



Interview Dos and Don'ts



Interview Dos

- Dress appropriately for the industry; err on the side of being conservative to show you take the interview seriously. Your personal grooming and cleanliness should be impeccable.
- Know the exact time and location of your interview; know how long it takes to get there, park, find a rest room to freshen up, etc.
- Arrive early; 10 minutes prior to the interview start time (or earlier if the employer instructs you to do so).
- Treat other people you encounter with courtesy and respect. Their opinions of you might be solicited during hiring decisions.
- Offer a firm handshake, make eye contact, and have a friendly expression when you are greeted by your interviewer.
- Listen to be sure you understand your interviewer's name and the correct pronunciation.
- Even when your interviewer gives you a first and last name, address your interviewer by title (Ms., Mr., Dr.) and last name, until invited to do otherwise.
- Maintain good eye contact during the interview.
- Sit still in your seat; avoid fidgeting and slouching.
- Respond to questions and back up your statements about yourself with specific examples whenever possible.
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- Be thorough in your responses, while being concise in your wording.
- Be honest and be yourself—your best professional self. Dishonesty gets discovered and is grounds for withdrawing job offers and for firing. You want a good match between yourself and your employer. If you get hired by acting like someone other than yourself, you and your employer will both be unhappy.
- Treat the interview seriously and as though you are truly interested in the employer and the opportunity presented.
- Exhibit a positive attitude. The interviewer is evaluating you as a potential co-worker. Behave like someone you would want to work with.
- Have intelligent questions prepared to ask the interviewer. Having done your research about the employer in advance, ask questions which you did not find answered in your research.

- Evaluate the interviewer and the organization s/he represents. An interview is a two-way street. Conduct yourself cordially and respectfully, while thinking critically about the way you are treated and the values and priorities of the organization.
- Do expect to be treated appropriately.
- Make sure you understand the employer's next step in the hiring process; know when and from whom you should expect to hear next. Know what action you are expected to take next, if any.
- When the interviewer concludes the interview, offer a firm handshake and make eye contact. Depart gracefully.
- Write a thank you letter to your interviewer promptly.

Interview Don'ts

- Don't make excuses. Take responsibility for your decisions and your actions.
- Don't make negative comments about previous employers.
- Don't falsify application materials or answers to interview questions.
- Don't treat the interview casually, as if you are just shopping around or doing the interview for practice. This is an insult to the interviewer and to the organization.
- Don't give the impression that you are only interested in an organization because of its geographic location.
- Don't give the impression you are only interested in salary; don't ask about salary and benefits issues until the subject is brought up by your interviewer.
- Don't act as though you would take any job or are desperate for employment.
- Don't make the interviewer guess what type of work you are interested in; it is not the interviewer's job to act as a career advisor to you.
- Don't be unprepared for typical interview questions. You may not be asked all of them in every interview, but being unprepared will not help you.
- A job search can hard work and involve frustrations; don't exhibit frustrations or a negative attitude in an interview.
- Don't go to extremes with our posture; don't slouch, and don't sit rigidly on the edge of your chair.
- Don't take your parents, your pet (an assistance animal is not a pet in this circumstance), spouse, fiancé, friends or enemies to an interview. If you are not grown up and independent enough to attend an interview alone, you're insufficiently grown up and independent for a job.
- Don't chew gum or smell like smoke.
- Don't allow your cell phone to sound during the interview. (If it does, apologize quickly and ignore it.) Don't take a cell phone call. Don't look at a text message.

Creating a Good First Impression

People form an opinion of someone they meet in a matter of seconds. For that reason, it's important that you pay attention to detail to create the best first impression you can.

Be On Time

Someone you are meeting for the first time is not interested in your "good excuse" for running late. Plan to arrive a few minutes early and allow flexibility for possible delays in traffic or taking a wrong turn. Arriving early is much better than arriving late.

Be Yourself, Be at Ease

If you are feeling uncomfortable and on edge, this can make the other person ill at ease and that's a sure way to create a wrong impression. If you are calm and confident, the other will feel more at ease and then have a solid foundation for making that first impression a good one.

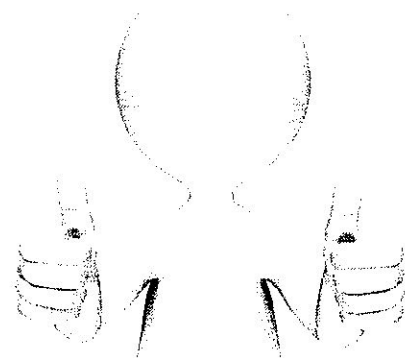
Present Yourself Appropriately

The person you are meeting for the first time does not know you and your appearance is usually the first clue he or she has to go on. The key to a good impression is to present you appropriately.

Start with the way you dress. What is the appropriate dress for the interview? In a business setting, what is the appropriate business attire: a suit, blazer, casual? And ask yourself what the person you'll be meeting is likely to wear. What about your grooming? Clean and tidy appearance is appropriate for most business and social occasions: a good haircut or shave, clean and tidy shoes, neat and tidy make up. Make sure your grooming is appropriate and help make you feel "the part."

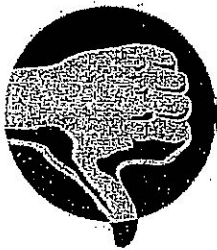
A Winning Smile

As the saying goes, "Smile and the world smiles, too." So there's nothing like a smile to create a good first impression. A warm and confident smile will put both you and the other person at ease. So smiling is a winner when it comes to great first impressions. But don't go overboard with this—people who take this too far can seem insincere and smarmy.



