

7 Deadly Interview Sins

1. Lack of Enthusiasm

- Recruiters say that applicants who show appreciation, interest -even love-love for a particular career field can help to compensate for a lack of paid experience. Displaying enthusiasm can be a tall order when interviewing with someone you've never met before. General rule of thumb, take their level of enthusiasm and kick yours up a notch higher.
- The most critical component of the interview is attitude, there is a clear distinction between candidates interviewing for a paid position and those interviewing for a career. People interviewing for a career should walk in the door with a terrific attitude and a sense of direction.

2. Unprofessional Behavior

- Looking for a job is a job, an around-the-clock, 24/7 type of job. Always be on your toes and demonstrate professionalism. Often important pre- and post- interview steps are neglected.
- The telephone - Who's taking messages for you? What does your answering machine say? Roommates and family members should know about your job search and the importance of courteous phone manners.
- Your appearance - It's a job search myth that candidates should dress for the job they are seeking; they should dress better since they are not going to work but to an interview.
- Timeliness - Arriving late and rescheduling meetings are all too common signs that a candidate isn't ready for the business world.
- Follow-up skills - Always send a letter thanking the interviewer for their time and reinforcing your enthusiasm and interest in the position.
- Your e-mail address - Make sure that if you include an e-mail address that it is a professional version and not your "fun" social or home version, e.g. funbunny@youreemailprovider.com. If you don't have a professional address, open a new account for free at Hotmail or Yahoo or Netscape and create one that is simple, professional and direct, e.g. jsmith@youreemailprovider.com or

mjones@youremailprovider.com. Remember to check it since employers are now provided with this means of contacting you.

3. Lack of Direction

Don't arrive at the interview with hopes of being told which position best fits you. It's your job to know what you want, not the interviewer's. Arrive at the interview with clear career goals and be careful not to confuse earnings potential with career goal-setting. Recruiters are more impressed by students interested in gaining experience than interested in gaining a paycheck.

4. Poor Research Prior to the Interview

Research the field, profession, and company before each meeting and arrive well-armed with background facts and questions. Asking what the company sells is a huge turn off to a recruiter. Visit their website, network with employees, read the business periodicals, do anything you can to learn more about the company.

5. Lying to Employers

Most corporate recruiters interview enough candidates to develop a sixth sense that alerts them when something sounds fishy. Most company's policy on lying during the recruiting process: rescind the offer. Most recruiters will do background checks, call references, and verify academic records. It's not worth it to lie.

6. Weak Communication Skills

- How you behave during an interview can be as important as what you say. Avoid:
 - Talking too much. Avoid excessively chatting on and on. Be concise with your replies, get to the point and stay there.
 - Listening poorly. Pay attention and actively listen. One recruiter tells about an interview when the candidate obviously wasn't paying attention during the introductions and spent the entire interview calling the recruiter by the wrong name! By listening closely and paying attention, you will always be able to answer the questions more concisely.
 - Poor body Language. Be aware of what your "non-verbals" are saying. Sit up straight and lean slightly forward to show you are eager to hear what they say. Most importantly, make excellent eye contact. A firm handshake and excellent eye contact are two of the easiest ways to demonstrate confidence.

- Ask questions. Asking good questions shows you've done your research. It also demonstrates your ability to develop and articulate your thoughts about important issues.

7. Failure to Sell Yourself

- The single best way to sell yourself is by giving demonstrated examples of your experiences and skills and then translating this into benefits the employers can use. Before you go into the interview-know what you have to offer!
- At the end of the interview, take advantage of the closure. Ask what the next step in the process is, let them know you are interested and want the position. If the interviewer is on the fence, your positive attitude and enthusiasm will be convincing.