

## RECRUITING

# 5 Must-Ask Questions When Recruiting A Virtual Team



*Image credit: REUTERS | Paulo Whitaker*

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When it comes to interviewing virtual workers, once you have qualified their skillsets, the questions take on a different purpose. Can they work without face-to-face interaction each day? Do they get anxiety when co-worker responses aren't instant? Can they stay focused if they are at home with young children or an elderly parent? In other words, will they be a strong, valuable

and productive team member?

With HR compliance laws preventing many questions from being asked, is it possible to effectively extract the information you need? Yes.

Here are the five approved “asks” when interviewing for a virtual position.

**Related: [5 Ways to Ensure Remote Employees Feel Part of the Team](#)**

## **1. Why is working virtually appealing to you?**

While being close to the fridge, working in PJs or being “at home” when kids return from school is tremendously appealing for many, it doesn’t exactly speak to their career aspirations. It is important to find out if working remotely is a short- or long-term plan for the candidate, as well as how they view day-to-day responsibility and accountability. They may think that working in the middle of the night is acceptable as long as they finish a task before you begin at 9 am the next morning. That could work for your business model, but if it doesn’t, you need to know their vision now, not later.

## **2. What experience have you had as a location-independent worker?**

Honestly, working from home isn’t for everyone (even though people may think of it as a life of luxury). It takes a lot of dedication and focus to excel in a remote

position, so you'll want to choose someone with a proven track record of success. Ask them about jobs they held as a virtual worker, what they enjoyed about the job and what they didn't. It's also important to ask how often they were in touch with their co-workers, supervisors or direct reports. This gets to the heart of their ability to work as part of a team. Get specifics on what "in-touch" means for them. If they are accustomed to a daily Skype call with the boss and that is not feasible for you, be honest about that.

### **3. What online tools have you used to manage projects and communicate with your co-workers?**

Being virtual means online communication is essential and your employees must be proficient in the tools you use or have ease in self-learning. When you find out what they use, also find out what they like and dislike. Ask about situations when something wasn't working – did they consider that a default "day off" or were they clever in creating another solution?

**Related:** [4 Effective Ways to Manage a Remote Team](#)

### **4. Where will you be set up each day for work?**

While this might seem like a personal question, it is an important one for hiring virtual workers. Do they have a private home-office that is off-limits to family or will they be working at the kitchen table where distractions are

plentiful? Will they be working off-site at a coffee shop or in a suite at another company? It is critical to know your employee has a solid plan in place to ensure they can focus on their job, even though they are at home.

## **5. How do you prioritize projects when working as a team?**

Virtual means working independently but it doesn't mean working alone. At Greenback, we have a supply-chain approach to our customer deliverables and while we have back-up systems if someone gets behind, we expect team members to be responsible and accountable to each other. Find out how they prioritize projects, schedule their time and pace their day. If they are interrupted on a project because a co-worker is asking for help with something else, how do they respond? If they are able to prioritize the projects based on what's best for the company, you have a winning team member!

Finding the right virtual employees is a more challenging job than you might expect. But by asking some pointed questions to understand their remote working experience and habits and paying close attention to the answers, you can find the right fit for your company.

**Related: [The 4 Biggest Myths About Working at a Virtual Company](#)**