

# EIGHT JOB INTERVIEW MISTAKES TO AVOID

*by Nathan Newberger*

The interview is a critical part of the job search process and also the one where most job seekers have trouble. There is plenty of advice around on how to navigate through an interview successfully. This article includes some simple, but crucial items that job seekers should definitely plan on NOT doing!

## 1. DON'T SHOW UP LATE.

There is no easier way to lose points with a prospective employer than to show up late. First impressions do last. And unfortunately, showing up late screams things like "I am unreliable" or "Your time is not important to me". Is this what you want a prospective employer to think before you even have a chance to utter a word? Make it a point to try to be early to every interview. That way, bad weather, traffic, and that last minute phone call stand less chance of ruining your entrance. If the unforeseen 18-wheeler does happen to dump ten tons of tomatoes across the interstate, upon arrival, apologize first thing, offer a quick explanation and move on. (Ideally you would have called from your cell phone as soon as you caught sight of the delay.)

## 2. DON'T ACT DISINTERESTED.

No matter what the circumstance, never act disinterested during an interview. If ten minutes into the meeting you become certain that nothing on the planet could convince

you to take a job with the company, continue to pay attention and act like you care about the conversation. Remember that the interviewer does not exist in a vacuum. He or she has friends, relatives, and associates who may influence future job opportunities. If you behave poorly, the interviewer will remember and will share the story of you and your unprofessional behavior with others. Haven't you shared bad job search experiences with people close to you? The interviewer is probably no different.

## 3. DON'T BE UNPREPARED.

Being prepared has many facets. Interviewers expect you to know something about the company and the position you are seeking. Having this knowledge makes you appear

both motivated and truly interested. So make sure you do your research! Excellent sources of information include the Internet, periodicals, and people already in the field. Another facet of being prepared is being ready for the types of questions that may be asked. There are numerous articles on the web and in bookstores with practice interview questions and answers. Make sure to utilize all such resources available to you. And finally, don't forget to have extra copies of your resume and references on hand should they be requested.

## 4. DON'T FORGET YOUR MANNERS.

No matter how old fashioned it appears to use words like please, sir, ma'am, and thank you, do not delete these words from your vocabulary.



These simple words can work wonders towards making a positive impression. Always use a respectful tone of voice. Do not unnecessarily interrupt the interviewer. Maintain eye contact and a pleasant expression. Leave the slang, slouching, and gum chewing at home. Good manners signal respect for yourself and the people around you; never underestimate their importance.

#### **5. DON'T DRESS INAPPROPRIATELY.**

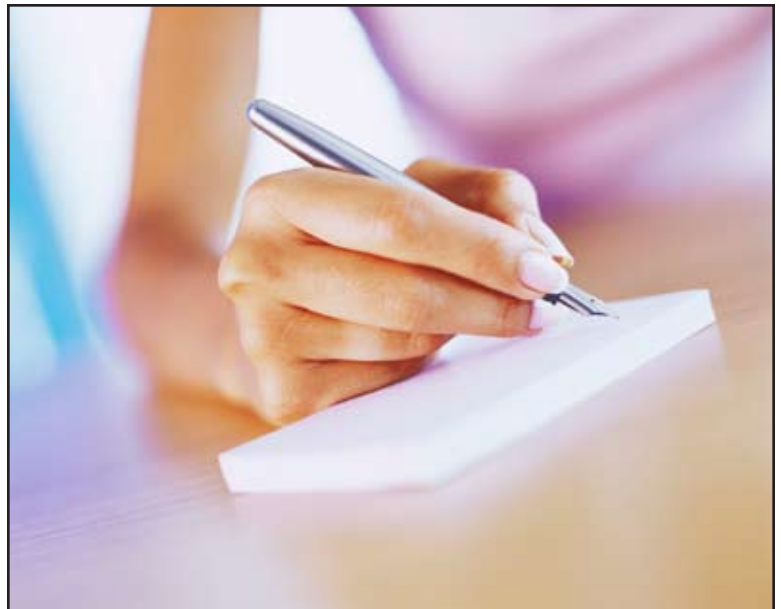
Whether you like it or not, the job interview is not the time to express your individuality. Always remember that your goal is to gain employment, not to make a fashion statement. Accordingly, you should not dress in any way that will distract attention from you and your qualifications. Things to avoid include unconventional hair colors, excessive jewelry and makeup, and any clothes that you would wear to a nightclub. Prior to the interview, contact the company's HR department and inquire about the company dress code. Do your best to dress accordingly. If there is any doubt, err on the side of being overdressed.

#### **6. DON'T BE UNTRUTHFUL.**

Never, ever lie during an interview. Mistruths have an uncanny habit of catching up to people. If the interviewer catches you in a lie during the interview, you have seriously damaged your chances of being hired. After all, would you hire someone that you couldn't trust? If your employer finds out you lied after you have been hired, it could be grounds for dismissal. Even if they do not dismiss you, you are still in serious trouble as you have damaged your integrity in the eyes of your boss. The bottom line is that you should always be truthful when interviewing.

#### **7. DON'T BE MODEST.**

When searching for the right job, put your modesty aside. Don't be afraid to confidently describe your skills and accomplishments. After all, if you don't sing your praises to your potential boss, then who will? Don't count on your resume to do all the work; it is only a tool to help you land the interview. Once you get your foot in the door, it is up to you to convince the interviewer that you are the ideal person for the job. Worried that you will come across as conceited instead of self-confident? Then practice how and what you will say with a friend or family member who can provide honest feedback.



#### **8. DON'T FORGET THE "THANK YOU" NOTE.**

Once the interview has concluded, take a few moments to jot down your impressions of the interviewer, what you talked about and any interesting points that were brought up during the meeting. The ideal time and place to do this is in your car as soon as you have exited the building, as your thoughts will be most fresh at this time. Use this information as you compose a well thought out thank you note to the interviewer. Mail this note no later than the day following the interview. Remember, promptness signals interest.

By avoiding these eight simple mistakes, you can improve your chances of having a successful interview and landing the job of your dreams.

#### *About the Author*

*Nathan Newberger is the job and career expert at <http://www.WorkTree.com>. Nathan has over 10 years experience in staffing and human resources. He has worked both as a recruiter and career counselor. Mr. Newberger has been the Managing Editor at <http://www.WorkTree.com> for the past 5 years and his articles have helped thousands of job seekers.*

*(You can read this article online at: <http://www.worktree.com/newsletter/interview-mistakes-to-avoid.html>. Sincerely, Nathan Newberger, <http://www.WorkTree.com> "Helping You Find More Jobs Faster")*