

# Interview Do's and Don'ts

## Interview Do's

- Do make sure that your hands are attractive. This means spotlessly cleaning with trimmed nails.
- Do make sure your hair is in place and conservative.
- Do pay attention to your scent. Women with powerful perfumes and men with intense colognes can destroy interviews. Moderation is recommended.
- Do go to the rest room before you visit the employment lobby. It is embarrassing to interrupt an interview, and you want to be as comfortable as possible.
- Do get a good night's sleep before each day that you search for employment. If you yawn in the lobby or smother a yawn during the interview, it will cost you. Be rested and at your alert best.
- Do look the interviewer in the eye. Recruiters place a lot of emphasis on eye contact.
- Do try to sparkle! Use gestures in your conversation. Make sure they are smooth and emphatic.
- Do smile. ☺
- Do make sure you get the interview's name right and use it a few times in the interview.
- Do have some money with you. You never want to be in the embarrassing position of having to say, "I don't have any money with me." The employer will almost always pay any expenses for something the company asks you to do.
- Do take notes if you wish. Write down some questions before you go into the interview.
- Do let the interviewer set the pace of the interview. Let him or her lead with the questions.
- Do let the interviewer decide when the interview is over.
- Do ask the interviewer when you will hear from him or her again if he or she does not offer the information.

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- Don't be late. In fact, plan to be early for any scheduled interview. If you are late or arrive just in the nick of time, the interviewer will start to wonder how prompt you might be after you start to work.
- Don't wear your outer clothes into an interview. Take any kind of overcoat off. Take rubber boots off and leave them in the employment lobby. Wearing those to an interview gives the impression you are anxious and want to leave.
- Don't sit down until you are asked. Don't worry about this, the recruiter won't make you stand-but if you move quickly to your chair and sit down, you will appear forward.
- Don't have anything in your mouth except your teeth-no gum, no candies, no breath mints and no cigarettes (obviously!)
- Don't lean on or put your elbows on the interviewer's desk. Sit back in your chair, so the interviewer can see more of you. Sit erect.
- Don't wear tinted glasses into an interview and if don't wear your eyeglasses all the time, don't park them on top of your head. Take them off and put them in your purse or pocket.
- Don't carry an oversized handbag even if it is fashionable. Carry a bag that is smaller and more manageable. Put it on the floor during the interview. Never place it on the interviewer's desk.
- Don't have unusually long fingernails. This applied to men as well as women.
- Don't show your nervousness by drumming your fingers, swing your leg, or cracking your knuckles. Don't have any loose change in your pocket—most of us tend to jingle it when we're nervous. (You really shouldn't have your hands in your pockets in the first place.)
- Don't keep adjusting your clothes.
- Don't fiddle with your hair.
- Don't compare the recruiter's office with others that you have seen. The recruiter might decide that you have seen the inside of too many employment offices, including his or hers.
- Don't pick up anything from the recruiter's desk unless you are invited to do so.
- Don't listen to any phone calls the recruiter may receive while you are with him or her. It's hard not to listen, but do your best to tune it out. After such a phone call, don't comment on something he or she said or ask a question about the conversation.
- Don't stand if someone else (man or woman) enters the recruiter's office. Keep your chair and don't say anything to the visitor unless you are spoken to first. If the recruiter introduces you to the person who came in, then you may stand.
- Don't inspect or read documents on the recruiter's desk.
- Don't call the recruiter "sir" or "ma'am" too much. Respect is mandatory, but don't go overboard.

## Interview Do's and Don'ts

### Interview Don'ts (continued)

- Don't overuse the interview's name. Too much of that is annoying.
- Don't be a comedian. Wisecracks and laughter can come later. Be pleasant, but remember that the interviewing process is formal and serious. An overly lighthearted approach will cause the interviewer to question the seriousness of your purpose.
- Don't give one or two word answers. The recruiter is trying to get to know you. Talk to him or her. If you go into a shell, you probably won't be hired.
- Don't dominate the conversation. Answer the questions thoroughly, but don't drone on forever.
- Don't interrupt. It is inexcusable in an interviewing situation.
- Don't use profanity even if the recruiter does. It can't possibly help your image.
- Don't use a lot of slang.
- Don't gush. You can be pleasant without being syrupy.
- Don't say "you know" all the times. It's, you know, annoying.
- Don't call the interviewer by his or her first name, unless invited to do so.
- Don't slip into a speech-making or preaching tone of voice. You are not on the Senate floor. You are in a conversation.
- Don't mumble.
- Don't chatter while the interviewer is reviewing your resume. Let him or her read it in peace.
- Don't interpret items on your resume until you are asked. Your resume should be self-explanatory. If additional details are needed, the interview will ask for them.
- Don't try to overpower the recruiter with bragging or overstatement. He or she will not respond well, and he or she is probably skilled in recognizing distortions of background and experience.
- Don't lie about anything. Sometimes candidates lie about their salary. Recruiters often ask for proof, such as a W-2 form.
- Don't criticize your present or past employer too much. If it is a bad situation, you can mention it but don't harp on it. Be objective instead of complaining or bad mouthing.
- Don't get angry or even irritated during the interview. You can be firm—not angry—if the questioning becomes improper or begins to slip into irrelevant areas.
- Don't look at your watch during the interview. This tends to hurry things along. Let the interview set the pace.
- Don't ask, "Will I get the job?" or "Can I have the job?" Those questions tend to push the recruiter and he or she will not like that. Rather say, "I hope you can consider me as a candidate for this job" or "I'm really interested in the job."
- Don't talk about the salary until later in the hiring process or until the recruiter brings it up.