
THE INTERVIEW

Questions Worship Leaders can Ask for their Next Interview



Why is Preparing Questions for your Interview Important?

In any job interview, we tend to make better decisions when we are well informed. In other words, we can make a more confident decision, when we can see as much of the bigger picture as possible. The rest we rely on God to help us discern whether or not this is His will for us and our family.

Once we have answered all of the staffs questions, there will be a moment during the interview, when you will be given the opportunity to ask the pastor and leadership board questions as well. This is not only a great opportunity for us to gain some more clarity about the role of the position you are applying for, but to also voice some concerns you may have.

Majority of the time, we are caught off guard, when the interviewer asks, do you have any questions for us? We usually don't have questions for them on hand. We were so focused on getting our resume ready, our worship leading reel ready, and what clothes we would wear that day ready, that we totally forgot to prepare some questions ourselves. Not being prepared with questions doesn't always have to be the case for us. And this is the purpose of this resource, we want to help the everyday worship leader, by sharing some questions that they could ask during an interview. Questions that other worship leaders have asked. We hope they are of great help as you prayerful consider on taking your next job as the new worship leader or pastor of a new church family.

When You Have Questions Ready?

- It shows that you're in this conversation, too
- It shows you're interested in the church and the job
- It shows you're enthusiastic
- It shows you're knowledgeable
- It shows you come prepared

QUESTIONS

Church & History

1. What is the vision and mission statement of the church and how are you accomplishing it?
2. How does the worship leader fit into your goals and vision for the future?
3. What is the church's core beliefs?
4. What is the culture like at this church?
5. How would you characterize the demographic of your congregation?
6. What role does worship currently play in the life of the church?
7. Where do you see this specific church and congregation for the next five years?
8. I always want to know the history of the church. Such as any church splits? How long does the average minister stay? Any family connections inside the church? How long has this church been in this community?
9. Is the worship leader required to be licensed or ordained with your denomination?

Commitment/Expectations

10. What are your expectations for a worship leader now, and what are your future aspirations for that position?
11. What is expected attendance/participation wise for small groups/Sunday school?
12. How many years are you expecting me to commit as the worship leader?

Conflict

13. How is conflict handled in this church and on this leadership team?
14. During worship team rehearsals, if any issues with team members were to come up, would you have my back if a team member needed to be removed from the team?
15. During Worship monthly meetings (not rehearsals) if general issues are addressed, and a worship team member is disgruntled and comes running to the Sr. Pastor, would courtesy be extended to include worship leader in discussion instead of talking behind the leaders back.
16. Are there any roadblocks and pitfalls I can expect to run into?

Copyright Material

17. Share with me about copyright ownership on resources created during employment?

Change / Trying a New Direction

18. I'd also ask whether the job is simply to lead the worship in their current way or if they want it to be developed into something different/more, and what they hope to see in the future.
19. If I am hired, are you wanting me to maintain the program you already have in place or will I be able to make changes and will the pastor and leadership team support me?
20. Do you want me to maintain the current program you have or will I be able to make changes as I see fit?

Culture

21. Describe the culture of this church and describe the culture of the surrounding community.
22. Can you please describe the current culture of this worship ministry?

Events / Projects

23. What kind of worship events does this church host or participate in?
24. Do you allow your worship team to attend local and national worship conferences or nights of worship to be encouraged, obtain insight and inspiration?

25. Are you open to hosting a night of worship here at this church?
26. Do you encourage your team to maintaining creative excellence, if so, how and in what ways have they done that in the past?

Family

27. What is your expectations of my family. How active do expect my spouse to be? My kids?

Health Insurance

28. Do you have insurance and benefits for me and my family? or will I have to pay for my own health insurance?

Hiring Process

29. Why is this job listed as part-time, and what are you hoping I will do with the other part time? (Very often churches are trying to hold down their budgets or hold equilibrium with an organist or someone else by not committing fully to a worship pastor's job and hours...but that can be debilitating over time.)
30. What's your vision for hiring a full/part time worship leader?" If it's filling an existing position, maybe a good question would be, "What happened to the last guy/girl?"

Hours

31. How many hours are you expecting me to put in as a part-time?
32. How many hours are you expecting me to put in as a full-time?
33. Do you I get a day or two off?

Innovator

34. Are you a gate or a bridge? " when they answer consider that a gate can be shut and hold back the flow. A bridge bends down and allows a flow from both directions. How do you want your leader to lead? Like a gate (deciding when to get out of the way, if at all) or a bridge (who is always humble and bowed down).

