



Interviews: What Not To Do

Now that you know what to do in an interview, here's what NOT to do.

Beware the no-no's.

You've overcome the résumé, cover letter, and possible phone interview so far, but now comes the most important test: the in-person interview. While you know what you should do in an interview, you should also be aware of what not to do.

Pre-interview no-no's.

Sending poor signals. Make sure your e-mail address, outgoing message, and social networking sites are all appropriate. "CutiePie@...", "Hey, man, leave your number and I'll hit you up," and "Here's me at last weekend's crazy party!" send the wrong message to employers when they e-mail, call, or go online to scope out potential candidates. Be sure your e-mail address is fitting for a job search, end your outgoing message with a "thank you," and be careful what you post online.

Don't be late. Being late can kill the interview before it even begins. Know the location, route, and parking situation beforehand. Do a trial run just to be safe. Arrive 15-30 minutes early to give yourself time to collect your thoughts and calm down.

Don't forget to dress to impress. Avoid heavy scents. Don't over-accessorize. Never wear stained clothing and try to avoid wrinkles. Ladies: Wear stockings with skirts, even if it's summer. Make sure you feel comfortable with yourself.

During the interview no-no's.

To start. Shake the interviewer's hand

firmly and thank them for meeting with you. Smile and make eye contact.

Hide your gift of gab. Don't talk the interviewer's ear off. Only share relevant info about yourself – nothing too personal – and avoid sharing too much. Don't be so casual that you come off as rude or cocky.

Modesty isn't an option. Remember, you're still trying to beat out competition for the job. Confidently communicate your skills and accomplishments. Just don't sound like you're patting yourself on the back.

Don't wing it. Always be prepared. Practice answers to potential interview questions beforehand, but sound natural.

Don't get greedy. Don't be the one who brings up salary and benefits.

Watch yourself. Body language can be a silent killer. Don't slouch, scratch, play with your hair, chew gum, or stare. Sit up and pay attention. Resist nervous ticks, such as fidgeting with clothing, rings, or other accessories.

If you don't have anything nice to say... Don't speak ill of previous employers and don't air personal grievances. Emphasize your strengths, not your weaknesses.

Don't interrupt. Listen carefully to the interviewer and understand each question before answering.

Ask intelligent questions. The interviewer is there to answer your questions almost as much as you're there to answer his/hers. So, have a few questions prepared.

Simply put:

Knowing interview no-no's is almost as important as knowing what to do:

- Send the right message with your e-mail address, outgoing message, and online content.
- Don't be late and don't leave your cell phone on.
- Always be prepared and dress properly.
- Don't talk too much, lie, or come off as rude.
- Speak positively about yourself and others.
- Don't bring up salary or benefits.
- Be aware of your body language and tone of voice.
- Understand and answer all questions. Also, ask intelligent questions.
- Always thank the interviewer at the end of the interview and again within 48 hours.

Never lie. Period.

Post-interview no-no's.

Don't forget to give thanks. Thank the interviewer for his/her time at the end of the interview, just like in the beginning. Ask about what the next step should be. Send a "thank you" either in a prompt e-mail or in writing within 48 hours. It's common courtesy and shows your interest in the position.

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