

Cheat Sheet: Ask the Experts

FIVE QUESTIONS STUDENTS FREQUENTLY ASK:

1. What is more important, a great resume or a great interview?

A great resume will get your foot in the door, but a great interview will land the job. A resume is an advertisement. It should highlight your experience and education, and it should tell a potential employer why you are the perfect candidate for the position. Once you make it into the employer's office, it's up to you to be prepared. Research the company, practice your interview skills with a mock interview ahead of time, and write down a few questions you want to ask during the interview. Show that you are prepared and want the job.

2. What is the salary range for my job?

You can find salary averages and potentials for various fields by logging on to websites like www.salary.com. It can be tricky to ask about pay during a job interview. It's usually best to avoid salary and benefit discussions during the first interview. You want to do your research so you have a salary range in mind, in case you are asked.

3. What is the market like for the job I'm looking for?

The best place to start researching a career field is your college career center. Your career center offers a multitude of career resources on the web, in journals, newsletters, books, seminars and at career/job fairs. The U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov) offers a wealth of information about the job market. And, if you are looking into a particular company, the best place to start is the company's website.

4. What is the potential for growth at a particular company?

Think about your career goals before you go into a job interview. You are the only one who can know if that company is right for you. Keep in mind that you want to learn about the company and its culture as much as the company interviewer wants to learn about you. Ask yourself hard questions about your future. Where do you see yourself in 5 or 10 years? What values are most important to you in a job?

Ask the Experts Cont.d)

5. What catches your eye about a potential employee during an interview?

Interviewers say they look for enthusiasm, personality, energy and presentation in a potential employee. They want to know that you are excited about this position, and that you will bring your best self to the job. Confidence is a key component. You can find that confidence by knowing what you are talking about (research, research, research) and by practicing your interviewing ahead of time.