



It's common advice among job-seekers: When you're interviewing, you need to interview the employer right back. After all, you're the one who is potentially going to fill this position, so you need to know if it's going to be a good fit, right? Except that while salary, benefits and schedule are important details, hiring managers don't appreciate questions like these until at least your second interview (or maybe even after an offer).

During your first interview, the "impress me" dance is still in full swing. When a potential employer asks if you have any questions, they don't want inquiries about benefits or parking; they want to see if you're prepared, educated and inquisitive. Here are six questions to ask at the end of your interview that will help you master the twisted tango of getting hired:

1. If I were to start tomorrow, what would be top priority on my to-do list?

The answer to this question will give you more insight into the current state of the position, while the question shows that you're invested and interested in learning how you can start things off with a bang. The added bonus lies in the Jedi mind trick: Now you've already got your interviewer picturing you in the position.

2. What are the top two personality traits someone needs to do this job?

The answer to this will be very telling: "Creative" and "intuitive" can be translated to mean you will be on your own, while "patient" and "collaborative" could mean the opposite. Not only will this question allow you to feel out whether you're going to be a good fit, it will also get your interviewer to look past the paper resume and see you as an individual.

3. What improvements do you hope someone will bring to this position?

This answer can shed light on what might have made the last person lose (or leave) the job, and it also tips you off on the path to success.

4. I know this company prides itself on X and Y, so what is the most important aspect of your culture?

This type of question shows you've done your research and gives you a chance to gain insight into what values are held to the highest ideal.

5. Do you like working here?

A good sign is a confident smile and an enthusiastic "yes," paired with an explanation as to why. If they shift in their seat, look away, cough and start with "Well...," consider it a red flag. Regardless of their answer, employers appreciate getting a chance to reflect on their own opinions, and this turns the interview process into more of a conversation.

6. Is there anything that stands out to you that makes you think I might not be the right fit for this job?

Asking this question can be scary, but it can also be beneficial. Not only does it give you a chance to redeem any hesitations the employer might have, it also demonstrates that you can take constructive criticism and are eager to improve—valuable qualities in any candidate.