



10 Common Interview Mistakes

Here's How You Can Avoid Them Too!

page 1



Making a Bad First Impression

First impressions count. You should always aim to arrive at an interview **at least** ten minutes early. Also, don't walk into an interview looking untidy. If you look messy, people will assume you do messy work. Look neat, clean and presentable. A good rule-of-thumb is to dress so you'll fit in with the people interviewing you. Limit distractions, and pay attention to your body language. Do not slouch in the chair. Sit up straight and make good eye contact with the interviewer. Be sure to introduce yourself, and firmly shake hands with the interviewer.



Failure to Emphasize Your Strengths

The interview is your opportunity to let the employer know your strengths. It is essential that you confidently and comfortably articulate your strengths. Explain how the strengths relate to the company's or department's goals and how they might benefit the potential employer. If you repeat your strengths then they will be remembered and if supported with quantifiable accomplishments, they will more likely be believed.



Failure to Include Concrete, Quantifiable Data

Don't talk in generalities as generalities fail to convince interviewers that you have the skills, knowledge and experience that they seek. Instead, include measurable information and provide details about specific accomplishments when discussing your experiences and strengths.



Lack of Preparation

Showing you have taken the time to research an organization and the position you are interviewing for is not only very flattering, it also creates a positive first impression as it shows that you have a genuine interest in them and have invested time in getting background information on them, their competitors and the industry sector.



Failure to Appropriately Answer Questions Asked

Answering questions poorly could mean talking for too long—or not long enough. Or it could be a result of not listening properly, or not asking the interviewer to clarify. Be a very attentive listener and pay attention closely to what the interviewer is asking. Also, figure out **why** the question is being asked and be sure to address it in your response.

10 Common Interview Mistakes

Here's How You Can Avoid Them Too!

page 2

6

Lying During the Interview

Lies, whether big or small, have no place in interviews as reference, background, and credit checks have become the norm. Lying will tarnish your reputation and waste everyone's time and energy. It is important to be truthful about any unpleasant aspects of your past work history, but keep the details as succinct and positive as possible.

7

Not Having Any Questions for the Employer

A common final question by the interviewer is "Do you have any questions for us?" One of the worst responses to this question is "No, I don't think so." You **should** have some questions for the employer! This is the opportunity to show the interviewer that you prepared carefully for the interview and have given significant thought to the position you are applying for.

- "What does a typical day working for Company X look like?"
- "What type of skills do you look for in a candidate for job X?"
- "Does Company X have any development programs in place for new hires?"
- "Could you please tell me about your own career path and how you got to your current position?"
- "What has been your most rewarding experience working for Company X?"

8

Not Closing the Job Interview Positively

Make sure to thank the interviewer for his or her time and shake the interviewer's hand. Don't forget to let him or her know that you look forward to hearing from the company soon. Express your interest in the position.

9

Failure to Follow-up

It is strongly recommended that you send a thank you letter, note, card, or e-mail after an interview to thank the interviewers for their time and consideration. Following-up is the "golden key" to getting hired. It shows that you are truly interested in the position, that you have a positive attitude and that you can take the initiative. Interviewers often meet with many candidates as part of the interview process. They need you to remind them of your candidacy and why you are the best person for the job. The job application process does not stop after you shake hands at the end of an interview. Go the extra mile and send a thank you note.

10

Stopping Job Search While Waiting for a Response

Even if your interview for the job of a lifetime went well, don't freeze your job hunt while you wait to hear back. For a variety of reasons you might not get the job, or you might stumble upon an even better opportunity. You don't have anything to lose by continuing the hunt.