

# Intelligence gathering

A contact is more likely to enjoy the process of being interrogated (and is more likely to be impressed by you) if you ask interesting questions. Here are a few ideas to get you started. You can generate even more useful and interesting questions related to your own particular needs and priorities.

## Job satisfaction and motivation

- Why do you do your job?
- How does the job differ from what you expected?
- What is the biggest reward you get from your job?
- What made you go for this job?
- What makes you keen to get to work in the morning?
- What makes you want to stay in bed?
- In what way does your job give you a sense of purpose (feeling of being in control, a chance to indulge your love of your subject, a chance to do something worthwhile, an opportunity to develop yourself, etc.)? (Insert whatever is important to you.)

## Details of the work

- Can you describe some actual examples of the sort of activities that your job involves?
- If you could change one thing about your job, what would it be?
- What are the hours like?
- How do you know you are doing a good job?
- What is the most important thing you have learnt through doing this job?
- Do the outcomes of the job just depend on your efforts or are there other factors that can affect what happens?
- What skills do you use most often?
- What makes someone successful in this job?
- How much variety is there in this role?
- Can you tell me some of the things you would do on a typical day?
- How much autonomy do you have in the role?
- Was there anything that surprised you when you started this job?

## Career progression and development

- What is the typical career progression in this field?
- How long would you expect to stay in this job?
- What sort of jobs do people move on to?
- How has the job changed in the time you've been here?
- Do you know anyone who has made an interesting career move from this type of work?
- Are there any training or development opportunities?
- How do you see this job developing in the future?
- Who do you have to impress to do well in this job?
- How do you keep up to date with developments in this field?
- How does one get promoted in this organisation?

## Colleagues, culture and environment

- What proportions of the time are you working on your own or as part of a team?
- Is there a particular type of person who works in this field?
- How typical are you of other people working in this role?
- How supportive are your superiors?
- What, if anything, annoys you about your colleagues?
- How would you describe the organisation culture and is it the same in other organisations in this field?
- How much office politics is there here?
- What sort of person would I have to be to fit in to this environment?
- Is this place a meritocracy?
- What are the facilities and resources like here?

## The sector

- What are the most important current issues in this sector that are likely to affect your job?
- What is the staff turnover like?
- Where do you find out about industry news and gossip?
- How competitive is the job market?
- Which organisations are doing interesting things at the moment?
- How is the industry changing?
- What are likely to be growth areas over the next few years?
- What threats does your organisation face?
- How do you keep one step ahead in this field?
- How often do vacancies arise and where do they appear?
- How secure is the job situation?

## Job hunting

- How did you get into this job?
- What would a well-qualified candidate be like?
- What background experience is useful?
- What would you look for on someone's CV?
- How do people normally get useful experience on their CV?
- Are there any courses that would be helpful?
- What skills are most relevant to the job?
- Where, if anywhere, are vacancies advertised?
- Who would be good people to contact?
- What opportunities are there for gaining relevant experience?

What advice would you give to someone in my position?