

Interview Process updated on Jan 2025

Common Mistakes You Should Avoid

There are many different types of interviews designed to serve different purposes or situations. Regardless of the type of interview, most will incorporate the following stages: establishing rapport, exchanging information, and closing the interview. Pay attention to the job titles of the interviewer(s). This can help you decide how much technical detail to provide in your responses.

Establishing Rapport

This is a very important part of the interview because while establishing rapport, first impressions are made, and the tone of the interview is set. Some people suggest that the decision to hire is greatly influenced by the first five minutes of the interview. A good interviewer will introduce him/herself, and take the lead. Follow his or her lead - if they are chatty, be chatty; if they are formal then you too be formal. Some employers use what seems to be casual conversation to get to know you on a more personal level and this may be crucial to a hiring decision!

Tips:

Smile and maintain eye contact. This is one way of communicating confidence, even if you don't feel it.

If the interviewer offers his or her hand, shake it firmly. If they don't, it is appropriate to offer yours.

Wait until the interviewer sits or offers you a seat before sitting down.

If the interviewer is making small talk, participate. Keep your answers short and positive.

Exchange of Information

This is the bulk of the interview. It is your opportunity to let the interviewer know what you have to offer, and your chance to learn more about the organization.

Tips:

When you answer a question, look the interviewer in the eye.

Be aware of the interviewer's reactions. If he or she looks confused, ask if you can clarify anything.

Be aware of what your body is saying. Avoid closed postures. Sit upright, but not stiffly.

Try to find a comfortable position as that will make you feel more relaxed.

Control your nervous habits. Don't swing your foot, talk with your hands (to an extreme), or fiddle with jewellery, buttons, pens, etc.

Show that you are interested in the job by asking questions.

Try not to appear bored or anxious. Don't look at your watch.

Closing the Interview

When the interviewer is done gathering the information that is needed, he or she will ask if you have anything to add, or if you have any questions. This is your opportunity to mentally review your inventory of skills and make sure that you have communicated everything that you wanted to. If any of your questions have not been addressed during the course of the interview, now is the time to ask them.

Tips:

Thank the interviewer for his/her time and consideration.

Ask when you can expect to hear from him/her.

If it is not known when a decision will be reached, ask if you can phone in a week's time to inquire about the progress.

If the interviewer offers his/her hand, shake it firmly. Otherwise, it is fine to offer yours first.

If not already discussed, you can offer to leave a sample of your work, or portfolio if you have one.