

Why Do You Want to Work Here?

by Jennifer Potter

So, during an interview have you, as the interviewer, asked “Why do you want to work here?” Did you ever wonder if THEY ask themselves that? Or whether they have really given the answer some thought before the interview? Maybe they never thought about it and just want the job for the paycheck; a way to pay off that college loan and gain a little experience along the way. But hopefully, they have done some research, and they do want to work there, and they have a good answer as to why.

So, how **does** a person know if a prospective employer is the ‘right’ employer? What do they have to know in order to choose the right opportunity? What questions are they going to be asking?

Let’s assume the candidate has figured out goals for their career, selected a few companies to take them there, applied to those companies and gotten the interview. Now what? There is a process every candidate should go through. After all, it’s one of life’s most important decisions! On the average, a person spends 40 - 50 hours a week at their job. That alone is a great reason to enjoy the ride while getting to where one wants to be!

We’ve talked about company culture before, ([Not so Obvious Interview Questions](#)) but again, it’s my first suggestion. Finding the right culture is paramount to a successful stay. There is no right or wrong culture, it’s simply a matter of where one fits the best. So, how does the candidate find out about the culture? By digging, that’s how! Head straight to the internet!

On your company’s website - usually a general overview is offered on the home page. But the real info is on the “About Us’ tab, and beyond. The candidate will be looking all through these pages and will be trying to assess if certain areas align with their way of thinking. The company mission - pretty important to know whether they are excited about it or even agree with it. If not, they probably won’t be happy very long. They should look at the leadership page - it can tell them a lot about your company. Do the leaders have a lot in common, or is it a diversified group? If they are all engineers, things may be a little focused on the technical side. Has a leader always done this, or has s/he come from different businesses? That may tell them that you encourage creativity and entrepreneurship. Is there a website blog? Any previous newsletters? These can explain where the company is focused. Is there a page that showcases the company’s baseball team and various outings? This would show that team spirit is valued. On the testimonial page - what are others saying about your personnel’s effort and work ethic? These all tell a lot about the culture. Have you ever assessed what these pages are telling the candidate?

Next, they should have checked out social media: LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. What are your pages like, and what will the candidate be thinking as s/he reads through them? Are they vibrant, exciting and full of interesting tidbits? A surefire way to spark some interest if they are! They may check out Glassdoor to look at salaries and any comments. Hopefully they’ll leave

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some room for differences of opinion. Have you ever done the following - it's a little known way of gathering some

info that may be out there - google the words <love company name> or <hate company name> (Keep in mind that it may be one or extreme or the other, but it would offer a tidbit of information.)

It's a very good idea to know all the information that is out there about your company so you can address any questions that may arise.

Another way they may gage your company is to look at the company's position within the industry. If your company is publicly traded, lots of analysts are only too willing to share their opinions about it for free! Some of the questions the candidate may ask themselves as they investigate more in depth are: What are the biggest issues facing the industry? Is it at a particular high or low? Who are the company's competitors? Are there any technologies coming out that may affect the company? Will the company be able to respond?

Now *during* the interview...

Have you as, the interviewer, ever considered the questions you ask? I mean, *really* thought about why you ask them? The candidate would do well to actually listen to those questions. Yes, of course, to answer them. But also because the type of questions will give the candidate some information. For instance, If most of the questions are focused on the technical side - well, one will know that technical know-how is most important. If the questions are behavioral, then the interviewer is probably looking for the right fit into their team environment. If they are on the more personal side "Have you ever wanted to start your own business?", then maybe the company is looking for a creative, leader type.

At the end of the interview, the candidate has a chance to ask some of their own questions. Now is the time when the candidate should not only ask for clarification on something the interviewer said, but also to delve into the company some more. Not to find out *about* the company, (because, of course, the candidate already did their research!) but to find out what the company is expecting from them. Some questions that may be asked: (and what the candidate is trying to find out)...

Does this company support career development? (Is this is a career stepping stone, or a place to land for a long while.)

Does it provide ongoing education? (Am I going to be able to learn and be challenged or just cruise?)

How does this company keep up with emerging technology? (Am I going to be given the chance to stay up to date?)

How important a role is teamwork? (no right or wrong, just a choice.)

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What will you expect me to accomplish in my first 60 days? (Is there a lot of training or am I going to be given the project and set adrift?)

And if you are ever asked “What’s it like to work here?” or “What does a typical day look like?”, the candidate isn’t being personal or trying to get you to spill your list of annoyances - s/he just wants an inside take on what their new company will be like and if it will align with how they best work so they can make an informed decision on whether this is a right fit for them!