

CareerNetwork

Top 20 List

INTERVIEW BLUNDERS THAT CAN COST YOU THE JOB!

- 1) The Loud Talker:** A harsh tone of voice can be a concern to the person who is conducting the interview. He/she may wonder, "...is this person going to come across harsh to his/her team?"
- 2) The Quiet Talker:** Soft-spoken candidates have a hard time gaining respect. They may be perceived as timid or weak.
- 3) The Chatter Box:** Obviously, the question on every interviewer's mind, "...will this person's work ever get done?" If you have a tendency to ramble, make it a point to answer questions directly and succinctly. And LISTEN. (You can't do that if you're talking...).
- 4) The Open Book:** There's a difference between being honest and completely exposing yourself. Keep your personal matters to yourself unless you believe they will affect your ability to get the job offer. Do not talk about family, your age or religion.
- 5) The Close-Mouthed:** No one likes pulling teeth--speak up and say something meaningful. Study the job description, do research on the company and discuss your accomplishments. NEVER tell your interviewer to look at the resume for the answer to a question. Sell yourself in a tactful manner.
- 6) The Potty Mouth:** It is completely inappropriate to use foul language during an interview. No matter what the industry, it is frowned upon.
- 7) The Interrogator:** It's fine to ask a couple of questions regarding the specifics of the job or the organization, but don't ask about compensation, benefits, hours, lunch and vacation.
- 8) The Broken Record:** Don't rehash conversations or ask questions that were already answered during the interview. It gives the appearance of being inattentive.
- 9) The Egotist:** There's a fine line between being confident and being cocky. Upbeat enthusiasm is fine but projecting a sense that the job is "in the bag" can backfire on even the most qualified candidates. Make sure your body language is relaxed but not too relaxed -- no putting your feet on the desk or leaning back in the chair.
- 10) The Stone Face:** Always remember that facial expressions are a key form of nonverbal communication, and their role in person-to-person communication is substantial. A smile shows enthusiasm and makes you more approachable. Eye contact is crucial in connecting with another person and a firm handshake is a must

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- 11) The Trash Talker:** Speaking negatively about past employers or co-workers is a huge no-no. Sour grapes or not, ALWAYS take the high road!
- 12) The Traitor:** Giving out proprietary information to competitors does NOT make you appear valuable... it makes you appear untrustworthy.
- 13) The Brute:** Eyes and ears are everywhere when you interview. Receptionists, security people and janitors have been known to provide reports to recruiters; always be kind to them.
- 14) The Appli-CAN'T:** The job application is a necessary element of the interview process. Never refuse to complete an application. "See resume" should not be written ANYWHERE on your application. Fill it out completely. Answer all questions truthfully—especially regarding compensation.
- 15) The Squirmer:** Be aware of your body language and especially fidgeting. People make all sorts of assumptions based on the way you carry yourself. Do not talk too much with your hands.
- 16) The Name Dropper:** Constantly mentioning those you know (either from previous jobs or at the prospective company) can come across as a lame attempt to elevate your status by association. People see right through it!
- 17) The Early Bird (or the one who's always late):** Do not arrive more than 10 minutes early. If you do, sit in your car. And do everything in your power to be on time for an interview. If you run late because of an unavoidable emergency, give plenty of advance notice that you will be delayed. Respect others' time!
- 18) The Uncouth:** Always use your manners! Make sure you get business cards from everyone you interviewed with and send thank you emails to all within 24 hours. Double-check grammar and spelling. If you make a mistake, it may cost you the job.
- 19) The Completely Clueless:** Remember ... dress for success! Wear a clean, fresh and updated suit or dress. A black dress is always safe. Guys, polished shoes and a clean shave are expected. Please wear a suit with tie and crisp shirt. Ladies, closed-toe shoes and clean, manicured nails are a must. No torn or frayed pocketbooks. Go easy on the make-up, jewelry, perfume or cologne. And NEVER smell like alcohol or smoke! No gum chewing.
- 20) The Ad Libber:** Bring a few copies of your resume, be prepared to answer about your strengths, weaknesses, accomplishments, reasons for leaving, goals, your ideal work environment and be prepared to provide examples. Do research on the company you are interviewing as well as the interviewers.