

Do Your Research

Undertaking in-depth research can be a tedious part of your job search. However it is a vitally important step, and is really your competitive edge. In researching a potential employer, there is no such thing as being too prepared. Your ability to cite facts and paraphrase from relevant business articles will impress the interviewer.

- What are the company's products and/or services?
- What is the size of the company, number of employees, and rank within its industry?
- Who are the company's primary customers? Why do they choose to do business with this company?
- Who are its major competitors? What differentiates this organization from them?
- What are the company's goals, philosophy, and mission statement?
- What were last year's strategies and objectives? Were they met?
- What is the financial health of the company? What was the company's performance like last year? What do the analysts think?
- What external factors affect its growth?
- What media exposure and/or major articles have appeared about the company within the last 3 – 6 months?
- Where is the company located? Where is the head office? Does it have any subsidiaries?
- What is the parent company? Is the ownership public or private?
- How long has the company been in business? What is its history? Have any mergers, acquisitions, or other items related to this company been reported in the news recently?
- Is the company unionized? If so, to what union(s) do the employees belong?
- How is the organization structured? What is the management structure? What are the names of the key players (ie. Chairman, CEO, President, etc.)?
- How many employees does the company have? What types of positions does the company offer? What types of positions are available?
- What have the employment trends or growth patterns in the organization been over the last five years?
- What are the company's long-range plans for expansion? For globalization?
- What information is available on salary ranges, benefits, and professional development?
- How do people describe this organization? What is its reputation for how it treats its employees, customers, and suppliers?

Company Research Information

<u>Company/Organization:</u>	<u>What is this company's mission statement?</u>
<u>Person's name & title:</u>	<u>What problems is this company facing?</u>
<u>Phone number(s):</u> 604-	<u>What are their goals for the future?</u>
<u>Email address:</u>	<u>How fast are they growing?</u>
<u>Website:</u>	<u>What do they need to beat the competition?</u>
<u>Street Address:</u>	<u>How is the company's financial health?</u> Good / Poor / Don't know
<u>Contacted on (date):</u>	<u>Who are their strategic partners in business?</u>
<u>Followed-up on (dates):</u>	<u>Could I make a difference for this company?</u> Yes / Probably / Maybe / I don't think so / I don't know

<u>Questions to ask them:</u>	<u>What skills or experience do they seem to be missing?</u>
	<u>How related is my experience to what they are seeking?</u>
	<u>Does their culture match what I desire?</u>
	<u>Are they able to pay what I need to earn?</u>
	<u>Would this be a fun and satisfying place to work?</u> Yes / No / Maybe / I don't know
	<u>Follow-up notes:</u>

Articles About Researching Companies

- http://www.quintcareers.com/researching_companies.html
- http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/employmerresearch/a/compresearch_p.htm
- http://interview.monster.ca/7463_en-CA_p1.asp
- <http://www.nids.ca> (information about Sector Councils)

How to find out information:

- ✓ Visit the company's website
- ✓ Visit the websites of the company's chief competitors
- ✓ Google the company for articles, blogs (both personal and corporate), company newsletters, industry newsletters, news clips, speeches or keynote presentations, membership in associations, resumes of former employees.
- ✓ Visit the library
- ✓ Connect with your network of contacts

Armed with this background information, you will be able to answer with confidence typical interview questions such as:

- *What do you know about our company?*
- *What are your thoughts on the challenges facing our industry and how can you help us?*
- *What would you do in your first 90 days if w hired you as a _____?*