

Research Guide

7 Things to Research before your next interview

“If someone asks me during an interview ‘So, what kind of business are you in?’ then the interview is over. Period. If they don’t care enough to figure that out before an interview, I know what kind of an employee they will be.” - Mike C., VP

1. The people you will be meeting (your next interviewer). Look for these things:
 - Common ground: Do you have anything in common? Do you have any mutual connections? Check LinkedIn to see their past employers, industry associations, college, volunteering, etc. Read their bio. If you have anyone on the inside, get the inside scoop on their personality & personal interests.
 - Role: What is their role at the company: what do they do? What is their job title? To whom do they report? How many people report to them?
 - Tenure: How long they've been in that role? How long have they been at the company?
 - Industry experience: How long have they been in the industry?
 - What matters most: if you have a friend on the inside, ask them for advice or insights about the person you will be meeting.
2. Other key players (executives, department heads, etc.) If the CEO is brand-new, you should know that. If she came from a competitor, you should know that. You can find out who the key players of the organization by reading the employer’s “About” page and employee bios. It’s also a good idea to check out what these individuals say on Twitter and LinkedIn to learn what employees say about the company online.
3. Company size, key clients, products & services. What do they sell? To whom? Per my quote from one of my former clients, if you start asking questions about this during the interview, you will not be a finalist. Review the company's website, annual report, blog, case studies & news.
4. The skills & experience the company values most. Read between the lines of the job posting. Ask a friend on the inside. Look at their company mission and values. For example, they might fancy themselves an innovative industry leader ... and they look for that kind of language in new hires.
5. News and recent events. Did they just expand into a new country? Sell off half their business? Acquire a competitor? Build a new office? Win an industry-leading quality award? You should know that. Most companies have "in the news" or media page. Check that, then do a google search.
6. The company's culture, mission and values. A Millennial Branding study said 43% of HR leaders believe cultural fit is the most important factor in long-term success. Pay attention to what they say on their website, on their careers page and in the news.
7. The inside scoop. A friend on the inside is great for this, but so is Glassdoor. You can often find information about salaries, hiring processes and company reviews.