

The Workplace Vetting Guide

01

Protect Your Talent, Your Energy, and Your Future.



You're not just accepting a job — you're investing your energy, your creativity, and your future. This guide offers essential questions to ask before you accept a role, while you're working, and when patterns begin to show. Because your peace, your growth, and your talents deserve a workplace that honors them — not just uses them.

BEFORE YOU ACCEPT THE JOB

Questions to Ask During Interviews

01. What systems are in place to support employees who raise concerns or ideas?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systems are vague, informal, or rarely used.• Leadership responds with vague assurances but no clear process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear feedback systems exist (e.g., HR contacts, anonymous options) and are trusted by employees.• Leaders can name real examples where feedback led to positive change.

02. How does leadership handle disagreements or setbacks?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflict is treated as disloyalty rather than an opportunity for growth.• Leaders avoid hard conversations under the guise of "maintaining harmony."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership encourages respectful disagreement and uses it for team improvement.• Setbacks are reframed as lessons, not failures.

03. What is the real average tenure here — and why do people leave?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High turnover is normalized or explained vaguely ("People just move on"). • Growth opportunities are discussed, but promotions from within are rare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are challenged with new opportunities that develop your skills. • Your leaders encourage experimentation, learning, and visible growth.

04. How are diverse opinions and respectful challenges received?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning ideas is subtly discouraged or labeled as being "difficult." • Leadership shows defensiveness rather than curiosity when challenged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership actively invites diverse perspectives. • Respectful dissent shapes real decisions and drives innovation.

WHILE YOU'RE WORKING

Questions to Ask Yourself (Self-Check-In)

01. Am I valued for my contributions, not just my output?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition happens only in public for optics, not in private for authenticity. • Contributions are minimized or quietly reassigned to others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are credited consistently and sincerely for your ideas and achievements. • Leadership actively supports your growth and visibility.

02. Are transparency and feedback part of the everyday culture?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct questions receive vague reassurances ("You're doing great!") with no specific feedback. • Feedback seems inconsistent or changes depending on who's observing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You receive clear, consistent feedback that helps you grow. • Leadership welcomes ongoing dialogue without defensiveness.

03. Am I growing — or just surviving?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High turnover is normalized or explained vaguely ("People just move on"). • Growth opportunities are discussed, but promotions from within are rare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are challenged with new opportunities that develop your skills. • Your leaders encourage experimentation, learning, and visible growth.

04. Am I truly heard — or are my concerns softened, reworded, or ignored?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking up leads to critique of your "tone" rather than addressing your actual concern. • Your concerns are later reframed in documentation, diluting your voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership listens respectfully, follows up with actions, and invites clarification. • Changes and solutions reflect your contributions without punishment or dismissal.



Pro Tip: Document Everything — and Protect Your Energy

Creating a clear paper trail after meetings strengthens your voice and boundaries. Summarizing agreements and next steps clarifies intentions — and protects against "quiet revisions" later. Documentation won't stop poor leadership, but it will expose patterns faster and give you the clarity to choose your next move.

WHEN YOU NOTICE THE PATTERN

04

Questions to Clarify Reality (Before It Spirals)

01. Are high performers being minimized, isolated, or quietly erased?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High performers are excluded from key meetings or projects.• Public praise is followed by private sidelining or vague criticisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High performers are celebrated, mentored, and offered growth opportunities.• Success is shared transparently, without jealousy or hidden retaliation.

02. When concerns are raised, does leadership seek truth — or shift blame?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns are minimized ("It's just a misunderstanding") without real investigation.• Leadership protects reputations over resolving harm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership approaches concerns with neutral, open-minded investigation.• Corrective actions are visible, timely, and rooted in respect for all voices.

03. If I project forward six months, based only on patterns I'm seeing — do I see growth, or slow erosion?

WARNING SIGNS	POSITIVE SIGNS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emotional exhaustion and isolation worsen over time, despite promises of change.• "Things will get better soon" becomes a repeated but empty phrase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You see visible improvement in communication, collaboration, and personal growth.• The future feels energizing, not heavy or uncertain.



Reflection

Quiet dismissal isn't a formal meeting. It's a pattern.

It shows up as reduced assignments, fading inclusion, and subtle distancing — without a conversation.

If your role, visibility, or dignity is shrinking without explanation, trust what's being removed, not just what's being said. Choose clarity. Choose peace. Choose yourself. May your next chapter be worthy of the story you carry.

- Karen Waleska