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## Entry-level interview questions

Use these sample **entry-level interview questions** when you're recruiting junior candidates or recent graduates.

### How to interview entry-level candidates

Interviews with junior candidates and recent graduates are challenging, as their lack of professional experience can make it hard to gauge their skills. But, targeted entry-level interview questions can help you assess their abilities.

When interviewing entry-level candidates, evaluate their:

- **Communication skills:** how they present themselves and their goals.
- **Time-management skills:** how they managed deadlines in the past (e.g. during college or internships.)
- **Problem-solving skills:** how they approach job-related challenges (by using hypothetical scenarios or simulation activities.)

Here are some sample questions to ask entry-level candidates during interviews:

### Examples of entry-level interview questions

- Why did you choose to study this field?
- Would you consider expanding your studies in the future? What would you want to learn more about?
- How do you think your studies have prepared you for the challenges you'll face on the job?
- Why did you apply for this position? Was there something specifically in the job ad that drew your attention?
- What would you do if you were on the phone with a client and didn't know how to answer their questions?
- Describe a time (e.g. from college or an internship) when you worked as part of a team to accomplish a goal.
- How did you organize your schedule when you had to complete various projects and assignments on tight deadlines?
- What would you like to have learnt or what skills would you like to develop during your first year at work?
- What kind of projects did you work on during your internship? What was your role, what challenges did you face and what did you learn?
- What would you do if your manager assigned you with a task you didn't know how to

approach?

- Pretend I'm a potential client and you want to sell me X product. What would you ask to learn about my needs and how would you try to convince me to buy the product?
- Describe a time when you received negative feedback from a professor or manager. How did you react?

## How to assess entry-level candidates in interviews

- Junior candidates and recent graduates mightn't be familiar with professional interview settings. Start with an ice-breaker and then describe the process you'll follow to make them feel comfortable.
- Focus on [situational](#) questions instead of [behavioral](#) ones. Pose hypothetical scenarios to test how candidates manage work-related situations, even if they lack relevant experience.
- Place value in volunteer work, extracurricular activities and internships. These kinds of experiences can give you an idea of how candidates interact in a team environment and how they use their skills to achieve results.
- Entry-level candidates are not necessarily inexperienced. They may be professionals looking to make a career change. In this case, gauge what motivates them to pursue a career in a different industry.
- Include an [assignment](#) in your hiring process to better evaluate candidates. This is particularly useful for creative roles when candidates don't have a complete portfolio of work yet. Plus, you'll gain some good talking points for your interviews.

*Related:* [How to attract and hire entry-level employees](#)

## Red flags

- **They have different career goals.** Junior candidates might struggle to identify jobs in their field of interest. If you realize that their career goals don't match your position, it might be hard to retain them in the long-run.
- **They are arrogant.** Employees in junior positions often require training and mentoring from more experienced coworkers. A "know-it-all" attitude may prevent them from developing professionally.
- **They are unprofessional.** You shouldn't judge junior candidates too harshly if they don't come fully prepared for your interviews. But, signs of unprofessionalism, like showing up late or missing deadlines for assignments, are clear red flags.
- **They lack motivation.** Entry-level employees often show enthusiasm and a "can do" attitude for simple and challenging tasks. Candidates who don't ask follow-up questions and seem disengaged mightn't be interested in your position.