

Choosing the Right Employer

INTRODUCTION

This document is in two parts. The first is a top ten list of questions to consider asking when making your final choice of who may be the right employer for you. These questions have been quoted from Sue Simons, National Manager – Jobseek (a division of Drake International) as published in an article found on www.seek.com.au. (See full attribution at the end of this document)

The second part contains some skills development questions and exercises which you may wish to consider for further exploration.

TOP TEN QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING THE RIGHT EMPLOYER

By Sue Simons

Does the organisation know where it's going?

It's essential that you find out where the organisation is heading. What are its goals and aspirations? What sets it apart from its competitors?

Joining an organisation that has no viable growth strategy is a "death sentence". Unfortunately, these organisations are awful places to work for - morale is low, direction changes by the minute, and meanness and tightness replace prudent cost management.

What is the quality of leadership?

Quality leaders not only have the strength of character to make the tough decisions but they also inspire their staff. They are prepared to "walk the talk" and win the hearts of employees. At the end of the day, they make others want to follow them.

Are employees genuinely committed to the organisation and its goals?

Employee commitment is often the yardstick to a healthy organisation. Happy and committed staff usually means a strong and viable organisation.

Does the organisation have the capability to satisfy customer requirements?

There is a direct link between customer satisfaction and employee commitment.

Does the organisation in question understand and implement the things important to their employees?

As we spend most of our waking hours in the office, our work environment needs to be physically and motivationally attractive. It needs to reflect the fact that organisations value their employees.

Does the organisation have the work culture you're comfortable with?

While this may seem an odd prerequisite, it is amazing how often people leave organisations because of incompatible cultures.

For example, in a company that has a sales culture, people with a research and development focus can expect to be frustrated in that sales culture's focus on short-term efforts, rather than longer-term solutions.

Is talent genuinely identified, utilised and developed and are employees provided with some sort of career-path?

One of the most frustrating experiences any employee can have is feeling under-utilised and directionless. This can be the major cause of resignations and of staff being snapped up by the competition.

Is there a direct link between business success and personal success?

All employees like to feel they financially have a share in the success of the organisation - usually through incentive schemes such as "bonus" payments and share plans.

Is the need to balance work, life and family recognised by the employer and are these policies implemented and practiced?

Busy demanding jobs need to be compensated by flexibility to ensure healthy recreation and personal growth, including family and relationship commitments.

However, the nature of what is important in the work/life balance varies in the stages of employment. For example, for younger employees getting some leave to travel overseas may be important; for people with family responsibilities, having flexibility to attend to family needs may be paramount. For older employees, a flexible working week to fit in a golf game may be important!

Ultimately, is your resume going to be significantly enhanced by working for the organisation in question?

Studies have shown that employees now recognise that "cradle to grave" employment with one employer is very unlikely. Therefore, the modern resume is a more complex document than its predecessor. Most employers like to be able to see some kind of career path or pattern, however lateral, in the diverse roles that you may have undertaken in the duration of your career.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT EXERCISES AND QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND EXPLORATION

Please consider the following additional questions:

- If you don't immediately know the answers to these questions, how might you find out?
- How comfortable are you in "interviewing" your potential new employer? How would you explain to them your need to "interview" them?
- What do you feel you would gain by also "interviewing" existing employees of the organisation, versus just a manager or HR representative? How might you ask for permission to do this?
- How could you use social networking on the internet to locate current and/or past employees of the company in order to conduct your own private interviews?
- If the organisation meets some, but not all, of your desired responses to these questions, do you know what you'd accept as "good enough"?
- If the organisation admits that they don't have a fully positive answer to one of your questions, but explain how they have strategies in place to address it, would you still be willing to accept that they are moving in the right direction for you?

- Aside from interviewing, what other “evidence” do you feel would be sufficient to evaluate the organisation?
- How would you like to give feedback to the organisation about the research you’ve conducted? Consider both positive and constructive feedback. Will it make a difference to your answer whether you decide to work with this organisation or not?

ATTRIBUTION

The top ten questions to ask to determine if you’re choosing the right employer have been quoted from an article written by [Sue Simons](#), National Manager, Jobseek, a division of Drake International, as published on www.seek.com.au. To read the full article, please click [here](#).

Further development has been conducted by the askacoach.com team in the creation of some skills development exercises and overall formatting.

There are many articles and resources available at www.seek.com which may be of benefit to anyone exploring career options.

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