



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR GRADUATE ADVISER

Congratulations on finding a Graduate Adviser to help you develop your skills and experience! You may feel a bit apprehensive in approaching them with questions: “what if they think my question is stupid?” Remember – the only stupid question is the one you don’t ask! Your Graduate Adviser won’t expect you to know the ins and outs of their business, and won’t judge you based on what you don’t know.

To help you get started, we’ve put together some questions you could ask your new Graduate Adviser. Think of some of your own questions too, and try to tailor them to what you already know about the company and industry in question. Don’t ask too many questions at one time, just enough for you to be able to take in and evaluate the information. There is plenty of time to ask follow up questions at a later date.

ABOUT YOUR GRADUATE ADVISER’S WORK & CAREER

- How was your transition from university to work (e.g. what did you experience and what should I expect)?
- Could you describe a typical workday or week?
- What skills are required in your position on a day-to-day basis?
- What parts of your job do you find most challenging?
- How do you best handle career or personal obstacles?
- What was the driving force behind your career choice?
- What was your first graduate job, how did you feel when you started and what did you experience?
- What do you like most about your profession?
- Are there any negatives to your job?
- How many hours do you work in a typical week?
- How would you describe the corporate culture?
- What are your greatest achievements in your career so far? Ask how the opportunities arose, how they felt about them at first, and how they accomplished the tasks.

ABOUT THE INDUSTRY

- Can you tell me about job prospects in this profession? Are graduates in demand?
- What developments on the horizon could affect future opportunities?
- How has the industry changed... in the last five years?
- Has it affected your organisation? What do you think will happen in the next five years?
- How do most people enter this profession?
- Why do people leave this field or company? Where do they go?
- Who are the most important people in the industry today?



ABOUT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- What is a typical path in this profession? What is the potential for advancement in the field?
- Can you tell me about your career progression?
- How did you get your job?
- If you could start all over again, would you change your career path in any way? Why?
- What are the opportunities and support available for personal development within your company?

ABOUT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- What does your employer look for when hiring in terms of skills, attributes and attitudes?
- What skill areas are you interested in developing?
- What skills does your employer wish more applicants had?
- What skills matter the most?
- Can you recommend any courses I should take/ literature to read or professional bodies to become a member of to improve my prospects?
- Discuss the value of networking
- Discuss your knowledge of effective networking
- Discuss your Graduate Adviser's approach to networking
- Ask for suggestions regarding networking opportunities
- Discuss your Graduate Adviser's interview experiences
- Discuss interview strategy

ABOUT BEING 'A GOOD FIT'

- Who is your go-to person for advice?
- How do you handle criticism?
- How do you stay motivated?
- Do you think my objective is clearly stated, realistic and achievable?
- How does working in this profession fit with a work-life balance? Is there frequent travel or evening entertaining?
- Considering your colleagues and contacts in the industry, what personal attributes are essential for success?
- Taking into account my skills, education, and experience, what other career paths would you suggest I explore before making a final decision?
- Thinking about the most successful interns or recent graduates you have had, what was it about their skills, attributes, attitudes or work ethic that made them stand out?

