



THE CULTURE INTERVIEW GUIDE

How to Reveal Culture, Values & Fit

Are you building a team? This guide is to support your interview preparation.

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Hiring is a two-way interview. The best conversations don't feel like an interrogation they feel like genuine curiosity. This guide is built around one simple technique: ask a broad, open-ended question, then gently follow the thread with why, how, and tell me more. Layered this way, both sides get past the rehearsed answer and into the real story which is where culture, values, and red flags can show up. Use this guide and its suggested questions when hiring for your team. Sections are organized so you can ultimately customize the questions if you wish.

THE GENTLE QUESTION FUNNEL,

This prepared style of questioning is a curious form of communication to use throughout.

1. Start broad & open - "Tell me about a time **when**..." or "Walk me through how..."
2. Ask **Why** — "Why do you think that happened?" "Why did that matter to the team?"
3. Ask **How** — "How did you handle it?" "How did that work out?"
4. Invite more — "Tell me more about that." "What else stood out to you?"
5. Ask for the outcome — "How did it resolve?" "What was the outcome?"
6. Close with **reflection** — "What did that teach you?" "What made that important to you?"

For Employers: Hiring the Right Fit for Culture

What the best hires look like

- They have a legitimate, well-considered reason for wanting to move.
- They align naturally with your company's stated values and not just able to recite them back to you.
- They are genuinely passionate about the work itself, not just the title or the logo.
- They share your company's vision organically, in their own words.
- They bring a track record of real accomplishment and follow-through throughout their career.

Questions to ask yourself before the interview

- How can I figure out why this person would be a good fit for our company?



- How can I tell if our company is a good fit for them?
- How do I identify top talent, beyond the resume?
- How can I tell whether this person will genuinely fit our culture, not just perform well in an interview?
- What tends to make a candidate go quiet after we've scheduled an interview or not show up at all? What might that tell us about our process?
- What ultimately makes a candidate accept or decline an offer?

Values & culture-fit questions to ask candidates

Use the funnel sample above ask, then follow with why / how / tell me more.

- Tell me about a work culture where you really thrived. What made it work for you?
- Tell me about a work environment that didn't work for you. What was missing?
- Walk me through how you make a tough call when your values and a deadline are in conflict.
- What does "good leadership" look like to you? Tell me about a leader who modeled that.
- How do you like to be recognized when you do great work?
- How do you like to receive feedback and how do you handle it?

Training, development & HR — know your own answers first

Before you can evaluate a candidate's fit, be ready to speak to your own house. Be prepared for candidates worth hiring should ask you these:

- What kind of training and development do we offer employees, and how is HR involved in it?
- Do we run training in-house, through an outside training company, or with contractors and outside programs/individuals?
- Do we have a mentorship or mastermind program?
- Do we use assessments to build culture and 360-degree feedback surveys? Which ones, and why?
- Do we have dedicated team and individual training budgets?
- Does that budget cover conferences, for development?

After you've discussed the role — closing & alignment questions

- Would you like to join our team?
- How does joining our team get you closer to where you want to be in your career?
- How do we align with your personal goals?
- How do we align with your professional goals?
- How will this role benefit your career?
- What makes us stand out from your other opportunities?

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