

**GREAT
INTERVIEWS ->
*Great Hires:***

**50+ Questions to
Identify A-Level
Candidates**



Great hires start with great interview questions –

and this guide is packed with dozens of the best. Whether you're hiring an entry-level worker or a remote manager, these questions will help you identify people with the right skills, work ethic, and culture fit to thrive in your company.

In this eBook, we share essential questions to help you:

- Gain insight into how a candidate thinks and approaches work.
- Assess cultural fit.
- Delve beneath a candidate's façade.
- Hire for D&I success.

Ready to learn how to customize interview questions to identify top performers who will add value to your team?

Let's get started!

Need to find *targeted questions* quickly?

Go straight to interview questions on these topics:

- » [Why Is Asking the Right Questions So Important To Making Great Hires?](#)
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Why Is Asking the *Right Questions* So Important To Making Great Hires?

Failing to prepare appropriate questions can lead to interviewing problems, including:

- **Biases.** Snap judgments can interfere with the quality and accuracy of applicant assessments.
- **Inconsistencies.** Lack of structure and process across candidate interviews can make it difficult to determine who is most qualified for a role.
- **Inefficiencies.** Inexperienced interviewers may ask improper questions, allow the interview to go off-topic, or use poor evaluation techniques.

Preparation is key to interviewing success.

Planning thoughtful interview questions ensures that hiring decisions are based on relevant data and will dramatically increase your chances of hiring a top performer. Use these tips to prepare effective interview questions that will improve the quality of your hires:

- **Define the job.** Develop a thorough job description listing all duties and responsibilities.
- **Analyze the position.** Assess what skills and experience the candidate will need to succeed in the role.
- **Develop questions.** Use the job description and role analysis to create a list of standard interview questions and ideal responses to each question.

Hardworking Questions To Ask *Every Candidate*

These basic interview questions can help you understand how a candidate will perform on the job—and as a member of your team.

1. How familiar are you with the company, and why do you want to work here?

Asking this interview question will quickly help you gauge a candidate's level of interest. With the amount of information available on the internet, all candidates should have basic knowledge of the company and why they want to work there. Lack of insight and enthusiasm should raise an immediate red flag.

2. Why are you leaving your current position?

Does your job opportunity offer the candidate a better fit? If so, asking this question provides an opportunity to share information about those benefits. If not, it creates an opportunity to set realistic expectations for the job.

3. What work skills and experience do you bring to the position?

This interview question will help you assess critical thinking skills. Look for answers that show self-awareness of hard and soft skills and how they can benefit the team.

4. Do you work best alone or in a team?

Will the candidate be working on-site or remotely? This question will help determine if their work preference suits the opportunity.

Hardworking Questions To Ask *Every Candidate*

5. Did you ever face a significant challenge in your previous job? How did you overcome it?

This interview question will give you a sense of how the candidate approaches a problem and what critical thinking and analytical skills they use to solve it.

6. Can you tell me about a time when you had a disagreement at work? How did you resolve the situation?

Look for answers that show professionalism and the ability to manage conflict constructively without blaming others.

7. Where do you see yourself in three years?

Revealing the candidate's career goals allows you to share how your company can help achieve them. Candidates who can see themselves advancing within the organization are more likely to be happy with their jobs.

8. Do you have any questions for me?

The interview process is a two-way street. Interested candidates may have some insightful questions for you. Be sure to leave time to answer them.



Taking the First Step: Questions For Entry-level Candidates

If you're hiring for an entry-level job, ask questions that can help you determine whether the candidate has the interest, motivation, and passion for learning the skills for the role. Consider these options:

1. Why do you want this job?

A clear, concise answer to this question shows that the candidate is interested and ready to invest time in the opportunity.

2. Do you have any experience that has prepared you for this role?

A ready answer to this question will show the candidate has given some thought to the duties and responsibilities of the role. Even if the candidate doesn't have any direct experience, they likely have soft skills or life experience that might contribute to their success.

3. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Look for answers that speak to the responsibilities of the role and will complement the team already in place.

