

Musicians

Pre Novel Research Questionnaire

For Musicians

What's been your most memorable live performance to date?

How did you prepare for a live show? Is there a specific routine or ritual you follow?

Where did you find inspiration for your lyrics or melodies?

Did you prefer to write music alone or collaborate with others? Why?

How did you handle creative blocks when they arise?

What's the most challenging part of making music, in your experience?

How much did your personal life or current events influence your work?

Did you have a specific process or routine when you're working on new music?

What's a typical day like for you when you're on the road?

How did you balance time between performing and personal downtime while touring?

How did you manage all the logistics of touring — travel, gear, venues, etc.?

How did you handle the stress of constantly moving from city to city?

Have you ever faced any major challenges while on the road (like travel delays, technical issues, etc.)? How did you overcome them?

What's your "must-have" item or piece of gear that you always bring on tour?

What did you do to unwind or relax after a performance, especially if it was a particularly intense show?

What's the hardest part of the physical demands of performing every night?

What's going through your mind right before you step on stage? Did you get nervous, excited, or something else?

How would you describe the feeling of performing live compared to recording in the studio?

Is there a moment during a show when you feel connected to the crowd? What did that feel like?

When you're on stage, did you ever get lost in the music? How did that affect your performance?

How did you deal with stage fright or nerves, if it ever happens, especially on big stages or in front of new audiences?

What's the best crowd reaction you've ever experienced during a performance? Can you describe the moment?

How did the energy of the crowd affect your performance? Did you feed off their excitement, or did you stay focused on your performance?

Have you ever had a crowd surprise you with how they reacted to a song or performance?

Did you ever change up the setlist or performance based on the crowd's energy or mood?

How does it feel to look out into the crowd and see people singing your lyrics or connecting with your music?

Did you ever feel a sense of vulnerability when you're on stage, especially when performing emotionally-charged songs?

What did you think it is about live music that creates such an emotional connection between you and the audience?

Did you ever interact with the crowd during the show? How do you balance performing and engaging with the audience?

Did you notice any differences in how crowds react depending on where you're performing—different countries, cities, or venues?

How does the energy of a show change if the crowd is particularly quiet or vocal?
Did you adjust your performance based on that?

How much say do you have in tour planning (venues, setlists, etc.)?

Do you travel with a large crew or a small team?

How do you coordinate gear and equipment across different cities?

What's the biggest logistical challenge you've faced on tour?

How do you deal with travel delays, cancellations, or gear failures?

What's the dynamic like among the band or tour crew?

How do you maintain relationships with friends or family while touring?

Have you made long-term friendships on the road?

How do you handle conflict within the group or crew while on tour?

What's something people misunderstand about the social life of touring musicians?

Have you ever experienced burnout on tour? How did you handle it?

What's the most difficult show you've ever had to play?

Have you ever considered stopping touring altogether?

How do you recharge after a long tour?

What support (mental health, physical therapy, etc.) would you like to see more of for touring artists?

How does using a click track affect your timing and overall performance?

What challenges do you face when playing with a click track on tour?

How do you coordinate the click track with other elements like backing tracks, lighting, or video?

Sound Engineers

For Sound Engineers

What's your typical routine on show day — from load-in to soundcheck to showtime?

How do you prepare for a new artist or tour?

How do you handle soundchecks when the artist isn't available?

What's your process for building a mix during a live show?

How do you balance the artistic intent of the music with the acoustics of the venue?

What gear do you typically use (consoles, outboard gear, plug-ins, etc.)?

Do you have a preferred mixing console for live shows? Why?

How do you handle signal routing and gain staging in complex setups?

What's your approach to EQ, compression, and reverb in a live mix?

How do you deal with frequency conflicts between instruments or vocals?

How do you adapt your mix to different venues — from clubs to arenas to outdoor festivals?

What are the most difficult acoustic environments you've worked in?

How do you deal with sound bleed, echo, or poor room acoustics?

How do you manage feedback risk in high-volume environments?

How much do you rely on virtual soundchecks or presets in changing venues?

How do you approach monitor mixes for artists — in-ear vs wedge?

How do you communicate with musicians during rehearsals or performances?

What are some challenges specific to being a monitor engineer?

Have you ever had to troubleshoot mid-show monitor issues? What happened?

How do you tailor mixes for different performers or band members?

How closely do you work with the artist or music director?

What's the relationship like between FOH, monitor, backline, and stage techs?

How do you navigate creative differences (e.g., volume preferences, EQ choices)?

What's your approach to working with guest engineers or opening acts?

How important is trust between the artist and the sound engineer?

Stage Managers

For Stage Manager

What does a typical day look like during rehearsals vs. during performances?

Can you describe your role during a live show?

How do you prepare for a new production?

What tools (digital or analog) do you use to stay organized?

How do you coordinate with the director, designers, and tech crew?

What are the most critical skills for a successful stage manager?

How do you handle high-pressure situations or emergencies during a show?

Can you give an example of a quick decision you had to make that impacted a performance?

How do you manage stress or burnout during a long production run?

What's your approach to leadership and team management backstage?

How involved are you during early rehearsals compared to tech week?

What's your role in maintaining the director's vision once the show opens?

How do you document blocking, cues, and actor notes?

