

Asking questions of your own

It is very common for interviewers to close an interview by asking if the candidate has any questions they would like to ask. People who ask good questions demonstrate real interest in and knowledge of the job.

5 a In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 What sort of information should you try to find out during your interview?
- 2 What questions would you ask in an interview in your country?
- 3 Are there any questions you wouldn't ask? Why not?
- 4 Would you ask about salary?

b Read the following extract from an article about asking questions in an interview. Which do you think is the best question?

Questions to ask

Job hunters are always being told to ask one or two killer questions in an interview. But how exactly do you go about doing this?

It's important to consider the culture of the organisation you are hoping to join and the personality of the interviewer. Be careful to adopt the right tone and convey a positive attitude. You want to ensure this

opportunity works for you, not against you.

Pick and choose from the following list of tried-and-tested questions.

- a What are the most/least enjoyable aspects of the role?
- b You mentioned there would be a lot of researching. Could you tell me what your most successful employees find most satisfying about this part of the role?

c What are the most important issues that you think the organisation faces?

d Could you tell me more about the training opportunities you offer?

e Could you tell me how performance is measured and reviewed?

f Would there be a chance for promotion in the future?

g Do you have any doubts about whether I am suited to this position?

c Match the questions in the article (a–g) to the following expert advice (1–7).

- 1 This question can highlight that you are keen to develop your skills and add further value to a company. d
- 2 This question can emphasise your determination to make progress and to do so over the long term. —
- 3 This question can demonstrate your listening skills, and associates you with being successful in the role, as well as finding it satisfying. —
- 4 This question can show that you like to know what sort of challenge you are going to face and that you like to get properly prepared for it. —
- 5 This question can demonstrate that you appreciate the importance of delivering results. —
- 6 This question can show that you are interested in the employer as well as the job. It will be clear you have done some research, done some thinking, and are now keen to hear their analysis. —
- 7 This question is a rather bold way of emphasising some of your strengths. It suggests you are open to constructive criticism and willing to learn from the experience of others. In addition, it gives you a real chance to address any weaknesses the employer may think you have. Finally, it allows you to finish on a high, restating why you think you are the right person. —

d Look at four versions of the same question (a–d). In pairs, discuss the following questions.

- 1 Which version is the most assertive?
- 2 Which version is the most delicate/tentative?
- 3 Which would you use?

I noticed from your brochure that you are actively involved in several projects to support the local community.

- a *If I were to work for you, would that be something I could get involved in?*
- b *If I work for you, will that be something I can get involved in?*
- c *If I worked for you, would that be something I could get involved in?*
- d *If I work for you, is that something I can get involved in?*

e Complete the following candidate's questions with your own ideas.

- 1 Could you tell me more about _____ ?
- 2 What are the most important _____ ?
- 3 Could you tell me how _____ ?
- 4 Would there be a chance _____ ?
- 5 Do you have _____ ?

f It is important to show you are listening actively to the interviewer's response to your question. In pairs, take turns to ask and answer your questions in Exercise 5e. Remember to show you are listening actively by:

- keeping eye contact with the interviewer;
- nodding your head;
- making noises and short comments to show you understand (OK / Really? / I see);
- paraphrasing what the interviewer has just told you (*so you're saying...*)