

Welcome to *The Workforce Link Podcast*, where we're offering forward-thinking conversations for the workforce, linking employers and job seekers to a brighter tomorrow. I'm your host Sundi Jo Graham with the Central Workforce Development region and I'm happy to be back with you for another episode.

"Do you have any questions for me?" This is a pretty common question you usually hear at the end of a job interview. Never, I repeat, never, answer that question with a "no". There's always at least one question for you to ask, but I can almost guarantee there is more than one. "Well, Sundi Jo, what are they?" you ask. Great question. That's what we're going to dive into in today's episode. We're actually going to talk about 8 questions that every job seeker should ask in a job interview.

So, without further ado, let's dive straight in.

We're frequently taught when it comes to interviewing, how to answer questions, but we don't talk enough, in my opinion, about how to practice asking questions. I've talked to various hiring managers in different industries and many of them tell me that you'd be surprised by the number of interviewees who don't ask questions.

We're about to get you ahead of the game in the job search process. Let's talk about 8 questions to ask in your job interview that is going to make the employer want to hire you!

1) HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING HERE?

Don't be afraid to make things personal in the interview. This is the perfect question to lead things in that direction, and it opens an avenue for even more follow-up questions like, "What is your favorite thing about working here?"

And this also gives you some insight into whether or not the employer enjoys their job. If they answer with something like, "Well, I've been here for 10 long years," you're going to be able to tell really quickly whether they actually like their job or not. If they don't, maybe you just opened the door to ask even more questions about why in the world you should go to work there if they don't even like their job. Just a thought.

2) HOW IS THE WORK ENVIRONMENT?

Ask about how the team operates. Do the team members get along? Is there more of a collaborative effort or do people work independently?

And this opens the door for you to be able to let the employer know what environment you work best in. Maybe you're going to fit right in if they're looking for someone who is super independent and vice versa.

3) HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS FOR MY POSITION?

First of all, notice how I said, "for my position" vs. "for the position"? This allows you to step into authority before you even start the job. You're taking action.

Some employers will be prepared for this answer and know exactly what they're looking for. For some, this just might open the door to help them have a clearer mission for the job. Either way, it's a win because it's helping you understand the boundaries, and it's helping the employer set them.

This also opens the door for other questions, like "what qualities do you look for in this position?" "What metrics do you use to measure success?"

4) WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE THAT COMES WITH THIS POSITION?

Again, this shows leadership. You want to know what you're coming into and show the employer that you're not afraid to ask the hard things or do the hard things.

All jobs face challenges, even the ones we love.

And that opens the door for you to ask how the previous team member dealt with that challenge or didn't deal with it. This shows the employer you're invested in learning from the mistakes of others so that you can try your best to avoid them.

Are you looking for career training without even having to leave the house? Good news for you, my friend. We've recently launched *The Career Club*, a virtual work experience for job seekers ages 14-24.

Here's how it works:

We assist you with job-seeking skills, personal management skills, how to meet employer expectations, money management principles, good work habits, and more.

After training is complete, you'll receive job placement, allowing you to implement your newly developed skills.

And here's the cool part... **You get paid while you learn.** That's right. You'll receive \$13/hr while participating in the virtual training, with a possible transition to a higher wage upon job placement.

This, my friend, is an exciting opportunity to earn while you learn. To sign up or learn more, visit cwdregion.com/careerclub.

5) ARE THERE ANY ADDITIONAL ROLES I'LL TAKE ON THAT WE HAVEN'T TALKED ABOUT?

This is important, perhaps even more so today in the workforce, because of the lack of workforce. Many of us are taking on dual roles, which is absolutely okay if you know what you're getting into.

I'm part of a small team and many of us take on extra responsibilities to help the other out, but we're never surprised by it. Our Executive Director and leader shared with the whole team ahead of time that this might be something we have to do. None of us mind it, because we want the organization to be the healthiest it can be, and we serve under a great leader who helps us to succeed. That makes all the difference.

