

Three Interviewing Mistakes

By Carole Martin

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Since no two interviews are alike, it is difficult to be prepared for what lies ahead, but you can focus on your presentation skills, which may be even more important than what you have to say. Three areas of performance, which should be considered dangerous and deadly, are worth spending some time thinking about before your next interview.

1. Poor non-verbal communication image. It's about demonstrating confidence -

- Stand straight, and make good eye contact. (Note the color of the interviewer's eyes.)
- Connect with a good, firm handshake. (There's nothing like a limp response in a handshake.)
- Sit erect and lean forward in the chair, appearing interested and attentive. (Slumping denotes a lazy attitude.)

That first impression can be a great beginning, or a quick ending to your interview.

2. Poor verbal communication skills. Your interviewer is giving you information, either directly or indirectly.

- Good communication skills include listening and letting the person know you heard what they said.
- Observe your interviewer's style and pace and match that style, adjusting your style and pace to match.
- Use appropriate language. (Beware of using slang words or references to age, race, religion, politics, or sexual preferences - these topics could get the door slammed very quickly.)
- Telling the interviewer more than they need to know could be a fatal mistake. (Too much information - particularly personal information - could get into some areas that are best not discussed in an interview.)

3. Not asking questions. It is extremely important to ask questions.

- When asked, "Do you have any questions?" if you answer "No," it is the **WRONG** answer!

- Asking questions gives you the opportunity to show your interest. (The best questions come from listening to what is said and asked during the interview. Ask for additional information.)

- Asking questions gives you the opportunity to find out if this is the right place for you. (Your chance to find out what goes on in the company.)

The job market is very competitive and the competition is fierce. Give yourself every advantage by preparing and practicing before the interview. Be aware of your verbal and non-verbal performance and the messages you are sending. It could make the difference between a job offer or not.
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Carole Martin is passionate on the subject of interviewing. Her philosophy is that the interview is a two-way process and that research, preparation, and practice are keys to a successful interview - and that these are learned skills.

As the interview coach for Monster, she reaches out to millions of people with encouragement, advice, and tips on how to succeed in today's job market. She is the author of several interview articles and an email newsletter, "Interview Fitness Training." Visit her sites at <http://www.interviewcoach.com> and <http://www.interviewfitnesstraining.com> to subscribe to her free monthly newsletter.

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