Can you share how you handle conflicts or tension in the rehearsal room?

How do you keep actors and crew on schedule?

How do you ensure smooth communication between departments (lighting, sound, costumes, etc.)?

What's the key to maintaining morale and discipline backstage?

Can you describe your relationship with the director and producers?

How do you communicate with understudies or swings about performance readiness?

What happens if something goes wrong mid-show?

What's the most difficult show you've managed and why?

How do you troubleshoot technical or interpersonal issues during a run?

Have you ever had to stop or hold a performance? What happened?

What's a moment where your problem-solving made a big difference?

How do you manage a team with varying levels of experience?

Instrument Technicians

For Instrument Technicians

What drew you to working behind the scenes in music or live performance?

Do you specialize in certain instruments (guitar, drums, keys, etc.)?

What does a typical day look like on tour or in a studio session?

How early do you arrive before a show or soundcheck, and what's your setup process?

How do you maintain and tune the instruments under your care?

What's your role during the actual performance?

What happens during load-out or strike at the end of a gig?

What tools or gear do you always keep in your kit?

How do you handle emergency repairs mid-show?

Can you walk me through the process of setting up a guitar rig or drum kit?

How do you document or remember each musician's gear preferences?

What software or tech (tuners, modeling systems, patch editors, etc.) do you use regularly?

How closely do you work with the musicians or band members?

How do you handle artist-specific quirks or gear preferences?

Have you ever had to adjust or fix something mid-performance without being noticed?

What's your strategy when dealing with a stressed or frustrated performer?

How do you earn the trust of the artist you're teching for?

What's life like on the road as a backline or instrument tech?

How do you balance your personal life with the demands of touring?

What's the dynamic like between the crew and the band?

What are some unwritten rules of life backstage or on tour buses?

How do you stay organized when traveling with so much gear?

How do you keep instruments in peak condition through different climates and venues?

How do you handle vintage or rare instruments differently from standard ones?

What are some things casual musicians do that damage their gear?

Stage Hands

For Stage Hands

Can you describe your typical day (or night) on the job?

What kind of training or education did you receive for this role?

Are you part of a union? If so, how has that impacted your work experience?

What are the main tasks you're responsible for during a show or event?

How does your role change between load-in, performance, and load-out?

What's the most physically demanding part of your job?

How do you coordinate with other crew members like lighting, sound, or stage managers?

What tools or equipment do you use most frequently?

What's the work culture like among stagehands?

How would you describe the sense of teamwork backstage?

Are there any unspoken rules or traditions among crew members?

What are some of the biggest misconceptions people have about stagehands?

Do you feel your work is recognized or appreciated by the audience or performers?

What are some of the biggest challenges or risks of the job?

Have you ever been in a dangerous situation during a show? What happened?

What safety protocols are most important in your day-to-day work?

How do you stay alert and focused during long or late shifts?

Has the industry changed in terms of safety or working conditions over the years?

What's the backstage culture like?

How do you manage irregular hours or overnight shifts?

Is it difficult to maintain work-life balance in this field?

What are the best and worst parts of working live events?

How do you see your role fitting into the overall success of a production?

Production Managers

For Production Managers

How would you describe the main responsibilities of a production manager?

How does your role differ during pre-production, production, and post-production (or load-in, run, and strike)?

What's a task people assume you do—but you actually don't?

How do you balance creative needs with logistical or budgetary constraints?

How do you manage time, schedules, and deadlines across departments?

What's your approach to building a production schedule from scratch?

How do you budget a show or event? What are the biggest cost factors?

How do you prioritize when the budget doesn't cover everything the creative team wants?

How do you deal with unexpected expenses or last-minute changes?

What software or tools do you use to manage scheduling, budgets, or crews?

How do you coordinate between departments like set, lighting, costumes, and sound?

What's the most important part of managing a large crew effectively?

How do you resolve conflicts between creative teams and technical crews?

What qualities do you look for when building your production team?

How do you keep morale up during long or stressful productions?

How do you handle equipment rentals, load-ins, and venue coordination?

What's involved in managing a tour or traveling show compared to a stationary one?

How do you ensure safety compliance across the crew and cast?

What are the hardest logistical challenges in your line of work?

How do you keep track of all moving parts during a live event or shoot?

Lighting Directors

For Lighting Directors

How do you develop a lighting concept or design for a specific artist or tour?

What role does music play in shaping your lighting design?

How do you balance creating a consistent visual brand with keeping things fresh?

Can you describe a show where lighting completely transformed the audience experience?

What types of lighting equipment do you prefer for concerts?

What lighting console(s) do you program and operate on tour?

How do you work within different venue sizes and tech limitations?

What's your daily routine like on tour — from load-in to showtime?

How do you adapt your design to different venues (arenas vs. clubs vs. festivals)?

What do you do if something malfunctions during a live show?

How do you handle changes in setlists or last-minute creative direction?

How closely do you work with the artist or music director?

What's the creative process like between you and the set or video designer?

How do you align your work with the artist's brand or aesthetic?

What's the dynamic like with the rest of the touring crew (audio, video, stage)?

How do you keep your team motivated on long tours?

How much of your work is artistic expression vs. technical precision?

How do you use lighting to enhance the emotional arc of a song or set?

Do you improvise cues live, or is everything pre-programmed?