4. How do you handle deadline pressure?

Performing under pressure is a learned skill. Look for responses that indicate the candidate has learned from experience and developed skills for meeting deadlines.

5. Have you ever worked on a team? What was your role?

Collaboration is an essential skill for most jobs. Listen for answers that show the candidate knew their role, performed it well, and respected the work of other team members.

Climbing the Career Ladder: Questions To Ask Managerial Candidates

A great manager knows how to balance their job duties while also managing a team of employees. Asking the right questions can help you find the best candidate to lead your organization.

Try questions like these:

1. How would you best describe your management style?

Pay attention to the words the candidate uses. For example: hands-off or hands-on? Does the candidate give self-focused examples or team-focused examples? How will their management style mesh with the team and the organization?

2. Has your management style changed with experience?

Management style often evolves as a manager gains experience with leading teams. Take note of answers that show awareness and a willingness to grow and adapt to the needs of a team.

3. When was the last time you had to address underperformance with an employee? How did you handle the situation? What was the result?

Learning how a manager deals with uncomfortable situations can tell you a lot about them. Ideal responses to this question will show the candidate has experience handling performance issues and knows the appropriate way to approach confrontation. A good result will show that their treatment of the situation was effective.

4. What strategies do you use to motivate your employees to do their best work?

A great manager knows how to inspire the team to give their best every day. Since teams are made up of individuals, that can be a big task. Look for answers that show creativity, problem-solving skills, and empathy.

Hiring for Engagement: Cultural Questions for Candidates

Every organization has a culture created by its mission and values and reflected in the behaviors, attitudes, and interactions of its employees. In a healthy company culture, employees feel free to be themselves and believe their work positively impacts the company.

Hiring candidates who add to your company culture helps your organization thrive.

Cultural questions can help you understand a candidate's beliefs and values and determine how they will contribute to your company. It's important to remember that you are asking these questions to uncover unique characteristics that will "add" to your company culture, not "fit" a developed mold. There are no right or wrong answers to these types of questions.

Here are some examples of cultural interview questions:

- How would you describe the company culture at your last job?
- Were you comfortable in that job? Why or why not?
- How would you describe the ideal corporate culture?
- What makes you best feel supported as an employee?
- Can you describe your best day at work?
- What would you do with your free time if you won the lottery and never had to work again?
- What is one skill you wish you could learn?
- What is your least favorite job to do at work?



Virtual Questions for Remote Employees

Is your organization continuing with a remote or hybrid work model? Then it's likely you need to develop some interview questions to help determine whether candidates have the necessary soft skills to perform their roles from remote locations. Here's what you need to know:

1. Have you ever worked remotely?

The reality of working from home can be much different than many workers expect, so it's essential to understand the candidate's level of experience.

2. If you have worked remotely, what challenges did you face? Did you need to adapt your work style?

Loneliness, isolation, distraction, difficulty obtaining needed information quickly, and other challenges plague remote workers. Look for answers that show the candidate puts proactive solutions in place.

3. Do you have a dedicated workspace?

Whether it's a kitchen table or a dedicated home office, you need to know whether the candidate has a distraction-free space where they can be productive.

Virtual Questions for Remote Employees

4. When working at home, how do you schedule your day?

Although a remote work schedule is generally more flexible than on-site work, time management is vital. Find out whether the candidate can balance independence with productivity.

5. What communication tools did you use to stay in touch with the team in your last remote position?

Remote teams use a variety of platforms to stay connected. Use this question to assess the candidate's communications skills and familiarity with your organization's tools.

6. Have you ever had a conflict with a remote colleague? How did you resolve it?

Communication can be tricky when you aren't talking in real time. Use this question to learn how the candidate addresses and resolves communication problems.

7. How do you separate work and life when you work from home?

Employees with a good work-life balance are happier, healthier, and more productive. Look for answers that show a candidate knows how to "leave" work at the end of the day.

