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Key Questions You Need to Ask

A job interview can quickly disintegrate into a one-way dialog unless you ask some high quality relevant questions of your own. Candidate questions are essential for a successful interview, because they create dialogue and help clarify your understanding of the company and its needs with regard to the position for which you are interviewing.

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 approached in such a way as to show interest and understanding of the employer's needs. Your probing questions will also help you to better align your skills and abilities versus the company's needs and challenges. Here are some questions that have proven to be very effective:

- What's the most important issue facing your 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 aptitude you feel is critical to getting the job done?
- Is there a certain aspect of my background you would like to utilize 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.