

INTERVIEWS: MORE THAN JUST THE BASICS!

Everyone knows (or should know) the basics about going on a job interview. You need to be on time. You should have a positive attitude and dress well. You also need to know about the company and the position. These are all helpful tips, aren't they? But sometimes, even if someone gets all those things right, the interview can still go very, very wrong. I should know—I've worked in human resources for 20 years! Here are the most common mistakes I've seen in an interview.



It is important to look relaxed and confident in an interview.

Right Candidate, Poor Interview Skills

- The perfect candidate applied for a position in our sales department. His application and résumé were impressive, but he was really shy and nervous. He wouldn't even make eye contact. Throughout the interview, he mumbled his answers to all my questions and spoke really quickly. His interview skills convinced me that he wasn't a good fit for this position.
- When you're at an interview, it's important to make good eye contact, but look away once in a while so you don't make the interviewer uncomfortable. If you feel nervous, pause to think about your answers before you speak.
- It's also okay to speak slowly. Speaking slowly is better than speaking too quickly.

Incorrect Body Language

- A candidate came in to interview for a project manager position and she made a great first impression. She had all the right answers to my questions. Sounds great, doesn't it? Well, during the interview she kept looking at her watch. She couldn't sit still, and she kept crossing her arms. Her body language was telling me that she didn't want to be in the interview.
- During an interview, pay attention to what your body is doing. Your body movements are just as important as your answers to the questions—they're a language of their own. First, remember the basics: Sit up straight and don't slouch in your chair. Then remember to be still when you're listening and to think about each movement when you're talking. And of course, avoid nervous habits like crossing your arms, shaking your legs, or fidgeting in general.

3 CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

A Which statement best describes the main idea of the article?

- The way you speak is more important than the way you move in interviews.
- Most people make mistakes in interviews and don't get the job.
- How you speak and move are both important during interviews.

B Read the article again. Circle the correct answers.

- Why did the first person described in the article not get the job?
 - He spoke too slowly and seemed uninterested.
 - He mumbled and didn't look at the interviewer.
 - He was not prepared for the interview.
- What did the interviewer not like about the second person described in the article?
 - She didn't seem interested in the position.
 - She didn't have good answers to the questions.
 - She didn't know anything about the company.
- Why did the author choose these interview examples for the article?
 - They show the most common interview mistakes people make.
 - They show that most people are bad at doing job interviews.
 - They show the worst interview mistakes she has ever seen.
- Why is the author a good source of information about interviewing?
 - She has a lot of experience looking for work.
 - She only ever worked for one company.
 - She has been interviewing people for many years.

C FOCUS ON LANGUAGE Reread lines 13-24 in the article. Think about the phrases *a good fit* and *a first impression*. Then answer the questions.

1. What does the author mean by the phrase *a good fit*?

2. What does *a first impression* mean?

D Read the Reading Skill. Answer the questions.

1. What else have you read about interviews? What kind of advice does the article give that is similar or different?

2. What experience have you had with interviews? How does this experience help you understand the examples in the article?

E PAIRS What is the article about? Retell the most important ideas. Use your own words.

The article is about job interviews and...

READING SKILL Make associations

When you read, think about what you already know about the subject of the text. Think about other texts you have read and experiences you have had that can help you understand what you are reading.