

Interview Them Back

You are also deciding. Fill in the top half before you have an offer in hand, because excitement is very good at rewriting your standards. Then use the rest to collect what you actually see.

DECIDE THIS FIRST, BEFORE ANYONE OFFERS YOU ANYTHING

Compensation, flexibility, manager, scope, growth, commute, travel, benefits, stability, mission. Be specific enough that you'd recognize a violation.

Must have

Nice to have

Absolutely not

QUESTIONS THAT GET REAL ANSWERS

Ask for a specific instance. Specific examples make rehearsed answers harder to hide behind.

ON LEADERSHIP

"Tell me about a time you changed your approach because of feedback from someone on your team."

ON MISTAKES

"What happened the last time a project here went badly? What changed afterward?"

ON THE ACTUAL JOB

"What does a hard week in this role look like?"

ON SUCCESS

"Six months from now, what would make you say the person in this role is doing exceptionally well?"

TO A CURRENT OR FORMER EMPLOYEE, ON LINKEDIN

"I'm considering a role there and would value your perspective. What has your experience been, and is there anything you wish you'd known before joining?"

THE CONSISTENCY TEST

Ask two interviewers the same important question. Wording and perspective will differ. Pay attention when the underlying expectations, priorities, or values conflict.

MY QUESTION	PERSON ONE SAID	PERSON TWO SAID

SAID VS. OBSERVED

WHAT THEY TOLD ME ABOUT THE CULTURE	WHAT I ACTUALLY SAW

When the two don't line up, trust the pattern over the pitch.

PATTERNS WORTH SLOWING DOWN FOR

☐ Ready to hire without testing whether my experience fits the actual work

☐ The role description shifted between conversations

☐ Direct questions got guarded or evasive answers

☐ "We're like a family" replaced a real answer about expectations

☐ Former employees are described dismissively

☐ Many people in comparable roles appear to leave quickly

☐ I never met someone I'd work with daily

☐ The perks are impressive and the specifics are vague

One signal may have an explanation. A repeated pattern deserves a direct question before you accept.

WHAT I STILL NEED TO KNOW BEFORE I ACCEPT OR DECLINE

WHO I'LL ASK

An offer solves today's search.
The wrong job starts the next one.