

THE BEST QUESTIONS TO ASK AT A JOB FAIR



Summary: Job fairs can be the much needed opportunity to get your foot in the door of a company but without the right questions to ask to make you stand out, you may miss that opportunity.

Job fairs have dozens to hundreds of companies present to find new talent. Eager men and women dressed in their best professional outfit will wait for hours with their resume, cover letter, business card, and [elevator pitch prepared](#). With so much competition, you need to make sure you have an [edge that makes your stand out](#). Asking the wrong questions can ruin your chances so here the ten best questions you could ask.

1. [Prepare before attending the fair](#) by looking through the list of companies attending to find the ones you are most interested and then research those companies. Once you know more about the company you will be able to ask someone along the lines of “What does “blank” mean for the company?” Make sure it is positive; don’t bring up the latest scandal that happened at the company.
2. “What are the opportunities for advancement?” This question tells the recruiter that you are interested in being with the company for a while and are eager to prove your worth to the company. If the position you are applying for is entry-level ask something more along the lines about what the typical five to ten year trajectory looks like for new employees.
3. “What kinds of training programs are offered?” Employers want candidates that are interested in growing their skill sets, especially for high-tech jobs. Be careful not to give the impression that you are looking for a free education from the company.
4. “What skills and attributes does the company value most in employees?” This question will lead into a discussion but before asking this question, make sure you have done your research into the company so that you can be sure that your skills and attributes will be a match.
5. “What kind of educational background do you look for in employees?” This question is exactly like the last one. You can even include in the discussion how your internship, study abroad experience, or senior project has given you more skills and experience.
6. “How would someone like me contribute to the company?” Research the company’s open positions to find what desired skills and job experience they seek in candidates. This question will give the recruiter the opportunity to envision you as already at the company instead of you trying to persuade them of how you will contribute.
7. “What are the biggest challenges of this position?” This question only applies when the company has an open position they are trying to fill. This question does not get asked often so it will catch the recruiter’s attention and show that you aren’t afraid of challenges.
8. “What’s the company culture like?” Company websites or job fair displays don’t demonstrate what the atmosphere is like at the company. Some companies hold a rigorous schedule where everyone is expected to clock in and out at specific times where other companies allow a more relaxed schedule.
9. “What do you enjoy most about working at the company?” Everyone loves talking about themselves. Recruiters spend most of their time talking about the company and listening to applicants talk about themselves so this question will be a nice change for them.
10. “May I contact you with further questions?” If the discussion with the recruiter goes well, get their business card and ask them this question.

Photo: 211sepa.org