested, unmotivated, and even unsophisticated.

Therefore, here are some sample questions based on the two reasons above:

Make sure this position, department, and company are a good fit for you.

- I understand the responsibilities of this position as they are stated in the job posting. But perhaps you could give me an idea of what a typical day may look like?
- What are your expectations of this person within the first 90 days?
- What are the most challenging aspects of this position?
- Please describe your training program or process.
- Where does this position fit in the overall organization of the company?
- Who will the person in this position report to?
- Can you give me a sense as to how the department or company is structured?
- How would you describe the company “culture”?
- Does the company have plans for expansion or growth?

Do not ask about things that you have already been told or things that are obvious. For example, if the job posting lists the responsibilities of the position, don't ask what job duties are. Don't ask basic questions about the company that you could have researched on the company website.

Notice that these questions DO NOT include inquiries about salary! In fact, most questions dealing with your compensation and benefits (even tuition reimbursement) are OFF LIMITS. Those issued will be covered once you have been offered the job. Refer to the “Salary Negotiation” handout from FGCU Career Services.

It is also important that you understand who to pose the questions to. Your first interview may be a “screening” interview with a human resources staff person, who may not know about the particulars of the position you are seeking.

To gather information to help you better understand the needs of the company, so you can interview more effectively and “sell yourself.”

- What are the major challenges facing the company or department?
- What are some of the company's short-term and long-term goals?
- What skills are especially important for someone in this position?

Use the information you gather from these questions to further your candidacy. For example: *“I understand that your company will be expanding into the technology consulting industry. I have a strong computer background and contacts in that field that may help during this expansion period.”*

Your final question:

- What is the next step in your selection process?
- Do you have a timetable for making a decision? (Ask only if not addressed by question above.)