

Sample Questions to ask at a Panel Discussion

- What is the primary function of your department/organization?
- How would you describe the culture of your organization (relationships among colleagues, value systems, philosophies, etc.)?
- Could you describe a typical workweek or day on the job?
- What interested you in this field?
- What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?
- If you were to leave your position, why would you leave?
- How many hours a week do you work? Is there any travel involved?
- How did you acquire your position? What job search methods did you use?
- How long did it take you to find a position? How many positions did you apply for? How many interviews did you have?
- What other positions have you held or considered? What are related positions or fields?
- What other types of positions are available in your organization (besides yours)?
- What is the typical dress code for your department/organization?
- What kind of benefits packages does your organization offer?
- What kinds of opportunities for advancement do you have?
- What does a typical career path/career ladder look like at your organization?
- What are the salary ranges for entry-level positions?
- What traits do hiring managers look for in candidates?
- What qualifications are needed for XYZ position?
- What degrees are most preferred by your organization? Is a graduate degree necessary?
- Is any special training required?
- If your organization (or a specific position) does not accept entry level candidates, what is the best career path for me to get hired eventually by your organization or for XYZ position?
- Where does your organization advertise open positions?
- Do you offer summer, part-time or internship positions? How can I apply?
- What does the typical application process for full time positions involve?
- How competitive are positions in this field?
- What made the best resume you've ever seen the best?
- What made the worst resume you've ever seen the worst?
- What should students do in order to have a successful interview?
- What should people look for in an organization such as this as they consider positions?
- How soon should I start my job search?
- What is the single most important piece of advice you would give college students?

TIPS FOLLOWING THE PANEL DISCUSSION

- Don't just bolt out of the room. Stop to chat informally with panel representatives.
- Make a favorable impression. The panel representative you talk to just might remember you later. (In fact, he/she could be the same person who interviews you later).
- Network. Tell the panel representatives what your career goals are. Even if you are not interested in their organization, they may know someone in the area you'd like to pursue. Ask if you may have a copy of their business card and add it to your collection of networking contacts. (If you don't have a collection - start one!!)
- Ask if they (or anyone else from their organization) plan to attend any upcoming Career Fairs. If they say yes, let them know whether or not you plan to stop by their table at the fair and drop off your resume.
- Thank them again for taking the time to come to USC to talk to students!