

# Tips for a Successful Job Interview

Contributed by the editors of *AIArchitect*

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## SUMMARY

A job interview is a two-way process that requires the curiosity of both employers and interviewees. The following questions will prepare interviewees to actively engage in the interview process and to obtain key information about potential employers.

## BE PREPARED

The key to a successful job interview is arriving prepared. Know the company, anticipate questions, and bring contact information with you. AECWorkForce, a subsidiary of ZweigWhite, advises candidates to prepare a list of questions in advance. Here, reprinted with permission, are suggested questions from the firm's new book, *Guide to Finding the Right Job in the Design & Construction Industry*.



## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What is it like to work here?
- What are some of the firm's problems? What is being done to address these?
- What is the state of the firm's financial health?
- What are some of the firm's strengths?
- May I see the firm's business plan?
- Who are your clients? May I talk with one?
- Who are your competitors?
- What kinds of computers and programs do you use? Will I have my own computer?
- Is this a new position or a replacement? What happened to the person who held it previously? Do any current employees of the firm think they should have this position?
- What are this position's daily responsibilities?
- What is the career path from this position? What's the next step and what would I need to do to get there?
- Who directly supervises this position? What is his or her background? What's he or she like? May I talk to other people who report to this person?
- How many people are in the department/group/studio? May I meet some of them? Do they want this position filled?
- What would I be working on immediately? What would be my role?
- What are the firm's expectations of the person assuming this role?
- How would my performance be measured?
- How are pay reviews scheduled?
- How long have you been here? Why do you like working here?
- Does this firm encourage continuing formal education? Do you accommodate class/seminar schedules? Do you pay for any portion of tuition/attendance fees?
- How is firm ownership structured? What are the opportunities for ownership?
- Will I have a written employment agreement?
- Does your company require that I sign a noncompete agreement?
- How many women and minorities hold management positions in your firm?
- Where do the other employees live? How far away are these communities? Can you describe them? What is the commute like?
- How many other candidates are you considering for this position? What can you tell me about them?
- What is your schedule for making this hiring decision? When you began this process, what was your target date for getting someone on board? What is the next step?
- When will I hear back from you?

## TO ORDER

*Guide to Finding the Right Job in the Design & Construction Industry* may be ordered online by visiting the Web site

<http://www.aecworkforce.com/guide>.

## RESOURCES

### More Best Practices

The following AIA Best Practices provide additional information related to this topic:

- 07.02.01 Sample Interview Questions
- 07.02.03 How the talent Strain Affects Architectural Firms
- 03.01.07 Navigating the Job Search Process and Beyond

### For More Information on This Topic

See “Keeping Key Staff,” by Celesta Lewis, *The Architect’s Handbook of Professional Practice Update 2004*, page 91.

See also the 14th edition of the *Handbook*, which can be ordered from the AIA Bookstore by calling 800-242-3837 (option 4) or by email at [bookstore@aia.org](mailto:bookstore@aia.org).



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### Keywords

- Practice
- Personnel management
- Hiring
- Employment interviews