

Job Fair | Sample Questions

As with any situation where you find yourself with a potential employer, students must be prepared to ask insightful questions of recruiters at job fairs. There are four categories of questions you can ask recruiters, each with a specific strategy.

Strategic Comeback Questions

These questions are designed to give job-seekers the chance to respond to the recruiter's answer with a positive spin on how you perfectly fit (and ideally exceed) what the company is looking for in an employee.

- What kinds of skills and experience do you look for in the employees you hire?
 - What are the characteristics of your most successful employees?
 - Are graduate degrees important to advancing within your organization? Which ones?
 - Which courses or experiences do you suggest to be a successful candidate?
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Strategic Planning Questions

These questions are designed to give the job-seeker more information and knowledge about the hiring process for each particular employer.

- What kind of entry-level positions (or internships) exist within your organization?
 - Does your company hire on a continual basis or just at certain times of the year?
 - How long does the hiring process take? What does it consist of?
 - What percent of applicants are eventually hired? What is the retention rate?
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Key Company Information

These questions are designed to provide you with critical inside information you need to know when making a decision about the attractiveness of each potential employer. Remember, a job fair is a two-way street and you should be evaluating these companies as much as they are evaluating you.

- Are there specific career tracks within the organization? In other words, what can a typical employee (for the position I am seeking) hired in your division expect to be doing 2, 5, or 10 years after hiring? What is your organization's culture like?
 - For how many years does the typical employee stay with the company?
 - Are there opportunities for ongoing training through your organization?
 - Do you expect your employees to relocate? How much travel is involved?
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Recruiter Information

Some experts advise not asking the recruiter personal questions relating to his or her job. If the recruiter is an alum of your university, or you have some other personal connection, these questions are fine. Even if there is no connection, these questions can be asked -- and their answers can provide you with some critical insights.

- What made you choose this company and why do you stay?
- How long have you been with the company?
- What's the one thing that most surprised you about this company?