

AVOID FOUR JOB INTERVIEW BLUNDERS

The following tips are from my conversation with Carole Martin, the job interviewer coach for Monster.com and the most capable interview expert I know with 15 years of human resources management experience.

Blunder #1 – Poor Non-verbal Communication

“Interviewing effectively is about demonstrating confidence. Things like standing straight, making eye contact and connecting with a good, firm handshake are all vitally important”, says Martin.

Think it like this: we humans have only been using words for the past 10,000 years or so, right? Before that, we communicated by grunting, posturing and clubbing each other over the head. So we humans have been paying attention to no-verbal cues for many thousands of years longer than we have verbal ones. It’s in our genes.

The person who interviews you is no different. That’s why your body language plays such a vital role in shaping the first impression you make. It can be a great beginning to your interview, or a quick ending.

Practice accordingly.

Blunder #2 - Failure to Listen Actively

“From the moment you start talking, your interviewer is giving you information, either directly or indirectly. If you are not listening actively, you’re missing out on a major opportunity, says Martin.

Make sure you take copious notes, jotting down every key phrase and idea that your interviewer uses. Doing so will demonstrate your enthusiasm for the job, your attention to detail and it will help you recall what is said so you won’t ask a question that’s already been answered, for example.

Good communication skills include listening and letting the person know you heard what they said. Observe your interviewer and match their style and pace.

Blunder #3 – Talking Too Much

“Telling the interviewer more than they need to know can be a fatal mistake. Candidates who don’t prepare ahead of time tend to ramble, sometimes talking themselves right out of the job,” Martin says.

Remember that you’re at the job interview to get information as much as you are to give it.

“Prepare for the interview by reading the job posting thoroughly. Try to focus on the skills you have that match the requirements of the position and relate only that information,” says Martin.

Blunder #4 – Appearing Desperate

This can be tough to avoid in the current job market. After all, you need a job. But, you must rein in your emotions.

“As a rule, if you interview with a ‘please, please hire me,’ mind-set, you will appear less confident. Maintain the three C’s during your next interview. Cool, Calm and Confident! You know you can do the job. Make sure the interviewer knows you can, too,” says Martin.

Your Lesson: Follow these four bits of hard-won interview advice, gained during 20+ years of HR experience. Nearly all the job seekers I speak with try to “wing it” during interviews and nearly all of them regret it later. Don’t make that mistake. Heed Carole’s advice.

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