

Job Interview Questions YOU Can Ask

Before each interview, identify 5-10 important questions you want to ask the person you'll be interviewing with. Select the appropriate questions for the audience you are speaking with: HR/Talent Acquisition, Future Manager, Peers, Leadership.

Role Mandate, Scope, and Impact

- How would you describe the core mandate of this role over the next 12–18 months? What problems is it expected to solve?
- What prompted the need for this role at this point in time? What has changed in the business?
- Where does this role sit in the organizational structure, and how does it interface with the executive team?
- Who are the most critical stakeholders for this role, and where are alignment and influence essential?
- What are the primary internal and external constituencies this role serves?
- What decisions does this role own outright versus influence collaboratively?

Success Profile and Performance Expectations

- What outcomes have distinguished leaders who've been successful in this role?
- What do you see as the most complex or unresolved challenges this role needs to address right now?
- When you think about the ideal leader for this role, what capabilities or experiences matter most at this stage of the organization's growth?
- Which elements of this role require the greatest judgment or tradeoff decisions?
- How is performance assessed at the leadership level? What indicators matter most beyond metrics?

Leadership Style and Manager Partnership

- How do you typically partner with leaders in this role?
- Where do you expect autonomy versus close collaboration?
- How do you decide what you personally own versus what you delegate to your leadership team?
- How do senior leaders stay connected to what's happening across the organization?
- If I asked your peers to describe your leadership strengths, what themes would likely emerge?

Decision-Making and Operating Norms

- How are decisions typically made at the enterprise level?
- Which types of decisions are centralized, and where is authority intentionally pushed down?
- When critical work needs to get done, how does it actually happen here?
- Where do leaders tend to experience friction or delays?
- How do leaders challenge decisions or offer dissenting perspectives?

Team, Talent, and Capability Gaps

- What capabilities or perspectives are currently missing on the team that this role is expected to bring?
- What differentiates leaders who are successful and trusted here from those who struggle?
- Can you share examples of leaders on your team who've grown or been promoted recently?
- What specifically enabled their progression?
- What leadership behaviors are most rewarded here?

Culture, Values, and Inclusion

- How would you describe the prevailing leadership philosophy here?
- How has it evolved as the organization has grown or faced change?
- How do senior leaders model sustainable performance and healthy boundaries?
- How do you intentionally reinforce culture within your team?
- How does the organization ensure diverse perspectives are reflected in decision-making, not just representation?

Recognition, Development, and Growth

- How do you approach recognition beyond formal programs?
- Can you share a recent example that reflects what you value in leaders?
- What investments do you make in leadership development and capability building?
- How do leaders typically progress from this role?
- What career paths have others taken after serving in this position?

First 90 Days and Transition

- What outcomes would you expect in the first 90 days to feel confident this was the right hire?
- If I were stepping into the role today, what would you want me to understand deeply before making changes?
- What early missteps have you seen new leaders make in this role or organization?
- What would success look like by the end of the first year?

Organizational Context and History

- What happened with the previous person in this role, and what did the organization learn from that experience?
- How has this role evolved over time, and what prompted those changes?
- What work or decisions are not happening as effectively as you'd like today?

Closing the Interview

- What additional context would be most helpful for you to determine whether this is the right mutual fit?
- Are there any concerns or gaps you'd like me to address as you consider my candidacy?
- What will determine success in this role one year from now?

Final Questions You MUST Ask

At the end of the interview you should always ask these two questions so you understand their hiring process and you know when to follow-up.

- **What is the next step in this process?**
- **What is your timeline for getting back to candidates about the next steps?**