# Interview your CEO well: question bank

Questions grouped by theme, with space for your follow-ups and the answers you want to keep.

## How to use this bank

1. Choose three themes for the piece you are making.
2. Pick five or six questions across them, and write one follow-up for each.
3. Ask the first question, then listen. Come back to the list only where you still need it.
4. Ask for the answer in one sentence at the end, and keep the version you like best.

## 1. Interview details

| | |
|---|---|
| **CEO** | *[name and role]* |
| **Company** | *[name]* |
| **Interviewer** | *[name]* |
| **Date, time and place** | *[include the room or location]* |
| **What the piece is for** | *[e.g. a 90-second film for the website]* |
| **Themes chosen (three)** | *[write the three themes]* |
| **Questions sent in advance?** | *[Themes only, unless the CEO asks for the questions]* |

## 2. Question bank

*[Tick each question you ask. Write your follow-up in the second column, and the timecode of the best answer in the last.]*

| Question | Your follow-up | Asked | Timecode of best answer |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Where it started** | | | |
| What did you see that other people missed when you started? | | [ ] | |
| Who gave you the first real chance, and what did they say? | | [ ] | |
| **A decision that did not work** | | | |
| Tell me about a decision you would make differently now. | | [ ] | |
| What did you notice first that told you it was going wrong? | | [ ] | |
| **The team** | | | |



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| Question | Your follow-up | Asked | Timecode of best answer |
|---|---|---|---|
| Who on the team would be most surprised by what you just said about them, and why? | | [ ] | |
| What do you ask a new hire to do in their first month? | | [ ] | |
| **The customer** | | | |
| Describe a customer you think about often. What did they need? | | [ ] | |
| What do they say when they come back? | | [ ] | |
| **Advice** | | | |
| What would you tell someone starting a business like this one? | | [ ] | |
| What do you still get wrong? | | [ ] | |

## 3. Your chosen five or six

*[Plan the questions around the cut you want to make. It is better to cut the list than to rush the answers.]*

| No. | Question (copy from the bank) | Follow-up | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

## 4. On the day

**[ ]** Warm-up done before the first question that counts.

**[ ]** Names used: the CEO's name, the names of the people in the story, and the interviewer's name.

**[ ]** Questions are open and ask for a story, not a yes or no.

**[ ]** The CEO talks to the interviewer, not to the lens or from a script.

**[ ]** Last question: ask for the answer in one sentence, and keep the version you like best.



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## 5. Notes

*[Anything the CEO said that you want to come back to, or a story to follow up after the day]*

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