

RESPONDING TO "DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?"

If you answer, "No, I think you've covered everything", you are making a big mistake. Most interviewers judge your interest, intelligence, and personality style by the questions you ask. Questions give you the opportunity to: 1) Show your interest in the job. 2) Learn more about the company, its products, services and history. 3) Learn further details about the job, the work environment and what the interviewer thinks are the most desirable attributes to fill the position. 4) Learn about the characteristics of the boss and other people in the department. 5) Get to know and become friends with the interviewer and increase your chances of getting a second interview or an offer. Don't cut the interview and yourself short! Ask away!

NOTE: Avoid asking questions about money, benefits, and time off. If you really need to know, it is best to wait until after the second interview to ask if they happen to have a brochure about their policies and benefits. The objective of most questions is to show how you care about doing a good job. Ask not what this company can do for you but what you can do for this company!

Company Questions:

- 1) How long has the company been in business?
- 2) How many employees?
- 3) What products/services are involved?
- 4) How has business been recently?
- 5) Are there other locations or branches?
- 6) What kind of growth has the company experienced over the last two years?
- 7) Have there been lay offs over the past five years? Are more lay offs possible?
- 8) How has Houston's economy effected this business?
- 9) What departments have been effected the most favorably or unfavorably?

Job Content Questions.

- 1) What does the _____ consist of? (typing, accounting, data entry, budget analysis)
- 2) What percent of the day or week is typically needed to take care of the _____? (typing, budget work, data entry, accounting, cold calling, collections, filing, research, analysis work)
- 3) Is the job fast paced, moderate, slow or a combination of these things?
- 4) How much overtime is expected? Is overtime compensated?
- 5) Would _____ be a part of the job? (letter composition, report compilation and analysis, budget work, problem solving, decision making, personal customer contact, liaison representation, cost accounting, research, collections, etc.)
- 6) Could you give me examples of the _____ that is involved. (problem solving, decision making, research, etc)

- 7) What kind of personal work or errands might the boss or others need from this person?
- 8) How would other employees, other than the boss, need to utilize this particular person?
- 9) What have others found to be the most challenging aspect of this job? The most difficult? The most tedious? The most enjoyable? The least interesting? The most time consuming?
- 10) What kind of office equipment, computer software and hardware, is used in this job?
- 11) What kind of on the job training, if any, is involved.

Questions To Determine What The Employer Wants Most

- 1) What things have been appreciated the most about the people that have done this job well in the past?
- 2) What are some pet peeves or trouble spots that others had that you would like to avoid or improve upon with the next person hired?
- 3) What happened to the last two people in this job?
- 4) What top three characteristics are you hoping to find in the person you hire.

Note: As you learn about the key attributes desired, give examples of how you have those wonderful characteristics!
Sell yourself!

Questions To Show An Interest In The Interviewer

- 1) How long have you been with the company?
- 2) Where did you work before?
- 3) Where did you start out at this company.
- 4) What have you liked about working here?
- 5) What kind of changes have you seen since you have been here?

Questions About The Boss And Others

- 1) What are the personality traits of the people I will be working with?
- 2) Are there any difficulties I should be aware of?
- 3) How patient or impatient have you found the boss and staff to be with breaking in new employees.
- 4) Does the boss need a "mind reader" or does he tend to give detailed instructions.
- 5) What personality and work styles have worked best with the boss and department staff?
- 6) Is the boss noted for being _____? (easy going, a perfectionist, high energy, laid back, disorganized, friendly, aloof, moody, fast paced, methodical, organized, a delegator, fearful of delegating, direct and out spoken, quiet, intimidating, shy, etc.) In what ways?

Questions About Work Environment

- 1) Would it be possible to take a tour of the company and see the area I would be assigned to? If not...
- 2) How is the new person's work station set up? Is the work area a bull pen, cubical, private office, or a shared area with one or more other people?
- 3) Is it a smoking or non-smoking office?
- 4) Is it a fast paced, moderate, or slow environment?
- 5) Does everyone get along or are there some trouble spots?

Questions About The Future Growth Of The Job

- 1) What have top performers in this job experienced in added responsibilities and growth opportunities? (It is wise to avoid asking "Where could I be promoted?" It can be interpreted as too pushy.)
- 2) How are performance evaluations or reviews made for this position?
- 3) When are evaluations made?
- 4) If performance is good, are merit increases included with these reviews?

Questions About Your Chances For The Job

- 1) How many candidates do you plan to interview for this position?
- 2) How many have you already seen?
- 3) Is anyone being seriously considered?
- 4) When do you hope to make a decision or bring applicants back for a second interview?
- 5) Do you anticipate that I will be in the running for this position?

In closing: Clearly express a desire for the position and recap what you can contribute to the company.