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QUESTIONS ARTISTS SHOULD ASK POTENTIAL MANAGERS

Don't be afraid to ask questions when talking with a potential manager. Not only should you find out if you're both on the same page and have the same vision for your career, but you should also find out how the manager handles business. Below are 15 questions that our sources suggested.

1. "WHO DO YOU KNOW?"

The music business is based on relationships and connections. Effective managers have a wide network of contacts that can be tapped whenever needed.

2. "WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN?"

Without a marketing plan you won't have much success. This is a critical factor and prospective managers should display some expertise in this area.

3. "WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS?"

A manager should have short-term and long-term goals that are part of a larger marketing and promotions plan. Short-term goals could be weekly or monthly, so long as they advance your career.

4. "DO YOU LOVE MY MUSIC?"

It is a business, but you still need people who love your music. Besides, if they're passionate about it they'll work harder.

5. "WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN THINGS AREN'T GOING WELL?"

It's all strawberries and cream when everything's clicking, but what happens when things go south? It takes a real manager to handle problems promptly and efficiently. Ask for examples based on their experience.

6. "WHO HAVE YOU MANAGED?"

Check the manager's roster — current and past. You should contact prior

clients to see what they have to say. But, don't ask for references from the manager. You'll only get those that rave about the services.

7. "WHAT'S YOUR TRACK RECORD?"

Does the manager have any notable successes? How about failures? Ask for examples.

8. "DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO DEVOTE TO MY ACT?"

The best managers are often busy and may have more than one client. It's important to find out if they have the time to give you the attention you need.

9. "HOW BIG IS YOUR STAFF?"

If a manager is handling several clients, you need to know how the work will be done.

10. "HOW VIGILANT ARE YOU ABOUT MONEY?"

A manager who doesn't keep track of income and expenses can cause big problems. They should be eager to go after money that's owed you, or have someone on call who will do it for them. Additionally, a manager should watch expenses carefully.

11. "WILL YOUR COMMISSIONS BE BASED ON GROSS OR NET?"

There's a huge difference. If a manager will only commission gross income (income before expenses are deducted), they're probably a dinosaur, and will sometimes make more than

you. Modern managers will frequently commission net proceeds (income minus expenses), or split between net and gross commissions depending on the revenue stream.

12. "WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO?"

Make sure you're clear about what the manager expects from you. If it's very little, beware. Real managers expect you to work as hard as they do, and should have a list of things they expect you to do.

13. "IS IT ALL RIGHT IF I MEET WITH OTHER MANAGERS BEFORE MAKING A DECISION?"

Competent and confident managers don't mind if you talk with other prospects. In fact, they'll often suggest it. If a manager gets angry about this question, or bad-mouths other people, be cautious.

14. "WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ME (AND MY ACT)?"

Good managers will Google you before meeting with you. If they don't, it tells you something about the way they conduct business. Information is power. By the way, you should Google them as well.

15. "ARE YOU AWARE THAT I'M GAY?"

Anything that could affect your career should be out in the open. It can make a difference in how a marketing plan is designed and implemented. By bringing it up, you can also tell if the manager has any problems with it. 