

Questions To Ask In A COVID-19 Job Interview

Many companies and industries have changed due to the pandemic. It's your duty to ask insightful questions to ensure you make the best-informed decision for you. At the very least, it's your responsibility to make sure you know what you're walking into if you do accept the job.

Here are 5 new questions you should consider asking in a job interview, whether you land an interview during or post the pandemic.

1. What are the company's biggest challenges right now and in what ways will this role help alleviate those challenges?

Any company that has decided to open a new position during this pandemic has determined that the particular role is essential to the growth or continuation of the company. As a job candidate, it's vital you understand the challenges the company may be experiencing as a result of the pandemic and how the company desires for your role to solve those challenges.

Asking this question allows you to go beyond the job description and gives you an idea of what you should expect if you were to land the position. It shows the interviewer that you're a problem solver and that you're not just thinking about yourself, but that you're also thinking about how you can contribute to the company's goals. Plus, as you move forward in the hiring process, their answer to this question will give you more ways to show the hiring manager that you can be impactful to the team right away.

2. In light of social distancing and remote work, what tools or practices have you all implemented to continue communication and collaboration, and to support employees?

While some companies embraced remote work and flexible hours years ago, many other companies have been forced to embrace remote work because of the pandemic and have experienced many changes because of it. Now more than ever, it's important to know what type of company culture you're walking into – or logging into from home before you accept the job. Especially if you are applying for a manager role, this question will help you get a good understanding of how the company is working together. This will help you be sure you're joining a place that will allow you to connect and support your direct reports and senior leadership in a way that is productive and effective for everyone.

3. I noticed that you all are big on collaboration and failing fast [or other aspects of the company's culture]and I could imagine that being adaptable and flexible are a few traits that are even more essential right now. What other qualities have become even more vital in a new hire since this pandemic?

One of the hardest things for recruiters and hiring managers to determine while interviewing virtually is if a job candidate will mesh well with the team. Role fit and culture fit are the top two things companies look for when hiring. Eliminating face-to-face communication makes it a bit harder to determine the latter. But luckily, it's still your duty to do everything you can to show the interviewer that your values, work style, and personality align well with the company and team. Asking this question is a great way to show them that. It will also give you a chance to see if the team has qualities that will allow you to thrive on the team and at the company.

4. I'm interested in joining a company where I'll be able to contribute and add value right away. Could you share more about the onboarding process, in light of COVID-19? What changes have been made to ensure that the new hire is still successful once they join the team?

Everyone knows that the first 90 days at any company are crucial to success. As a job candidate and potential new hire, you need to know how the company intends to onboard you while working remotely and practicing social distance. What new methods have they implemented to ensure you get started on the right path? How do they plan to connect you with other employees once you're hired? What tools or pieces of training do they plan to give you access to once you join the team to make sure you're well informed and well equipped? How long do they intend for you to work remotely before transitioning to the office?

Asking this question will help ensure you're not lost at sea once you accept the job offer. It will also show the interviewer that you plan to be a valuable asset to the team right away.

5. I know things are quite uncertain right now but as we continue to navigate this time, what are the company's top priorities and plans for the next few months?

Transparency is key right now. If your future company can't be honest with you as a job candidate about their plans or goals right now, then they most likely will not be honest with you once you're an employee. Of course, none of us can predict how the next few months will pan out, but you can get clarity on the company's rough draft. Job security is never guaranteed but, at the very least, you should know that you're joining a company that has a strategy for proactively moving forward.

Asking some variation of these questions will give you a good understanding of the company you could be joining. These questions will also show the interviewer that you're a problem solver, a big-picture thinker, and an adaptable team player, all things companies are looking for right now when hiring.

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