Hire for Success With DE&I Questions

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are top-of-mind with today's candidates. Communicate your company's DE&I values and set clear expectations with questions like these questions:

1. How do you feel diversity and inclusion support the goals of this company?

Listen for answers that show a specific understanding of business goals and company values and how a diverse and inclusive atmosphere creates happier employees and a healthier business.

2. Have you ever adapted your work style to work effectively with someone from another culture?

Take note of answers that show respect, empathy, and a team-first attitude.

3. What makes you feel included in the workplace?

This question makes inclusivity personal and raises awareness of how to include others.

4. Have you ever had any DE&I training?

An open mind and an interest in learning will help foster a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Drill Deeper: Interview Questions That Go Beyond the Surface

The internet can provide ideal answers to commonly asked interview questions in seconds, and a savvy job seeker knows how to do research. So how can you be sure a candidate's answers reflect their beliefs and experiences—and not what they think you want to hear?

Here are a few questions to help you dig deeper into a candidate's personality and skills—and get the information you need for a solid hire:

1. What work tasks do you NOT like to do?

You may have to ask follow-up questions to get a frank response, but most candidates will admit to aspects of their previous job they did not enjoy. Compare answers to the duties and responsibilities of the prospective role to ensure a good fit.

2. What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

This question will tell you where a candidate's true interests lie. Pay special attention to activities that have work-related elements, indicating they have passion for their job.

3. What is the best way to manage you?

This query helps you gauge whether the candidate understands what they need to succeed in the role. A question like this can also give insight into how a candidate's communication style, leadership needs, and feedback requirements will fit your existing team.

Questions to *Ace* the 2nd Interview

You've narrowed the candidate pool, and you have some great choices. Now what? Here are a few 2nd interview questions to help you make the best choice for your team:

1. Do you want to discuss anything from our first interview further?

This is an excellent icebreaker question to reopen the dialogue. Allowing candidates to refine or change an answer that may have been bothering them from the first interview will put them at ease and help them focus on your new questions.

2. Why are you the best candidate for the job?

Look for candidates who can answer this question confidently and thoughtfully, addressing key experiences and skills that will allow them to succeed in the role and add value to the organization.

3. How does this position fit into your career goals?

Turnover is expensive. Use this question to establish whether the candidate sees themselves growing with the company long term.

4. What do you find most exciting about working for this company?

Genuine interest and excitement in the business often indicate a positive attitude that will help them succeed and inspire others on the team, leading to a more productive workplace.

5. What kind of an impact did you make in your last role?

Gain insight into whether the candidate is process, people, or results-oriented by listening to how they describe their impact in their previous role.

6. Is there anything you would like to add that we haven't discussed?

This open-ended question gives the candidate a final opportunity to differentiate themselves from the competition and highlight relevant skills that weren't addressed in other questions.

Don't Go There: Illegal Interview Questions (And Legal Alternatives)

Some interview inquiries are prohibited by law to protect candidates from discrimination based on:

- Race
- Gender
- Family status
- Religion
- Age
- Ability
- Other demographic information

Desired information: Is the candidate authorized for work and legally able to work for the company?

Illegal: Are you a U.S. citizen?

Legal: Are you authorized to work in the U.S.?

Desired information: Will the candidate's religious practices limit work availability?

Illegal: What is your religion?

Legal: Are you able to work during our required schedule?

Desired information: Does the candidate plan to stay with the company long term?

Illegal: When do you plan to retire?

Also illegal: If you get pregnant, do you plan to return to work after maternity leave?

Legal: Do you have long-term career goals? What are they?

Desired information: Will family obligations influence schedule flexibility?

Illegal: Do you have kids? How many?

Legal: Are you able to work overtime during busy seasons?

Interview With Ease: How a Recruiting Partner Can Help

The right staffing partner will understand your business needs and know how to:

- Ask questions to determine a candidate's skills, experience, and cultural add
- Prompt discussion to reveal a candidate's values, work ethic, and career goals
- Perform key assessments and background checks
- Deliver top-performing candidates who will add value to your team

In today's competitive candidate market, it's never too soon to discuss your upcoming hiring needs. Contact your staffing or recruiting partner today and start a conversation.