Don't be afraid to ask what possible additional responsibilities you might have to take on. Let the employer know that you're not afraid to take on extra responsibilities, but you'd like to know what you're getting into. And if you know it ahead of time, depending on your personality and what season of life you're in, taking on extra duties might just be something you're not ready for. That's not a bad thing. You know what you can do and what you can't.

6) WHAT ARE THE COMPANY'S VALUES?

The culture is important, whether you're preparing to invest in the company long-term or not. A toxic work environment is not worth it. It's just not.

If the company doesn't know its values, perhaps this will cause the employer to do some digging and decide they need some. I'm not saying don't go to work there if they don't have them, but be careful, and don't be afraid to have a conversation about it.

And also don't be afraid to ask, "what steps are in place to ensure these values are upheld?" Again, how the employer answers matters.

Two examples of company values that I admire are at [Full Focus](#), located in Nashville, TN. You've heard me talk about them before, as I've referenced the Full Focus planner that I use. They have specific values and they expect everyone on our team to adhere to those values: unyielding integrity, prioritizing people, enthusiastic contribution, racial diversity, total ownership, intentional margin, relentless wow, and continuous growth.

That's probably why they were named one of INC's Best Workplaces for 5 years in a row, from 2017-2021, and appeared on the INC 5000 list of fastest-growing private companies in three of the last four years.

Another company that represents this well is [Joyce Meyer Ministries in St. Louis](#). Their values are simple, yet powerful: excellence, faith, love, unity, and integrity. They've been selected 'Best Places to Work by the *St. Louis Business Journal* multiple times.

Notice both organizations, though in different fields of work, make an effort to walk in excellence and integrity.

Company values matter, so don't be afraid to have a conversation about them.

And I want to throw this in real quick before we move on to step 7. We did a previous episode, episode 26, on the [5 Red Flags to Avoid In a Job Interview](#). We talk about what not to wear, how to communicate clearly, and more. It pairs nicely with today's episode, so if you haven't listened yet, I'll share the link in the show notes for you.

7) WHAT DO YOU DO FOR LUNCH?

This might seem like a silly question, but it brings it back to a personal level and it shows your enthusiasm for wanting to join the company.

Don't be afraid to ask, "Do people have lunch together?" "Do we each do our own thing?" "Is there a favorite place you recommend trying out?" Again, this keeps everything from being too serious and who doesn't like to talk about food?

8) WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS IN THE HIRING PROCESS?

Never leave an interview without clear next steps. You've got the employer thinking about food and now you get to put the cherry on top, pardon the pun, and close the interview. It's time for action and you've shown the employer you're ready to keep moving forward unless of course, the last 7 answers to your questions have made you want to run away.

Seriously though, get clarity. Should you expect a call in the next day or two? Is there anything else you need to provide on your end? And never be afraid to just come out and say, “When do I start?” Again, this shows initiative and it’s not going to leave you wondering what happens next.

RECAP

Let’s do a quick recap of what we’ve gone over today on the 8 questions every job seeker should ask in a job interview:

1. How long have you been working here?
2. How is the work environment?
3. How do you measure success in this position?
4. What do you think is the biggest challenge that comes with this position?
5. Are there any additional roles I will take on we haven’t discussed?
6. What are the company’s values?
7. What do you do for lunch?
8. What are the next steps?

These questions are game changers for you in the job interview. Be confident and ask questions. You won’t regret it. Good luck with your job search. You’ve got this!

REVIEW REMINDER

If you’ve enjoyed today’s episode, would you mind sharing it with someone else you think could benefit? Maybe a friend who’s preparing for their next interview. And if you haven’t already, would you mind heading over and leaving a review on iTunes for *The Workforce Link*? Let us know what you enjoy about the show. It means a lot to us, and it helps us stay visible so that others can easily find us.

CLOSING

Have a great week, my friend, and we’ll meet again in the next episode. Until then. Remember this... There’s always a brighter tomorrow if you’re willing to find it.
