

Good Questions To Ask At An Interview

Tough questioning about the company's future plans is legitimate, if done elegantly, but too much interest in the sick-pay scheme may set alarm bells ringing. Likewise, listen carefully to the answers, and, once out of the room, mark them out of 10.

Candidate Questions: Seven of the best

1. What are the reasons that you work for this company?

It normally raises a smile or a laugh from those conducting the interview. Not only will it show that you are enthusiastic about working for the company, but it will give you a good picture of life in the salon as they (the interviewers) are the best people to explain what is best about working there. You'll also get a useful insight into the motivations and personality of your interviewer. Thirdly, the question moves the interview onto a more personal, even-handed discussion.

2. What does success look like to you commercially and culturally?

The question should yield an overview of what the company's goals and aspirations are. You can then try and relate these to your personal ambitions and aspirations. Does it offer opportunities for the future, or will you be stuck in a role that goes nowhere? Are all employees encouraged to be part of success role and will you be rewarded for contribution?

3. How will my performance be measured?

Any organisation worth its salt will have systems and metrics in place to encourage progress and to reward success: credit should not be dished out on a wing and a prayer. You need to get a good measure of how you will need to perform in order to succeed in this particular organisation. If there is no formal and regular scheme for plotting personal development, think twice.

4. What do you like to see in a person who works for you?

Gives advance notice of whether you have what it takes to work well with this person and whether you would enjoy it. You should have worked out quite quickly whether there's the right chemistry, but this will provide a more objective confirmation. Definitely worth asking of your line manager at a second interview!

5. Do you have any reservations about my ability to perform this job to a high standard?

This is a brave question but also a golden opportunity to overcome objections. So many candidates leave the interview room without knowing what their interviewer thinks about them. So, ask the question and then, depending on any concern raised, offer: "I would like to put that concern to rest by assuring you of my commitment/ previous experience gained in this field/positive feedback I have received in this area.

6. What opportunities are there for me to progress my career?

If you want to work on shoots or be a member of an art team then this is the time to find out if those opportunities are likely to be available and if they are likely to fit into your career plans. If there is no art team or no opportunities to join it, this might not be the right place for you.

7. What training programmes do you have?

While training is at the heart of many salons' ethos, others do not offer additional learning and you may need to pay for any training courses or trends presentations from your own pocket. Many hairdressers are perfectly happy to do this, but it is important to be clear if this will be the case in advance, especially if you are someone who objects to doing so.