Research a Company

AT A GLANCE...

• Research a company to demonstrate to employers your desire to work for them.

• Make a connection at the company you’re interested in and ask questions about the company’s culture, goals, values, mission, etc. to help you gain first-hand information.

RESEARCH A COMPANY

Researching a company can help convey to a recruiter, an interviewer, or employer your enthusiasm for what they do. Adequate company research will prepare you for the interview question, “Why do you want to work for our company?”

WHY RESEARCH A COMPANY?

Employers want to see if you are excited enough to take time to research what the company does, what the company cares about, and where they are headed. Your interest in and knowledge of the company could make the difference between you and another candidate. Understanding the organization and the industry will allow you to better network, respond to interview questions, and articulate your potential value.

WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO FIND?

Don’t memorize facts about the organization to repeat back to them in an interview or cover letter. Collect information that will help you understand how the company operates, how it sees itself, and its place within the larger industry. Look for information that will help you make a connection to the company and articulate the value that you can bring. Use the following questions to jumpstart your knowledge about both the industry and company.

RESOURCES

The following resources can help you as you research different companies. You can use them to answer the questions on the next page.

• Company Website – especially their About and Careers pages.
• LinkedIn – the world’s largest professional network.
• Glassdoor.com – crowd-sourced company reviews.
• Vault Online Career Library – useful information on larger companies and corporations.
• Google News
INDUSTRY

Growth
• Are jobs in the industry growing or shrinking?

Major Players
• Who are the key companies in the industry?

Trends
• What new products, services, features are being developed? How is technology or world affairs affecting the industry?

Sources of Information
• Where do people in this industry go to stay up to date? Are there professional associations or publications to be aware of?

COMPANY

Mission, Values and Culture
Many companies build interview questions around their mission, values and company culture.
• What experiences do you have that show you align with these things? Will the company culture fit you and your needs?

Organization
• How is the company organized: who are the leaders, are there offices in multiple locations, what divisions or departments make up the company?

Key Products and Services
• What product or service is the company known for offering? Are there new products lines or services that have recently been offered? What future product or services has been announced and is in the pipeline?

Competitors and Partners
• Who are the company’s primary competitors or partners? How does this company differentiate itself from others in the industry?

Key Clients
• Who is consuming the company’s products or services?

Growth
• Is the company expanding (new products, new locations, acquisitions)? What jobs are posted on the Careers page of their website? Have there been layoffs recently?

News
• What comes up in a Google News search of the company? Have there been changes in leadership, new initiatives, additional funding?