

# The seven questions you should never ask in a job interview

By Abigail Malbon 3 weeks ago



It's a rare person who hasn't felt the urge to ask the following questions during a job interview: "How much does this job pay?", "When would I be up for a promotion?" or - if things aren't going particularly well - "And what did your last slave die of?"

Most of us would know to keep those in the back pocket, but there are plenty of other questions you should add to your 'Don't go there' list, says registered psychologist and principal consultant of [Glide Outplacement and Career Coaching](#), Simon Bennett. "As a career coach, I help job seekers prepare for questions they'll be asked in an interview but I also make sure they're ready for one of the trickiest things an employer can ask which is 'Do you have any questions for us'", he says. "Asking the wrong question can reveal flaws in your attitude, insufficient preparation or a lack of interest in the job and could make an employer think twice about hiring you."

On the list of Bennett's absolute no-nos?

**"So... what does the company do?"**

If you need to ask such a question, the employer will know you haven't bothered to prepare for your interview and will question whether you really want the role at all, says Bennett. "Almost all organisations have websites and social media channels

for you to research their business. A lack of knowledge is a red flag for employers and won't give them the confidence in your ability to do the job itself."

Give yourself the right start by Google stalking the bejesus out of the business before your interview so you don't ask any questions which could have easily been answered by a quick look at their website.

### **"Do you do drug and alcohol testing?"**

Short of turning up to your job interview straight on the back of a two-week bender, there's no quicker way to give potential employers the impression you have an illegal drug habit or drink excessively. "It's similar to asking about background security checks," explains Bennett. "And questions like this usually make the interviewer think you have something to hide."

### **"Why did the last person leave?"**

You have every right to be curious about why the last person left. Were they promoted or poached and given fistfuls of cash they'll never be able to spend in one lifetime, or did they have a heart attack at their desk? Still, it's a question that can quickly turn the interview process upside down, reveals Bennett. "If the previous employer moved on for positive reasons, the interviewer may be happy to share the information with you, otherwise asking this may create some awkwardness if they left under a cloud," he says.

### **"Do you monitor email use and web browsing at work?"**

Similar to the drug monitoring question, asking such a question will give the interviewer the impression you're a huge time-waster who can't be trusted to get on with your work without constant supervision, or worse – that you love nothing more than looking at inappropriate websites. "Employers expect you to know that, when you're at work using company property, you should restrict yourself to activities related to your role," Bennett adds.

### **"Does the team go out for Friday night drinks?"**

Are you looking for a job, or ways to improve your social life? Bennett says unprofessional questions like this are always inappropriate even if the company has a reputation for, and is proud of its "fun culture" both in and outside of the workplace. You can make your own assumptions about this one. Silently.

### **"Can I work from home?"**

Unless it's mentioned in the job advertisement or position description, it's best to leave this one well alone, advises Bennett. "There are some employers who offer flexible home working arrangements certainly, but if they haven't made it clear

and you ask this question, the employer may question your motivation, work ethic or ability to work in a team.”

There’s a time and place for everything so it’s better you ask about such a possibility if and when you receive a job offer.

**“How much will I get paid?”**

Why waste everybody’s time if they’re only going to pay two thirds of your minimum rate, right? Although it seems to make little sense to skirt the issue of salary, Bennett says asking about it at the first job interview can signal that all you care about is money. “Of course money is important to most of us, but timing is crucial when it comes to salary negotiations,” he says. “In the job interview you need to make the interviewer believe that you’re so keen on the role that money isn’t an issue for you.” Wait until they make you a job offer before discussing pay and may the force be with you.