Dress for Success:

It is helpful to try a "dress rehearsal" before a job interview. You can increase your confidence by seeing your put-together, professional self; you can be assured that the clothing is clean and in good repair; and you can ask the opinion of a friend or relative.

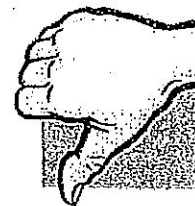


Women Should Avoid:

1. Hair that is over styled, teased, or moussed. It is best to keep hair conservative styled.
2. Dangling or large earrings.
3. Too many earrings, rings, necklaces, or bracelets.
4. Too much make-up. Too little is always better than too much.
5. Too much perfume- none is better.
6. Low-cut, tight, or short apparel.
7. Exposed undergarments.
8. Leather, suede apparel.
9. Ruffles, bows, or fringe (they do not project a professional or businesslike image)
10. Patterned nylons. Plain are best.
11. Very high heels.
12. Glittery , silver, gold, or open toes shoes.
13. Showing of tattoos or body piercings- cover with clothing or make-up if possible.

Men Should Avoid:

1. Earrings, bracelets, pinkie rings, or similar jewelry.
2. Too much aftershave or cologne- none is better.
3. Unbuttoned shirts.
4. Tee shirts.
5. Patterned T -shirts under dress shirts.
6. White socks with dress pants. Wear dark colored dress socks.
7. White pants.
8. Novelty or Leather Ties.
9. Sneakers.
10. Showing of tattoos or body piercing- cover with clothing or make-up if possible.



DELIVERING A GOOD HANDSHAKE

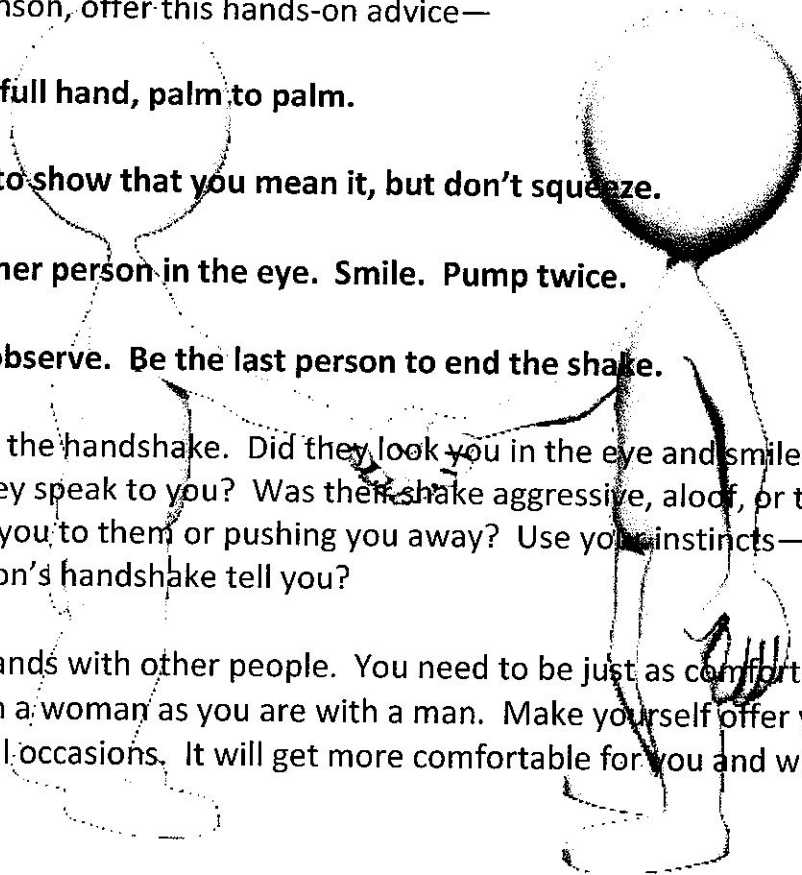
Don't let a potential employer get the wrong idea about you in the interview!

Crushing the other person's hand shows aggressiveness. The dainty fingertip shake says you're aloof. Shaking with a loose, gripless handshake shows timidity or nervousness. In *The Power of Handshaking*, authors Robert Brown and Dorothea Johnson, offer this hands-on advice—

- **Engage the full hand, palm to palm.**
- **Grip firmly to show that you mean it, but don't squeeze.**
- **Look the other person in the eye. Smile. Pump twice.**
- **Pause and observe. Be the last person to end the shake.**

Now—think about the handshake. Did they look you in the eye and smile during the shake? Did they speak to you? Was their shake aggressive, aloof, or timid? Were they pulling you to them or pushing you away? Use your instincts—what did the other person's handshake tell you?

Practice shaking hands with other people. You need to be just as comfortable shaking hands with a woman as you are with a man. Make yourself offer your handshake in social occasions. It will get more comfortable for you and will pay off in the long run.



Interviewing/Reasons Employers Give for Not Hiring an Applicant

- Sarcastic or defensive responses.
- Boastful or “know it all” attitude.
- Over aggressive or high-pressure type.
- Makes excuses or lies about unfavorable facts in record.
- Seems unprepared for interview late, cannot answer questions, etc.
- Poor grooming or personal appearance.
- Immature or ill-mannered behavior.
- Speaks negatively of former co-workers, school, or other people.
- Lazy or low on energy.
- Talks about personal problems.
- Radical ideas-politics, religion, dress, life-style, etc.
- Seems overly concerned about salary and benefits.
- Shows no interest in company or job.
- Undecided appears to rely on others to make their decisions.
- Doesn't ask any questions about the job.
- Poor work history-a “job hopper.”
- Fails to make good eye contact.
- Limp handshake.
- Lack of confidence-poor posture, shy, etc.
- Unable to take criticism.
- Appears to have trouble getting along with others.

