

MONEY 101 EDUCATION

1.25 Questions to ask a Prospective W-2 Employer – re: compensation, benefits, advancement

Obtaining employment often requires multiple interviews.

1. BEFORE THE INITIAL MEETING:

Show your interest by investigating the company BEFORE you go for an interview. Learn:

- When was the company started?
- Who was the founder?
- What are the company's primary sources of revenue?
- Who are their target clients?
- What geographic area does the company service?
- Is it a public or privately held firm?
- Who are the company's key competitors?
- How does the company distinguish itself from others serving the industry?



2. AT THE INITIAL INTERVIEW

Use the interview as an opportunity to ASK QUESTIONS and see if you are a good fit. Find out:

- What skills are you looking for in an ideal candidate?
- To whom does this position report?
- Can you share an organizational chart showing where this position fits in?
- Has this position become available due to company growth, or has someone left?
- If you have not researched the company in advance, you can ask the questions mentioned above (#1). However, if you have, let the interviewer know what you've learned and ask if your information is correct.

It is only appropriate to ask about compensation and benefits when you are confident an employment offer will be forthcoming. Below are items that should be on your radar for W-2 positions.

3. COMPENSATION

- Please verify this is a W-2 position (as opposed to an independent contractor)
- How often are paychecks issued (see below on pay periods)
- Is the Base Compensation Salary or Hourly
- Bonuses & Commissions—Am I eligible for bonuses or commissions? What portion of my overall W-2 is that expected to be?
- Overtime – if I exceed 40 hours a week, am I eligible for overtime?

4. PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

- How frequently does the company conduct employee reviews?
- What is the method used for employee reviews?
- Does the company generally give a cost-of-living increase or merit increase?

MONEY 101 EDUCATION

1.25 Questions to ask a Prospective W-2 Employer – re: compensation, benefits, advancement

5. PAID TIME OFF

- What is the company's paid vacation policy?
- What is the company's paid sick leave policy?
- What is the company's personal paid days off policy?
- Is anything extra given in the event of a death in the family?
- Can unused vacation (or sick days) be carried over to a future year?
- Can unused vacation (or sick days) be paid as additional compensation instead of being used?

6. RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN

- Does the company offer a retirement savings plan? (401k, etc.)
- Does the company offer a "match" to employee contributions?
- How long is the waiting period for a new employee to participate in the retirement savings plan?
- What is the "vesting" period? (can be between 1 year and six years)

7. HEALTH COVERAGE: MEDICAL, DENTAL VISION

- Does the company offer a medical plan? Dental? Vision Plan? Life insurance?
- Is there a waiting period to enroll in the plan?
- Does the employee contribute to the premium, and how much do they contribute? Are spouses and children covered? Is the contribution different based on marital status and coverage?
- What is the plan's annual deductible? Or the maximum out-of-pocket cost?

8. OTHER BENEFITS - Does the company offer other "pre-tax benefits," such as:

- Child Care Expenses.
- Commuter Benefits – i.e., Transit Check
- Disability - Short-Term or Long-Term benefits (over state benefits)
- Flexible Spending Accounts.
- Health Savings Accounts.
- Life Insurance
- Supplemental Insurance Coverage.
- Parking Permits

9. WORK CONDITIONS?

- Is this a remote, hybrid job, or one where I will be expected to enter an office? If reporting to an office, how many days a week is that expected?
- What are the regular working hours?
- Is there required or routine overtime?
- Will I be expected to work in the evenings or on the weekends?

MONEY 101 EDUCATION

1.25 Questions to ask a Prospective W-2 Employer – re: compensation, benefits, advancement

- What is the company's method for tracking working hours? Does the company want the hours worked allocated based on a specific project or client?
- How often do work schedules change (i.e., Important in specific industries such as retail, security, or restaurants)
- Are there specific days when in-person company meetings are held? If I work remotely, how does the company track hours worked?
- Will I be expected to travel for work? If yes, how frequently?
- Will travel involve overnight trips? Will the company cover all expenses related to my travel?
- Does the company reimburse expenses for a shared workspace if I work remotely?

10. ADVANCEMENT

- What additional education, skills, or work experience would be required for promotion?
- What is the typical time for someone to get promoted to the next level?