

“The Three Biggest Mistakes Made At Job Interviews”

Ever wonder why you never got called back for a second interview despite the fact you felt in your heart of hearts that the interview went well? While every interview scenario is difficult to summarize, there is a chance you may have made one or more of the three biggest mistakes job seekers make in an interview. These no-no’s may seem obvious, but you’d be surprised how often job seekers fail in these areas.

1. Failing to exude a positive body language

More than your words and your tone of voice, your body language is the No. 1 aspect you are being judged on, not just in the interview, but the moment you enter the company’s headquarters. Your great resume and/or a referral has likely gotten you the interview. Now, your potential fellow co-workers are sizing you up from head to toe to see if you’d be a good “fit” for their team. In short, will they like working with you?

The receptionist you checked in with to let them know you had arrived is watching your mannerisms in the quiet lounge area. Is the job candidate slouched in their chair, dressed appropriately and polite or speaking on their cell phone? You may not even realize it, but the receptionist and others that may pass through the reception area are checking you out, and you still haven’t even been called back yet for the interview.

Next thing you know you’re face-to-face with your potential future boss – or bosses. Are you leaning forward, engaged in the conversation, or are you leaning back or have a rigid

posture? You'd be surprised how many job seekers fail to realize how poor their body language is. And what about your eye contact. Are you looking the interviewer directly in the eye? The interviewer has to envision you being successful at his company and making him or her look good. If you don't seem engaged, you may have lost them and not even know it.

2. Failing to ask the right questions

The interviewer and the company you are interviewing with don't really care anything about you unless they know for certain you can help them. To that end, it puts the company at ease knowing you have learned as much about their organization as possible, particularly in your areas of expertise. When a job seeker brings and asks at least three questions related to helping the company improve its standing, now you have crossed into engagement territory. The interviewer has a new respect for you versus other candidates who, when asked if they had any questions replied, "No" or worse, "what's the salary for this position?"

The worst thing you can do in an initial interview is focus on "you" unless prompted by the interviewer. That means avoid asking questions such as salary, health benefits and vacation time and other "me" questions. Save those for a later interview, unless prompted to answer. Instead, tailor your questions around where the company is looking to improve and how you can fulfill those goals.

3. Failing to ask for the job

Ever been on a first date with someone, and the end of the date comes and you're not sure what to do because you're

not sure if you really like her or if she really likes you? Is it a kiss on the cheek or just a hug?

This body language awkwardness can also occur in an interview, but as the job seeker, you don't even know it because you're "living in an assumption world." You assume – as the job seeker – that since I showed up for the interview there must be an assumption I want the job. Not true.

Just like on a date, during the interview, your subject is judging your body language, tone and words. Perhaps the interviewer has devoted much of the interview to informing you of your responsibilities and the key benchmarks you'll be expected to meet. If your body language doesn't radiate engagement or enthusiasm, the interviewer can be left wondering if your words are sincere or just acts of desperation.

The end of the interview comes. You've already asked a few questions when prompted and the interviewer closes by saying something like, "well, we're still interviewing candidates this week so we'll let you know." And your response is a simple, "ok, great." Actually, not great, because you just cost yourself a second interview.

Assume the interviewer has been judging your body language during the interview and isn't certain you genuinely want the job. The interviewer feels the responsibilities laid out may not be your cup of tea even though your responses were, "no problem" or "that sounds fine."

So how do you eliminate any doubt? *You ask for the job.* Here's how your response should be:

“Thanks again for taking the time to meet with me and for going over the details of the position. I know this position carries a lot of responsibility and I just want to let you know I would really welcome the opportunity to work with you and your team. I’m ready to make an immediate impact. When do you anticipate making a decision on the next step?”

By informing the interviewer that you want the job you’ve eliminated any doubt in their mind. Think about it: would YOU hire a person you weren’t sure wanted the job or someone who was passionate and said point blank they wanted to work for you?

Avoid these three biggest interview gaffes and you’ll get more calls for second interviews – and even a job offer...