Leadership - Chain of Command

35. Who do I report and answer to (besides God obviously)? and more importantly, who do I NOT answer to?

Music

36. Can you please describe what style of worship the church has been doing in the past 6 months? Has there been any style changes in the past 5 years?...and if so, how was the changes accepted?
37. Can you describe your musical preferences and style.
38. Do you have contemporary, traditional, or mixed worship experiences?
39. What direction does the church want to go in relation to music? Hymns, gospel, contemporary? Mix of genres?
40. What is the lead pastor's playlist look like on his iPod?

Outside the Church

41. What are the expectations regarding participation in "non-worship" church events and activities as a church leader, and whether there is an expectation of volunteer service in the church outside of the job. I've seen situations where staff members are expected to spend 2-5 hours/week volunteering, which if you don't know about ahead of time can be hard.

Past Experiences

42. Questions about past worship leader(s), style(s), content, relationship with the rest of the staff and especially with the lead pastor?

Responsibility

43. What is my job description?
44. What is my actual title?
45. Weekly hours expected?
46. How many services a week do I plan for?
47. What is expected of me and how much freedom is there in the responsibility will be given or is everything out via the pastor or other leader...
48. Will my department be over the platform, or will it encompass the the sound, media, and light techs as well? Will the youth worship fall under this umbrella?
49. Is there a youth band? If so am I expected to lead it?
50. What is expected as far as time commitment per week?

Rehearsals

51. Does the worship team have rehearsal other than the day of the service? If not, can we?

Relationships

52. What has the lead pastor and worship pastor relationship looked like in the past?
53. How often does the worship leader and lead pastor, and leadership team meet together and what does that look like?

Salary Package / Health Insurance

54. What will the salary and package be for a part-time or full-time worship leader?
55. How many hours do they expect for the money and does that include prep time at home?
56. Do worship leaders get vacations? if so, what does that look like and is it paid?
57. Is there any personal ministry time allowance.

Single Applicants

58. A tip for singles: most times, the call process allows for a spouse to be involved in the discernment process. Someone pointed out how single people should be afforded the same allowance. (For example, allowing a trusted friend to sit in on an interview, so they can provide you with feedback later...So that would be something to consider requesting.)

Song Selection

59. How does the congregation engage with learning new (unfamiliar to them songs rather than specifically modern) songs.
60. Will the pastor have my back when people question the song selection and style?

Staff

61. What is your vision for a staff member's family?
62. What does encouragement look like in the staff/pastor relationship?
63. How are expectations communicated from the pastor/elders to staff?
64. How much do you expect a staff worship leader to volunteer personal time above and beyond the required hours?

Volunteer

65. Do you have a protocol or guideline for recruiting musicians and vocalists?
66. How have team members been recruited in the past?
67. Ratio/numbers of volunteers in the church and in my specific ministry?
68. How do you feel about including non-believing musicians and vocalists?

Worship Leader

69. How do the church leaders see the role of the worship leader?
70. How do current leaders work together to design parts of the service? (With the goal of understanding expectations and how much responsibility will be yours for things beyond music.)
71. Does anyone else come in and lead worship? if so, how does that work (i.e. under whose authority?)
72. Can I train other worshipers to lead worship on a rotating basis?

Technology

73. What kind of technology are you expecting me to know coming into this role as the new worship leader?

Worship Department Budget

74. Do you have a budget for the worship department?...if so, how much?...and do I have to still sell an idea to the church to use that budget money, or do I have discretion on using it as I see a need?

Worship Ministry

75. What is the vision for the church and the role of worship to fulfill that?
76. How is the worship ministry structured?
77. What's your understanding of the purpose of worship in a church or for the believer?
78. How does this church define worship? Any scripture references to back up your definition?
79. How does your community define what worship is, and what is the current expectation level of your worship volunteers?" For me those two questions can indicate many things: inward vs outward focus, worship as a lifestyle or worship are the two music sets performed during "service". It also tells me if excellence or matters of the heart rule the gatherings...or hopefully a healthy balance of both.

Worship Team

80. What musicians are available?
81. What musicians are not available?
82. How many teams are currently rotating?

Worship Planning

83. What freedom do I have or not have in relation to planning the service?
84. The situation regarding worship planning/prep--timeline, responsibility division, people involved.

Worship Wars

85. Are there any worship wars, challenges or concerns I should be aware of in the worship department?
86. Who are the trouble makers in the church, and are any of them involved on the worship team?

Other Questions

LEADING WORSHIP TOGETHER

87. What is your philosophy on how to minister to the LGBT community?" (Regardless the worship leader's position on the issue, it is becoming something that perhaps should be understood before partnering with a church body....if that makes sense.)
88. When it comes to Revivals and the special music, who will be involved in the selection of who comes, and what involvement during the music portion of the service is the current leadership responsible for?
89. How open are you to spontaneous worship?

We would like to say a Big Thank You to all of the worship leaders on Facebook who contributed to this list of questions we can ask for our next worship leading interview.

Resources for the Everyday Worship Leader