



AIA Best Practices: Tips for a successful job interview

Contributed by the editors of AIA Architect

Summary

A job interview is a two-way process that requires the curiosity of both employers and interviewees. The following questions will prepare you to engage actively in the interview process and 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 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? If the latter, what happened to the person who held it previously? Do any current employees think they should have this position?
- What are the job's daily responsibilities?
- When will I hear back from you?
- 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 non-compete 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?

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About AIA Best Practices

AIA Best Practices is a collection of relevant, experience-based knowledge and expert advice on firm management, project delivery, contracts and more, aligned with the *Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th edition*. See the full AIA Best Practices collection at aia.org/aia-best-practices.

This article corresponds to:

Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th edition Unit 1 - The Profession
 Chapter 03 – Career Development
 Section 03 – The Career Paths of an Architect